



NEW WINE

God & His Kingdom

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God and His Kingdom

A Foundational Course Focusing on the Revelation of
God and His Kingdom in the Scriptures

*Welcome to***God and His Kingdom***A Foundational Course Emphasizing the Revelation of God & His Kingdom*

Course Overview: This course is a foundational course with a special emphasis – Who is God and What is His Kingdom. Within the course you will learn:

- The Foundational understanding of God's Kingdom in heaven and earth
- What the Kingdom is and what it is not
- When and Where the Kingdom manifests
- Key Characteristics and Principles of the Kingdom
- How to enter and live in the Kingdom

Course Goals: By the end of this course, we would like you to:

- Develop a deep hunger for His Kingdom to come and make a total commitment to seeking first and living to advance the Kingdom of God
- Become a preacher of the Good News of the Kingdom of God
- Transition from a traditional Christian mindset to a Kingdom mindset

Follow-up Study: To obtain full credit and benefit from this course, we ask you to:

- a. Finish all Personal Study sections of the course manual.
- b. Read the follow-up reading: *The Kingdom in All Its Glory* by Alan Vincent on the Prepare International Website – www.prepareinternational.org - under this course title. This reading is broken down into four or five short articles.
- c. Write a 3-5 page essay, typed answering the following questions:
 - Describe the three greatest things you learned in the course in detail.
 - How will you apply these things to your life and ministry in the future. Think of a specific situation that you would apply these truths and explain how you might use this new learning.
 - **On the last page of your paper:** What was the most important thing you learned from the reading assignment from the Website?

Sources: The following sources were used to develop this training manual. . .

1. *The Kingdom in All of Its Glory* by Alan Vincent
2. *The Gospel of the Kingdom* by George Eldon Ladd
3. *The Unshakeable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person* by E. Stanley Jones
4. *Spirit Filled Life Study Bible, notes on the Kingdom of God* by Jack hayford



Lesson 1: What is the Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is being rediscovered all over the world. Christian leaders are in a major theological and lifestyle shift as we discover the central message and obsession of Jesus Christ.

In this course, we will discover how the Kingdom operates **today** and in **the age to come**.

Acts begins with the Kingdom and ends with it (Acts 1.3, 28.31). This history book of the NT is the example of what life in God's Kingdom is like in a Christ and Kingdom minded people. Revelation 1.6 begins to wind down the NT with the great declaration that Jesus Christ has made us "a kingdom of priests unto God."



Discussion: **When you think of the Kingdom of God, what do you think of?**

The Central Story of the Bible

The Kingdom of God is the central story of the Bible. It is the utter obsession of Jesus Christ.

Jesus

When Jesus broke onto the scene, His first words and last words (Mark 1.14-15 & Acts 1.3) were of the Kingdom. He spoke of the Kingdom 108 times and His life was the full demonstration of what a man full of the Holy Spirit experienced and did in Kingdom life. He is the Kingdom of God.

But the Kingdom of God is spoken of and pointed to much before this. It is also the central theme of the Old Testament. Indeed, the central theme of the entire Bible is **GOD AND HIS KINGDOM!**

The Law

The law, the first five books of the Old Testament teach us that God always desired a Kingdom and a Kingdom people . . . Exodus 19.6

The Psalms

As we read the Psalms, over and over, there is clear references to God's Kingdom. Ps. 103.19, Ps. 145.11-13



The Prophets

All through the Prophets letters, we see clear teaching about God and His Kingdom. Daniel 2.31-end, Daniel 7.9-10 & 13-14

What is the Kingdom of God?

What the Kingdom of God is NOT: Although, the Kingdom includes these things, the Kingdom of God is NOT necessarily. . .

Heaven-
The Church-

We must understand the Jesus never defined the kingdom, rather He was constantly describing it in terms the people of His day could understand. He would constantly say, "*the kingdom of God is like. . .*"

The Kingdom of God is a description the reality of. . .

#1 The coming of Jesus Christ – As we will clearly see in the next lesson, the Bible describes the coming of the Kingdom when Jesus comes onto the scene. When Jesus comes and is present, THEN the kingdom has come. We will discover that at His birth, the Bible teaches us that the Kingdom came, but it is also written clearly that the Kingdom WILL come when He comes again. Therefore, the first aspect of the Kingdom is the living presence of Jesus Christ.

Jesus IS both the King of this great Kingdom AND the full demonstration of the Kingdom. He not only taught about it, He fully demonstrated it. Jesus became a man and gave us the clear pattern of what a Kingdom man might look like. Where He is, the Kingdom is.

#2 Jesus exerting His power to rule – Secondly, the scripture clearly teaches us that the Kingdom of God is His rule and reign. That which Jesus has complete control over and rules, is IN the Kingdom – the Kingdom has come! The Kingdom of God is His reign.

The Bible words for Kingdom: Both the Old Testament word chosen for the Kingdom of God and the New Testament word do NOT refer primarily to the realm or the people when they speak of the Kingdom. These words describe the power and authority of a king reigning! A king exerting his power to bring everything under his control and rule.

OT - Heb. - malkuw (Dan. 2.44)

NT – Gr. – basileia (Matt 13.47, Rev 11:15-17)

The central issue of the Kingdom is Christ reigning in lives, families. That which He reigns over is in the Kingdom. Complete and utter surrender and complete and utter authority. The Kingdom is all about authority, who is in complete control. The Kingdom of God is NOT a democracy, it is a King exerting complete rights and authority to rule every area of His subjects lives.



Self – surrender is the first and only heart response to Christ as we are confronted with the Kingdom of God. Until a person surrenders to Christ, they do not enter the Kingdom. (Matt 13.44-45, Mark 1.15)



Reflection:

- Who makes the decisions in your life?
 - How do you decide what to do every day?
 - Why are you living where you are now living?
 - Did you put yourself there or did Jesus appoint you there?
 - Why did you choose the career you are now in?
 - What do you do with your time? Who is in charge?
 - What do you do with your money? Not with your tithe but with the 90% leftover? You might say, "It's my money, I can do with my money whatever I want." No you can't, it's His money.
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Self-giving, sacrificial love – As men surrender control to Christ, the very culture of His own life and Kingdom begins to enter the heart. The culture of the Kingdom is love – self-giving, self-sacrificing love. (Mark 12.28-34)

#3 Everything being rearranged and reordered by Jesus and His rule – The Kingdom of God is **Christlikeness!** When Jesus enters the human heart and begins to reign, He rearranges every priority, every attitude, every desire to be just like His. He brings His Kingdom order to every area of our lives. He reorders our family lives, our finances, our time, our businesses, etc. to reflect His light, love and glory.

Many have only taken the step of salvation into the Kingdom but have never gone any further. This total divine reordering has NOT occurred in their lives.

Alexander the Great: Alexander the Great in about 333 BC was considered one of the greatest military conquerors of all time. He entirely conquered the known world. As you study his life, military conquest was NOT his chief desire. Aristotle had tutored him many years and this mighty Greek philosopher had infected Alexander with a world vision. He had become consumed with the Hellenist philosophy of life and he totally believed that the order of Hellenism would solve all of man's problems. He conquered **Not** to just take territory. He conquered to bring a new order to the world – Hellenism. Every territory he took, he would then completely inject a new world order into them through education, religion, the arts and entertainment and politics.

The Kingdom of God is a new world order. Alexander the Great was mistaken. Hellenism was NOT the answer to all of man's needs, the Kingdom of God was. Jesus came to conquer the hearts of men and establish a complete new order, a completely new culture that would be the answer to man's every need.



Reflection: ***How is the Kingdom of God reordering your life? How much of His Kingdom vision and order do you see? Have you been completely infected with the culture of the Kingdom of God? Are you more of your own nationality today or of the Kingdom of God?***

#4 The putting down of all His enemies under His rule – the Bible teaches that He shall reign, until. . .that is, that the Kingdom will have its expression upon the earth until Jesus by His great power has destroyed everything that opposes both His rule and His salvation. **(1 Cor. 15.24-25; 1 John 3.8)** The Kingdom comes through the destruction of EVERY work of darkness. First of all in our hearts – the darkness and deception of self rule. Then the destruction of sin, sickness, poverty, etc.

#5 The unfolding of all of His blessings, salvation, and benefits to men – the Bible teaches that when His Kingdom comes, He brings salvation, power, blessing, love, and the wonderful gifts of His generous Father. **Isa 96-7** speak of the coming of the Kingdom of God when Christ is born. It then goes on to say that when He comes, there will be NO stopping the increase of His rule and His peace. His rule brings His shalom.

That Hebrew word *peace* is the word *shalom*. This word became one of the most important words in the Hebrew mouth. It literally meant ***all of God's blessing and prosperity!*** Within the meaning of this word is . . .

- Peace in all areas of life
- Prosperity
- Health and well being
- The blessing of God upon your life and labors

Where Jesus comes and rules, He blesses! He cannot be any other way because He is GOOD! He is LOVE! He is RICH! He is GENEROUS! The Kingdom of God is the doorway into life as it was meant to be lived.

Shalom: When we willingly offer God these two heart attitudes, He joyfully offers us His great blessing called Shalom. He zealously longs to draw us to Himself and pour out upon us all of His goodness and blessing, but there lies within the fabric of the Kingdom this principle: His All for Our All! (Matt 13.44-46)

#6 The Kingdom is Something - The Kingdom of God is more than Christ's reign, it is also more than God's total order replacing man's, the Kingdom of God is something! It is another realm of the spirit world where God's presence, power, and ruling authority is fully demonstrated and lived out.

- Matt 12. 6,41,42 (Something Greater)
- John 18.33-36 (My Kingdom is of another realm)
- Pastor Cho, the pastor of the largest church in the history of the world, teaches that one of the secrets to their success is that there is a parallel



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realm of the Spirit beside the three dimensional world we live in and if men learn to access it and live in it, they can change the world.



Application:

1. Does Christ genuinely reign in you?
 2. Has your life come under His divine order and is His culture replacing the culture of the world in you?
 3. Have you entered something – the Kingdom of God?
 4. Have you only entered the doorway of salvation, but never really began to walk in the power and life of the Kingdom of God?
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Lesson 2: When is the Kingdom



Bible Study: Matt. 12.32, Eph. 1.21, Mark 10.29-30, Matt 24.3, Luke 20.34-36; Matt 13.24-30 & 36-43; Matt 13.47-50; Matt 25.1-13; Matt 25.31-46; Matt 8.11; Matt 3.2; 4.17; Matt 12.28; Matt 13.1-11; Matt 13.44-46; Heb. 6.5; Phil 3.10; Eph 2.5; 1 Cor 15.23-25;

The Two Ages

Matt. 12.32, Eph. 1.21, Mark 10.29-30, Matt 24.3, Luke 20.34-36

- The Scripture speaks of two ages – this present age and the age to come
- They are separated by Christ's return & the resurrection (Matt 24.3; Luke 20. 34-36)

This Present Evil Age

- This age is called the present evil age – Gal. 1.4
- The Marks of this age – Eph. 2.1-3
- Satan is called the god of this age – 2 Cor. 4.3,4
- This age is controlled by demonic darkness and blindness. This Age is completely antagonistic to God's Kingdom for it is controlled by the god of this age, Satan and it bears His marks and nature upon it.

The Age to Come!

- See Matt. 13. 38-42; 13.47-50; 25.1-13; 25. 34, 46
- The Kingdom of God is God's complete reign in all of its perfection destroying every work of darkness and Satan's entire rule over men.
- The Kingdom brings in the redemptive blessing of God to men. The powers of this present evil age are completely shattered

When did the Kingdom Begin? the Kingdom in this Age?

- 1) **Dispensational Theology** teaches that the Kingdom of God will only come in the age to come and that there is NO Kingdom experience now on this side of heaven. It declares that Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom points to the age to come in every way and much of it must be spiritualized away. This thinking produces a mindset that things are going to only get worse for the church, and we have no power to stop the devil as he continues to try to control the earth. It limits people to thinking only in terms of God at work in the church and it points to someday in the future but totally robs us of power for today. Jesus will return and take us all out of this hellish mess.
- 2) **Kingdom NOW Theology** teaches just the opposite in varying degrees. It teaches that the Kingdom has FULLY come already, the devil has been bound by Jesus and the church is going to grow to greater and greater glory until all evil is eradicated. Often, this theology does not even believe in a



second coming of Christ because they point to the coming of the Holy Spirit and Christ indwelling believers as the second coming.

Both of these theologies are in error. They both take extreme views and are not clearly founded on Scriptural revelation. The Kingdom of God is both NOW and SOMEDAY. It belongs to the *AGE TO COME* but is manifest NOW in our *PRESENT EVIL AGE* as sons of the Kingdom enter it and demonstrate the power and authority of Christ.

The Bible Teaches that the Kingdom was introduced at Christ's Coming

- Daniel 2. 44-45 *In the days of those kings (the Roman kings), God will set up a kingdom. . .*
- Isa 9.6-7 *When the Child is given, the government (reign, kingdom) of God comes clearly to earth and He sits upon the throne of David again*
- Luke 1.31-33 *Jesus will sit on the throne of David and rule over his Kingdom*

Jesus Teaches the Kingdom Has Come NOW!



Bible Study: Mark 1.14-15, Luke 17.20-21, Luke 11.20, Matt 13.1-23, 31-33, 44-46

- *The Time is **fulfilled**, the Kingdom is at hand = has drawn near, arrived*
- *The Kingdom of God is among you. . .*
- *The Kingdom of God is in your midst*
- *The Kingdom of God is within you*

Jesus Teaches the Kingdom WILL COME SOMEDAY!



Bible Study: Matt. 13.24-30, 13.47-50, 25.31-46

- *The Kingdom of God will come in the harvest at the end of the age*
- *People enter the Kingdom after he great resurrection and judgment*

The Bible clearly teaches that **the Kingdom of God is NOW and NOT YET!** We are living in an age where the Kingdom of God has broken in and we are experiencing a partial reality, but the Kingdom of God climaxes and comes in all of its fullness at the second coming of Christ when He once and for all extinguishes all enemies of God.

The Kingdom in This Age is a time of Warfare and Work!

- **Jesus Christ is putting all enemies under His feet** 1 Cor 15.23-25
- **Daniel 7. 18** (receive & possess) **Daniel 7.21-22** (warfare)
- **Death, Satan, Sin, Sickness, etc. are already being overcome**(1 John 5.3,8)



From John the Baptist Christianity to the Kingdom

For several hundred years the church has believed that nothing can be done about the Kingdom of God until Jesus physically comes. The devil was going to get stronger and stronger. The church was going to get weaker and weaker. The devil was going to take over the whole earth. And just before he conquered and destroyed everything, Jesus would come in a rescue operation to save a church that was just nearly annihilated. The church has been hanging on, looking for some special time when Christ would come again and end the misery and suffering and take them home. There is some truth in this, but it is NOT a kingdom view.

Christianity without a true Kingdom experience and revelation can be termed “*John the Baptist Christianity*.” This is not a clearly Biblical term, but it describes a Bible truth just as the term *Trinity* is not a Biblical term but indeed describes a Biblical truth. When Paul came to Ephesus, he found a group of disciples of the Lord who had been taught about Jesus, but had been baptized by Apollos only in the Baptism of John. There was a problem in their lives – they had a sincere desire and faith in the Lord, but they lacked reality and power. They were “*John the Baptist Christians*.”

John the Baptist Christianity is forever proclaiming and looking toward the kingdom but never entering in . . .

- **Words with no power** - It is Christianity with preaching only and no power or authority (John 10.41) John accurately taught about Jesus, but he in no way demonstrated the Kingdom of God in operation
- **Victory in the future** - It is Christianity looking for the “someday in the future” of God & His Kingdom when Christ comes again.
- **“You are the light”** - It describes men and women who speak of the “light,” but do NOT demonstrate or live out the “light” The Bible says that in Jesus was **life** and this life was the **light** of all men. It goes on to say that John was NOT the light, he could only talk about it, but once Jesus begins to teach on the Kingdom, He tells His followers that **they are the light!** That is, they are not just to talk about Him and His life, they are to receive His life and demonstrate it! (John 1.3,4; John 1.8; Matt 4.16)
- **“You and Them” in the kingdom** – Jesus clearly teaches that not everyone is treated the same in the Kingdom of God. In Matt. 13.10-17, He even refers to His disciples as *You* and speaks of the others as *Them*. It is very clear that He treats the *YOU* differently from the *THEM*.
 - *YOU* – those who walk in a Kingdom reality having eyes that can see and ears that can hear and see into the Mysteries of the Kingdom. These have come as true followers of Jesus!
 - *THEM* – those who cannot see, cannot hear, have dull hearts to the Lord and His Kingdom and only see the outer things of the Lord. These are those who have only come to Him to receive the benefits of the Kingdom – healing, forgiveness, deliverance, and teaching.

This so summarizes what we have been taught and demonstrated for many years. We have had a Christian tradition way of thinking and believing and not a Kingdom mentality.



Discussion: *Discuss this idea of living as John the Baptist type of Christians instead of fully entering in and living in the reality of His Kingdom. Why do many live this way? How do we need the reality of the Kingdom of God to break into our lives on this side of heaven?*

CONCLUSION: When Jesus Christ came, Scripture clearly teaches that the Kingdom of God was inaugurated upon the earth. It is very true that it will be fully demonstrated at His second coming, but the power and blessing of the Kingdom has broken into men's lives now! As we submit to His Lordship, relinquish our independence and believe His glorious promises, we are caught up in the mighty blessing of His Kingdom now. Until the second coming, the kingdom life will always be a life of warfare for we are in a battle zone between the kingdom of darkness and the Kingdom of God.



Reflection

Are there those who have been saved and yet do not taste the powers of this Age to Come – the Kingdom? *Yes definitely.* Many have not tasted this great Kingdom power in this age, because of. . .

- Ignorance of it
 - Unbelief in it
 - Continuing to live in independence from the Great King
 - A viewpoint that the Kingdom will only come at the second coming of Christ
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How Does the Kingdom Come Into the Earth?

Jesus teaches us that the Kingdom does not come all at once in a big, observable sign, but that it begins very small-on the inside of a human heart, then starts to grow outwardly into a persons external, visible life until Christ rules and blesses all. Never forget that what He rules, He always blesses.

- It begins by Christ coming to a single heart and calling that person to surrender and follow
- The person responds, begins to seek Christ and Christ genuinely begins to reign
- The person's life begins to change as Christ's presence and rule flows into every area of life



- The Kingdom (reign), life, and power of Christ then moves into the family, work, finances, etc. Until Christ's Kingdom is moving now out from that person to that person's world around them
- Agape love begins to be the ruling principle and faith enables that person to bring Christ's supernatural life and power to many life situations
- Because of the life and witness of the person, others begin to desire God's Kingdom (His reign and blessing) in their lives also
- Businesses, workplaces, schools, government offices, and homes are powerfully affected and transformed

Conclusions

The Kingdom of God will come in its fullest sense when Jesus Christ comes again and has put all enemies of God and man under His feet. Until that time, we can taste and live in the powers of that Age to Come now as we see the Kingdom, believe in Christ and His Kingdom, Seek first His Kingdom, and open our hearts to Him. We don't have to wait for heaven some day. Today, we can experience a mighty foretaste of that great life that awaits us!



Lesson #3: The Kingdom Revealed in the Old Testament

Introduction

The Kingdom of God is spoken directly about many times in the Old Testament, and there are some clear types and pictures of it as you study closely. Let's look at several glimpses of the Kingdom in the pages of the Old Testament.

In The Garden

"Now in the beginning when God created Adam and Eve, we are told in Gen. 1:26-27 that He created them to rule over all the things that He had created. But in order for that to function properly Adam and Eve needed to be under authority. Their authority was not absolute, but it was dependent authority. ***For them to be God's rulers they needed to be under His rule.*** They needed to do God's will perfectly, and do it without deciding for themselves morally what was right or wrong, they just needed to do His will. . . "What we see here is the kingdom of God. God is the total supreme ruler and these two just obeyed everything He told them and without any disobedience; they lived in the eternal life of God. So all of creation was in right order and the kingdom of God covered all of creation. While this perfect order of the kingdom continued, all of creation was protected from the evil one and he had no point of access anywhere. As a result, there was no sin, no sickness, no diseases, no corruption, no evil, there was nothing that offended God in all of His creation. It was all under the kingdom of God. So if you ask, "I wonder what the kingdom of God will be like when it fully comes?" Just go back to the beginning and see!"¹

Man was created to be a dependent being. There is NO other option for him if he desires to live with the Lord. When a man is dependent upon the Lord, God gives life to that man. He empowers that man. When a man chooses to live in independence (making his own decisions and his own choices) he is choosing to live by his own resources, wisdom, and abilities. If he is to be empowered, there is only one source outside of himself, Satan.

Authority - The key issue of the Kingdom is authority. God invited Adam and Eve to live under His authority through simple surrender and obedience and then He would give them His own authority to rule on the earth (See Gen 1.28).

What was the goal of Satan's deception in the fall of Man? It was NOT just to get men to sin, it was to cause them to leave life under God's authority and thus forfeit to him, Satan, the authority God had given them. When the first couple sinned by throwing off God's rule and choosing independence, Satan gained authority over the earth and another kingdom was established, the kingdom of Darkness. (See Luke 4.5-8, 1 John 5.19, Col 1.13)

The Kingdom of God is about authority! God invites men to voluntarily surrender, live dependently upon Him and then He eagerly gives them authority in His name to rule and reign upon the earth!



In The Law (Exodus 19.6)

When we give a careful reading of the Law, we discover clear hints that it was God's desire to see that the children of Israel would be a demonstration of God's Kingdom upon the earth.

- You shall be to Me a **Kingdom** – a people under My authority, demonstrating My rule, My authority and My blessing.
- **Of Priests** - those who can each come to Me, minister to Me and minister on My behalf

The children of Israel never realized this reality. A chapter later, (Ex. 20.19) we see them declaring to Moses that they want no part of a relationship with God, they only want commands to obey. They abandoned their kingdom priestly position.

David's Kingdom – A Prophetic Picture

All through the Scriptures, Jesus' rule and Kingdom is referred back to David's throne. It is David, his rule, his throne, his reign that Christ would take up some day in an eternal Kingdom. Solomon, Josiah, or any other earlier King is never mentioned – only David.

Why is that? Why was David the precursor of the Messiah and his Kingdom, and His throne the one that Messiah would sit upon?

David's Kingdom is the OT picture and type of Christ's Kingdom today. Within it we see several key ideas that are foundational in the Kingdom of God. He was in no way perfect, but God saw things within him and his rule that would foreshadow the coming of the eternal rule under His Son, Jesus.

1. A man after God's own heart that would do all His will: In David, we see a ruler who is not motivated by greed, ambition, or a lust for power. We see a man motivated by an amazing desire to be close to God, to know Him, to walk with Him and to fulfill all of God's desires for the people. David was inflamed with the presence of God and a consuming passion to do His will.

This is a picture of Jesus Christ although a poor one. It is also a type of what the New Covenant Kingdom believers would look like at the core of their lives. This is the race of people God would raise up through His Son.

2. The Tabernacle of David instead of the Tabernacle of Moses or Temple of Solomon: For just over thirty years, we see a phenomenon in the Kingdom of David. There is a tent set up where God's presence dwells via the Ark of the Covenant and **all men** can come and experience God without a veil or priests to go for them. Men could experience the living presence of God.

- There were no sacrifices here – David had seen the Cross (See Ps. 22) and knew that sin had been atoned for
- There were no man-made barriers between God and man
- There were no rituals
- The tent was not the focus, God was and His relationship to individual people and the kingdom as a whole



- There was 24-7 prayer and worship here before Him.
- This was the power generation station of the kingdom

3. A Time of Perfect Peace & Prosperity (Shalom) within the Kingdom:

Because of David's rule, peace reigned supreme in the land. NO Enemies made any inroads upon the people of God. They were always defeated. It was a place impenetrable to the attacks of the Enemy. The Kingdom of Israel also went from being small, very poorly organized tribes with a great deal of internal and external problems to a well managed kingdom where there was blessing and prosperity for all. The people prospered greatly under David's rule.

This is to be true in Christ's Kingdom today. The Shalom of God is to rule in our hearts and lives. He will bring us into lives of great peace and prosperity as we live in proper faith and obedience to Him.

4. A Time of Unstoppable Kingdom Expansion Warfare: David's men were constantly advancing the borders of the Kingdom through warfare. They never ceased to be a warring people and *all* of their attempts to expand the Kingdom were successful. They had the full backing of their king behind them in this pursuit.

In Christ's Kingdom, He forms us into a people of war with constant Kingdom expansion in our hearts. This is a huge difference in the traditional Christian and the Kingdom man or woman.

5. Massive Kingdom Employment under David: As you read the pages of David's account, you begin to come upon list after list of all of the people who were employed within the Kingdom. There were many areas of service and David employed hundreds and thousands for the good of the people and the glory of God. The people were happy under David because they had a place of productivity and purpose.

Today, in the Kingdom of God there is full employment in the cause. There are not a few who work and then most sit on the sidelines, living their lives for themselves, merely enjoying the benefits of Jesus.

6. A King with a sincere heart to love and bless the people: As you study the histories of men, you find a common thread of truth – Kings rule men for their and their realms growth and men serve Kings to make them rich and powerful. This is the nature of earthly kingdoms and rule. Occasionally you will find an exception to this generalization but it is an exception. This is not so as David takes the throne. 2 Sam 6:18-19

How much more our heavenly King? When we come into the Kingdom, Jesus requires us to give our all, but we can because we come to a King who deeply loves us and desires to *bless us*, and give us *cakes of bread and dates and raisins*. Jesus so desires to share all of His goodness and blessing with us that we can fully trust Him.

7. New Covenant Revelation Grew Under David: Most of the Psalms were written in the Tabernacle of David setting by David or one of the worship leaders



there. It is unbelievable to read the theology of these Psalms. Most of the theology of the OT is very Old Covenant with man bound under the law to perform and serve God in the power of his own fleshly strength, but within the Psalms there is massive revelation of the New Covenant. The keynote thought of *for the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever* is clearly centered in New Covenant thought revealed in Jesus Christ.

Isaiah & the Coming King (Is. 9.6-7 & Luke 1.31-33)



Bible Study: Read the above passages and list everything you can see that Isaiah prophesies about the coming of the Kingdom in this messianic passage. Then read the words of the angel Gabriel and discuss what he reveals of the Kingdom in the birth of Jesus.

Gleanings from Isaiah:

- Upon Jesus would rest the government (the reigning power of God)
- He will re-establish the rule and Kingdom of David
- It will be ever increasing in nature
- The Shalom (peace) of God would come as His rule extends – this word Shalom means the entire blessing of God into every aspect of human life.

Gabriel's Announcement of the Kingdom to Mary (Luke 1.31-33)

- Your son will be the Son of God
- God will give Him the **Throne of David**
- He will reign forever & His Kingdom will be eternal



Discussion: Discuss the following with a partner:

Have you ever noticed or seen clearly God's Kingdom in the Old Testament?
How will you read the Old Testament differently now?

What is the essence of the Kingdom of God? What does it really mean for us today? Can a person be a Christian, but be missing out on the Kingdom and it's life and power?



Lesson #4: Jesus Introduces the Kingdom



Discussion: With a partner, describe how Jesus manifested God's Kingdom when He came. What did it look like as lived out through the humanity of Jesus?

When Jesus began His ministry, His consuming passion was to bring forth the Kingdom of God. In the four Gospels, it is recorded that He spoke of the Kingdom 108 times.

As we read the story, we are confronted with this fact-Jesus did not just teach about the Kingdom, He demonstrated it. In His humanity, we see lived out perfectly the Kingdom of God. So what were some things He said, and how did He demonstrate God's Kingdom to us?

Repent and Believe the Gospel

Mark 1.14

"The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Good News."



Reflection: These are the first recorded words of Jesus as He begins His ministry. What does He say? What is He telling us about the Kingdom?

- **The time is fulfilled** – the time that God and man have been waiting for has come. Now is the time. You don't have to wait any longer.
- **the Kingdom of God is at hand** – this term, "at hand," means *has drawn near, is here, is currently present*. Jesus wasn't pointing to a someday thing in heaven. His message was clear: the Kingdom is here, it is now, it is available to men.
- **Repent** – the word repent means to change your thinking about something that will result in a total new way of living. This message and this Kingdom was so very radical, that it would take a total revolution in their thinking and a complete 180 degree change of living.
- **Believe the Good News** – His last statement was that the Kingdom coming is GOOD NEWS. It is God's total solution to Man's total need. We must receive from God by believing the message of the Kingdom. He called this message – Good News! Whatever the Kingdom was all about, it would be Good News to those who can hear it, respond to it and receive it.



Follow Me

As Jesus preaches and does the works of the Kingdom, He meets individuals that He invites into relationship with Himself and His Kingdom. Notice what He does NOT say to these people as His initial invitation . . .

- Come and be saved
- Believe a message
- Become a Christian

His initial calling into the Kingdom life is one phrase, **Follow Me!**



Bible Study: Read the following passages and describe what you learn about the nature of this Kingdom life in His encounters with these people as He invites them to follow Him. Matt 4.19-22; Matt 8.18-22; Matt. 9.9; Mark 10.17-22

Following Jesus is the very heart of the Kingdom message. This is the Good News that we are to believe. If you do not understand and live this way, you will never experience His Kingdom on this side of heaven.

Following Jesus means to fully surrender to Him, abandoning the old life, entering an intimate walk with Him, and passionately following Him in life and work. **It is the life of absolute surrender!**

Surrender is the very heart of the Kingdom for only through surrender, do I give up my independence and self rule and come under the reign of Christ! We learned in the first lesson that the Kingdom of God is the reign of God and only as I surrender and abandon to Him do I come under His rule and authority.

What do we learn about surrender and following Jesus from these stories above?

- **Peter and Andrew** had to leave their fishing boat behind. This implied their financial security, their future, their success in life. Peter even left a wife behind at times as He followed.
- **The two religious young men** wanted to enter the Kingdom and be with Christ, but there were issues in them. The first one Jesus spoke to about having NO place to lay his head. This speaks of comfort. In this young man's life, comfort kept him from following Jesus. He would NOT surrender because of comfort. The second young man had relationship issues. He would NOT leave his father to follow Christ. Neither of these entered the Kingdom or followed Christ. They could not surrender.
- **Matthew** walked away from His tax-collecting booth and followed Jesus. Being a Jew, working as a tax collector probably meant that Matthew had betrayed his own people for some reason and was now working for the Romans against the Jews. He was probably an outcast and we know from the Scriptures that he was a good friend of many sinners. Matthew walked away from his rejection, shame, guilt, and sin to follow Jesus.
- **The Rich Young Ruler** sincerely wanted eternal life, but he never entered it. Jesus told him to remove the one barrier to full surrender and following –



money. The young man loved money. The issue was NOT that Jesus wants everyone to sell everything they have, it was that in this young man's life, money was Lord! There could only be one Lord in the Kingdom. The young man could not surrender and he left Jesus with a sad heart.

Surrender and following Jesus is the very heart of the relationship. In these stories, He addresses the issues of . . .

Relationships Money Comfort Work Security Success



Reflection: The doorway into the Kingdom of God is **Follow Me – a life and walk of full surrender! Have YOU surrendered to Christ? Are you living in absolute surrender? Have you left ALL to follow Him?**

Compassion – Agape in Action

The people were used to religious leaders who abused them, ruled over them, loaded them with heavy religious burdens that they could never carry, and cared more about their traditions than people.

Not so with Jesus. When He arrived on the scene, He was full of love and this love always demanded action of Him – **compassion**. **Compassion** is the deep moving of the inner man to reach out and help, love, serve, and give even when it costs you much. Jesus was moved by the needs and lives of people. He was NOT nearly as concerned with how they obeyed the minute aspects of one of the laws, as He was concerned about them. Jesus loved people!



Bible Study: Look at the following stories and describe Jesus' compassion and a genuine Kingdom manifestation. How was He different from other religious leaders you read of? Matt 8.1-4; Matt. 9.13; Luke 13.10-17; Luke 7.11-15; Matt 9. 35-38

As you read the above stories, you see a pattern in Jesus' demonstration of compassion:

- He has eyes to see – really see people and their need
- He has a heart that can be moved to reach out in self-giving love
- He has feet to move and hands to touch and heal

Compassionate, self-giving love is the heart of God flowing through Jesus Christ. It is a major call to the followers of Jesus Christ. (Matt 9.13; Matt 12.7; Col 3.12)

God's Authority in Humanity

A fourth thing Jesus clearly demonstrated to us about God's Kingdom is that in THIS AGE, the Kingdom of God flows through humanity and this flow is a flow of



heavenly authority, life and power. God passionately desires to give authority to men.

- 1) **Humanity** – Jesus was human, very human. People missed Him as Messiah because He seemed much TOO human for this. We find this in His own hometown (Mark 6), with the Religious leaders (Matt. 11.19), it even seems that John the Baptist had his own questions late in life (Matt. 11.2-6).

People do NOT lose their humanity as they come into the Kingdom and begin to manifest it. Humanity was created to demonstrate the Kingdom! We will still have personality flaws, a few sins, and life's problems as we manifest Christ and His Kingdom. Religion has told us to NOT let people close to us in the ministry and to hide our humanity and look hyper-spiritual all the time. This is NOT the Kingdom way and it is NOT Jesus' way. He never hid or was ashamed of His humanity. He enjoyed it thoroughly!

- 2) **Authority** – Jesus teaches us through His life that God longs to give His authority to humans. God's authority is His right and power to rule. He desires to give this to us as He did Jesus.

The Greek word for *authority* is *exousia*, which means *the power to lead, rule or the right to access and use power*.



Bible Study: Read through the following scriptures using this word *exousia* (note: sometimes the Bible translates the word *power* and not *authority*). What can you learn about how Jesus demonstrated Kingdom authority?

Matt 7.29; Matt 8.8-10; Matt 9.1 (vs. 6 & 8); Matt 10.1; Mark 7.19; Luke 9.1; Luke 10.19; Matt 28.18-20

Of Jesus, it was said. . .

- He taught as one having authority
- He healed with authority
- He cast out demons with authority
- He showed authority over the natural elements of the world
- He had authority to forgive sins

Key Statement: *They marveled that God gave such authority to men! **This is the Kingdom of God** – God giving authority to men.*

Key Revelation: *"I, too am a man under authority, with men under me. . .and Jesus marveled. . .I have not found such **great faith** in all Israel."* This centurion realized a powerful principle of Kingdom life by having lived in a powerful Kingdom (Rome), if I come under authority, the King will delegate his authority to me and I will be able to exercise authority.



The God of heaven passionately desires to give authority to men and women today. If we will surrender and come under authority, He will give us His authority – the right to access and use His power.

Faith – The Power to Receive in the Kingdom

One last attribute to mention here that Jesus both demonstrated and taught concerning His Kingdom is the life and power faith. The religion of His day was powerless to change your own life or the lives of others. It was a religion of beliefs, traditions and rules, but NO power or supernatural touch was upon it.

Jesus shattered this as He lived and taught the life of faith. At the onset of His ministry, He laid down this foundational Kingdom law, “**Be it done to you according to your faith.**” (Matt 8.13; Matt 9.29) This law is like not a legal law that if you break it, you will be punished, but rather it is more like a law of nature – like gravity. If we work together with gravity, we live well, if we don’t, we have taken ourselves out of cooperation with the earth.

Through faith, we can live a supernatural life, relate to God consistently, and receive His promises. Without it, we become just like the Pharisees leading an outwardly religious life with no reality or power. Through faith, our life takes on a supernatural nature of hearing God, receiving and being a channel of miracles and being the answer for the needs of others.



Bible Study: What does Jesus mean when He makes the following Kingdom Statements:

- 1) Matt 6.10
 - 2) Matt 6.33
 - 3) Matt 11.11-12
 - 4) Luke 12.32
 - 5) 1 Cor 4.10
-

The Kingdom is to be entered and not just studied

Matt 5.20; 7.21; 18.3-4; 19.16-26; John 3.1-6; Acts 14.22; 2 Peter 1.4-11

Many have only taken one step into the Kingdom of God, the step called salvation. The Kingdom is NOT something to be studied, it is to be entered, lived in and experienced in its fullness now and then in the age to come.



Discussion: With a partner, answer the following: Describe two churches. One living a non-Kingdom expression of Christianity and the other



NEW WINE *God & His Kingdom*

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demonstrating the Kingdom of God as Jesus did. What are the differences?
Which typifies your experience more consistently?



Lesson #5: The Kingdom's Father

One of the most striking truths we come into when we begin to see Jesus' life and message of the Kingdom is that there is a fresh revelation of who God is and who we are. God is revealed to be **the Father** and we are revealed as **His sons**. This was a very different view for God's people then and still is today.



Reflection: How did most people see God in the days of Jesus? How do they see Him today? What are the similarities? Differences?

The God of Judaism

When Jesus came on the scene in Israel, He came to a people who were oppressed in many ways. One of the sources of their oppression was their view of God. The Religious leaders had developed and taught a view of God which brought bondage and life-less religion. Here were some aspects of the view of God they taught:

- God was very distant and difficult to approach
- He was portrayed as a task-master that could not be pleased
- You came to Him through a complex set of rules and traditions
- He was so fearsome if you violated His commands that most people lived under a deep oppression

As a result of this view of God, the people of God developed a wrong perception of themselves also.

- They saw themselves as beggars who only could receive pennies from the Master.
- They saw themselves as slaves who could never please or appease a difficult task-Master.
- They saw themselves as peasants who were the servants of a great King.



Discussion: List as many ways this way of thinking about God and ourselves will influence our life.



The God of the Kingdom – Father!!!

When Jesus began His ministry, He began to paint a very different picture of God – a picture that would liberate people and draw them near to Him instead of drive them away.



Bible Study: Look at the following verses and describe the picture that Jesus paints of God. Is this the way people most see Him today? Is this the way YOU see Him? Matt 5.43-45; Matt 6.1-9; Matt 7.11; Luke 15; James 1.17

Jesus came and began to paint on the canvas of men's hearts a different view of God. It was so different that the religious leaders were often enraged at His teaching about God. Jesus revealed the FATHER. In the Gospels alone, God is spoken of as Father about 200 times. He revealed a Father who was. . .

- Compassionate and kind
- Approachable and accessible
- Reaching out to man with a gentle, inviting smile, not a judgmental frown
- Generous and ready to share His great love and wealth with people

Jesus came screaming the message and demonstrating the message that God is our Father. This has a tremendous implication – we are His children. His sons.

While Jesus lived on the earth, He perfectly demonstrated the Kingdom of God, and one of the things He most clearly demonstrates is the love shared between a Father and His Son. As has been stated throughout this course, the heart of the Kingdom is men surrendering to the reign of God in their lives, but when we see the Father the surrender is of a different nature. Because of this Father/Son relationship, Jesus passionately surrendered, obeyed and served the Father, perfectly living under His authority. You need to ponder these things in order to learn how to live in relationship to God.

“If we preach the kingdom without the Fatherhood of God, the kingdom can seem very severe and harsh.” Alan Vincent

But when we see the kingdom in terms of a loving Son lovingly obeying a loving Father, it makes it a much more wonderful relationship. Jesus did not find it hard to live in the kingdom, it was His absolute joy. It was joy because of the love relationship between the Father and the Son. And so it is with those who truly enter the Kingdom of God.

Genuine Sonship – the Test of a Kingdom Heart

One of the truest tests of a person discovering, entering, and experiencing the Kingdom is Sonship – are they living as sons or slaves. Many may have heard and even quote verses about being sons of God, but when we look at their lives, faith, and hearts, we see nothing but beggar slaves. It is the goal of the religious spirit to always drag us back into a slave's thinking and life.



The Apostle Paul planted a church in Galatia, but others came in with a different view and teaching about God and very quickly the people began to again reduce themselves to slavery toward God. Paul finally shouted through his letter, **“therefore, you are no longer slaves, but sons. . .”**

John lived longer with the Lord and perhaps experienced more of the Kingdom than any man. All of his writings took place from 90-100 AD after he had walked with God for 60-70 years. What can we learn from His writings? He knew the Father. In his Gospel alone, he refers to God as the Father over 100 times and when you read his epistles you discover he knew God deeply as Father and he had laid hold of his sonship in the Kingdom. In 1 John 3.1, it is as if his spirit is exploding with this truth when he writes, **“Behold what love the Father has poured out upon us that we should be called the children of God; and that is what we are!”**



Application: How does this Father/son relationship change life in the Kingdom? How does it change the thought of absolute surrender? How will it change your life? What would it be like to see that you must absolutely surrender to God’s reign and rule in your life without this Father/son relationship?

Have you discovered and entered this Kingdom relationship? Have you?

Sons of the Kingdom

When we come into true sonship, we are not just sons of God, but Jesus also calls us *sons of the Kingdom* (Matt 13.38). In the New Testament days, when this type of a title is given to someone, it is a description of their most outstanding characteristic such as Barnabas, son of encouragement (Acts 4.36) or Judas, son of perdition (John 17.12). When we understand Jesus’ use of this term, we come to the conclusion that the Kingdom of God becomes our consuming passion, an ultimate obsession. Only the Father and the Son Themselves are more in our hearts and minds than the Kingdom.



Lesson #6: Acts – The Church & the Kingdom

As we leave the Gospels, we enter the story of the church. Most people look at Acts in this way and they are accurate, but there is a greater story that we must understand if we are to have a full life in Christ now. Acts is the story of the Kingdom of God in operation and demonstration in the lives of normal people living out Christ in the Church.

Jesus spoke many times about the Kingdom but only a few times about the Church. His consuming passion was the Kingdom. Here are some truths about the Church in regard to the Kingdom of God. . .

- 1) **The Church is NOT the Kingdom.** The Church is IN the Kingdom if it operates in cooperation with Kingdom principles and laws. Unfortunately, the Church can choose not to receive the Kingdom in faith. This leaves the church with a pharisaical existence. Religious activity with no power.
- 2) **The Kingdom is greater than the Church but the Church is part of the Kingdom.** Kingdom citizens are members of the Church, but the Kingdom of God is defined by the rule and reign of the King (Jesus), not by its citizens and not by any geographical boundaries. In other words, everyone and everything that comes under the rule and reign of Christ is a part of the Kingdom of God.
- 3) **The Church is called to manifest and advance the Kingdom.** The church is the bride of the King. When the church receives the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised, things begin to happen. The Kingdom of God is preached, and then signs and wonders follow.



Bible Study ***Have the students read:*** Acts 1:3 & Acts 28:23, 31

What can you learn about the Book of Acts from these verses?

The book of Acts is the story of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in full operation and demonstration in His followers. He was in the midst of them demonstrating the divine rule and blessing of God among men. The book of Acts begins with Jesus giving last minute instructions about His Kingdom and it ends with Paul teaching the same things. God is trying to tell us a great truth-***this book is the revelation of what the Kingdom looks like in this age!***

Acts is the only book in the New Testament written specifically as a history. It takes up the narrative where Luke's Gospel ends, and gives the history of God's Kingdom life in the early church. Luke had ample time and access to the actual people involved in the life of Christ, and the events of the early church in Jerusalem. Luke tells nothing of Jerusalem's fall in AD 70 or of Nero's persecution of the believers which began in AD 64. He also concludes Acts near



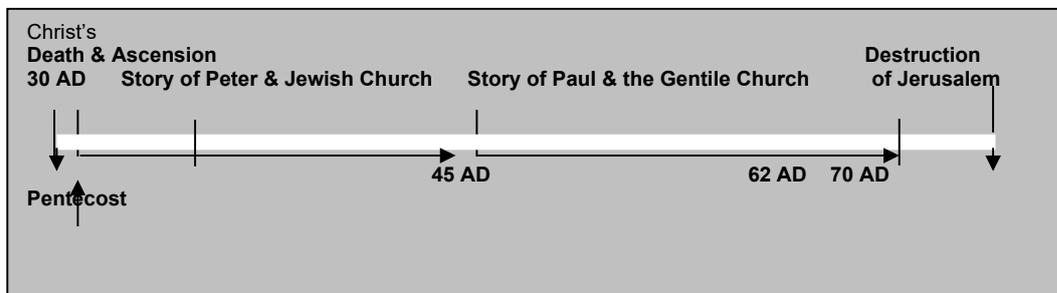
the end of Paul's imprisonment in Rome around AD 62; therefore, we conclude that it was around this time that Acts was penned.

The Story of Acts

Acts is the story of two men, their ministries, and the very different churches that arose under their leadership. It shows how this Kingdom might look in various cultures with different values and cultural norms.

Peter – Chapter 1-12 is the story of the Jewish church and Peter's Apostolic leadership and ministry in the Jewish context.

Paul – Chapter 13-28 is the story of the Gentile church and Paul's Apostolic leadership and ministry in a Gentile world.



What about the other 12 Apostles? How did they end?

In the AD 40s, they divided up the world systematically and dispersed themselves to preach the Gospel and establish the Kingdom. All were martyred but John who was the last Apostle of the 12 to die.

Matthew – Martyred in Ethiopia-AD 54

Peter – Martyred in Rome by Nero crucified upside down

Andrew – in Asia He was Crucified. Oh I love the Cross!

John – Boiled in oil but did not harm him, was banished to Patmos and finally returned to Ephesus in AD 95. Died at around 100

Paul – spent two years in prison, released and he then traveled and preached in Greece, Rome, France, and Spain. Returned to Rome, captured by Nero and beheaded around AD 67-72.



Reflection: When you think of the Kingdom of God as revealed in the book of Acts, what traits come to your mind?

What made their lives different from yours and mine?



Demonstrations of the Kingdom of God in Acts

A careful study of Acts reveals many Kingdom characteristics of what God's good rule should be like in the lives and communities of men.

1. A People and Church of Power Demonstration

Matt 12:28 tells us that works of power are signs that the Kingdom of God has come among or upon us. Signs and wonders are the cutting edge of the Kingdom of God. There are 42 demonstrations of supernatural power in recorded in Acts. How did the power of Christ demonstrate:

- Powerful preaching, conviction, and conversion
- Healing & Deliverance
- Raising the Dead
- Supernatural Transportation
- Divine Protection

Jesus Promises that power will be a defining mark of His followers in the preaching of the Kingdom of God. Mark 16:15-18 ***"And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. . . 17 "And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly {poison,} it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."***

2. Supernatural Communication

God still speaks clearly today. In fact, the promise of Joel 2 and Acts 2 is that when the Holy Spirit comes upon the people, the primary trait will be that they will be very prophetic-hearing what God is saying and following Him. Jesus promised that His people would be able to follow Him because they would hear and know His voice clearly. John 10:3-4

The Lord speaks 27 times in Acts in 28 chapters. How does He speak:

- The voice of the Holy Spirit = 7 times
- Angelic visitation – 6 times
- A vision or trance – 6 times
- Prophecy – 5 times
- Tongues – 3 times

Many times it was in a combination of these, but the underlying fact was that God led, directed, and spoke to His people.

IS THIS THE REALITY OF OUR EXPERIENCE? IT IS THE REALITY OF LIFE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

3. A Movement Led by Apostles and Prophets

Today, pastors lead all of our churches and movements. Pastors are shepherds and will only produce sheep! At the movement level, we usually have bureaucracy or organizational leaders instead of Apostles and Prophets.



In Acts, Elder led churches and Apostles and Prophets were the leader builders beside the Local Elders

The Bible Says: Eph 2:20, 4.11-12 ***“having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner {stone} . . . 4.11 And He gave some {as} apostles, and some {as} prophets, and some {as} evangelists, and some {as} pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;***

Apostles = People given great authority by Christ to establish and build the church.

There are many beside the twelve in the NT listed and named

- Powerful teachers & often moved in miracles
- Fathers to local elders and fathers of movements
- Builders of local churches

Engaged in: Pioneer evangelism, Church planting, Teaching and laying doctrinal foundations in the local churches, Establishing and appointing local elders, writing instructions, Correcting problems, sending other ministers in to lead or build.

Prophets = Moved in teams under the Apostles lead. Often revealed the mind of the Lord about what was currently happening (forthtelling) or what was coming (Foretelling). Strategy for ministry often occurred after prophetic words.

Key: These two offices were not lone rangers. They were totally based in local churches and sent out into wider ministry from their local expressions. They always worked in teams together with the local Elders.

4. A Radical, Vibrant Church Life

Great Pictures of this life in Acts 2.44-47, Acts 4.32-37 & Antioch

- High Community, sharing of life, laughter, love
- Share the money and possessions according to need (4.32-)
- Culturally diverse (13)
- A sending & giving church (4.32-37 & 11.27-30)

5. Increase and Addition – Constant Kingdom Expansion

Everything alive grows and multiplies or it is either not alive or it is dying. The Kingdom grows and increases.

It speaks of ***increase, multiplication, addition, or numbers*** 22 x's

Bible Study: Acts 2.47, 4.4, 5.14, 6.1, 6.7, 11.21

The Kingdom of God should never be static, it must be ever growing, expanding, and reaching out. It is the nature of Christ's life, His Kingdom, and His rule. Numbers ARE important to God! They are people! The very essence of life in the early church was increase. They were full of Christ and constantly thinking



about increase, more, people, souls. It was at the core of the church and what the church did.

Any church that does not have this operating within them has lost their Kingdom dynamic. There may be seasons when we don't grow as much outwardly or as fast, but those should only be seasons. (See Gen. 1.28; Deut. 7.13)

6. Centrality of the Word

The Kingdom of God is built upon the Word. These early followers were devoted to growing in the Word (Acts 2.42, 13.1, 17.11)

- Speaking the Word in Acts 35 x's
- Teaching 15 x's,
- Preaching – 11 x's,
- Speaking – 25 x's

In 1 John 2.14 it says that the Young Men in the Kingdom of God will have the Word of God abiding in them. They will be full of it and it will pour out of their lives.



Application: What about you? Does this describe your life?
What are the differences from your church and personal life and theirs?
Does your desire for the Kingdom of God exceed your level of comfort?

What do you personally need to do to experience God and His Kingdom like these early believers?

How would you build a ministry upon Kingdom Life?



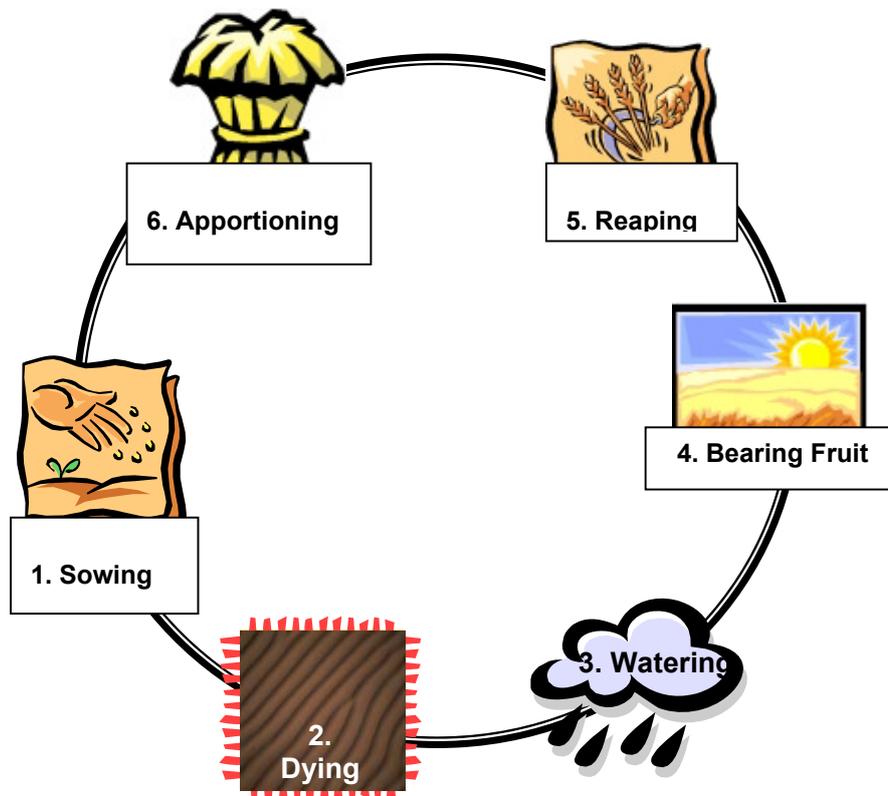
Lesson #7: The Laws of the Kingdom

If you were to visit a country, you would not need to know very much about the laws or customs of the land. You would probably have a guide on your visit. It would be a very different story if you were to move there and take up residence. You would have to learn, adjust to, and adopt the ways, laws, and cultural norms of that new country to fully function.

It is the same in the Kingdom of God. Some of the teaching of Jesus described the Kingdom while other teaching helped us understand the effects of His rule and blessing on people, cities, and nations. But a vast amount of Jesus' word teaches us how to enter in and live well as citizens in His heavenly realm. As we learn to live in the Kingdom, there is a cycle of life that Jesus teaches. If we allow this cycle to fully operate in our lives and in the life of the church, we will see the kingdom advanced through our lives. Many Christians treat these laws as optional and fail to realize how crucial this cycle is.

#1 The Law of Process

Jesus taught over and over that the Kingdom of God was like a seed that must be planted, cultivated, watered, etc and then over time, it would grow and bring forth its full life, fruit and power. It is NOT an event, it is a process!





Sowing and Reaping - Galatians 6:6; 2 Corinthians 9:6

This is perhaps the most fundamental law of the kingdom. “You reap what you sow” is a well-known axiom, but it is not a philosophical opinion. It is as ingrained in the order of the universe as is physics. We cannot say that *sometimes* we reap what we sow, or even that one *should* reap what is sown. These statements are wholly naïve. There is only one circumstance in which we may avoid reaping what has been sown. That circumstance is the reaping of death for our sins. Jesus has taken the consequence of our sin upon himself.

A principle that is closely connected is the law of increase. What is reaped will be a greater portion than what was sown. (Luke 6:37, 38) The KOG begins small and grows until it completely dominates.

- Matt. 13:31-32 – the mustard seed
- Matt 13:33 – the leaven
- Mark 4:26-29-the growing seed

Dying - John 12:24,25

In order for kingdom purposes to manifest, there must be a death to self, to the things of this world (things in opposition to the kingdom), even to good things that may be hindering kingdom purposes. Sometimes this means the death of a dream for your life or the death of relationships that have been important to you. Three principles that allow the law of dying to accomplish its work are:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Surrender | Luke 9:23-25, Philippians 3:7-11 |
| 2. Humility | Luke 9:48, Matt. 19:30, James 4:10 |
| 3. Sacrificial Love | John 15:13, Philippians 2:1-8 |

Two specific “heart issues” that Jesus applies the death principle to are personal ambition and fairness. (Matt. 20:1-16; Matt 20:20-28)

Watering

Romans 8:25
Psalms 37:9

I Corinthians 3:6
Isaiah 40:31

Psalms 42
Isaiah 51:16

This may be the most subtle and undeveloped teaching of the kingdom, yet it is absolutely essential to understanding how the kingdom advances in the world and how it advances in our lives. Once a seed has been planted (assuming that the seed is planted in good soil) there are two things that are non-negotiable factors in that seed’s transformation from a seed to a plant: 1) Proper nourishment and 2) Time. For us, this stage of the kingdom process is usually a confounding experience of darkness (being in the ground), being flooded with “nurturing” circumstances that strip away the old “seed” to make room for the new “plant” to emerge, and the ever popular period of waiting.



Growth and Fruit Bearing - I Corinthians 3:6; Galatians 5:22-23

The law of bearing fruit is completely dependent upon the action, grace and favor of God. We may sow seed, we may even participate in the watering of the seed, but we have no direct behavioral participation in the bearing of fruit. It either grows or it doesn't. It is 10 fold or 100 fold, etc. or it isn't. This work is completely out of our grasp and any attempt on our part to participate only subverts God's purposes and sets our own growth back. Our action is faith that the kingdom process will not fail. If we have sown, then a harvest will result.

#2 The Law of Faith

Luke 17:6 Acts 3:16 Acts 27:25 Romans 1:17 Romans 3:27

Jesus at the very onset of His ministry taught over and over, "**Be it done in your life as you believe.**"

You won't find this law in the illustrated model of the kingdom process because it doesn't fit *inside* the process. Faith is the catalyst and the locomotion of the kingdom of God. This faith is the tenacious behavior that illuminates a deep trust that the kingdom is and will continue to advance with marked signs of its presence regardless of the kingdom's hidden condition. Circumstances, when seeming to be in contradiction with God's word, are regarded as unreliable indicators. Faith demands that circumstances bow to the truth of the kingdom even if it cannot be presently seen in the natural.

Lack of faith, or unbelief subverts the kingdom process. It renders the kingdom as innocuous and impotent. The kingdom literally rises or falls on the faith of believers.

#3 The Law of Warfare – Forcefully Advancing the Kingdom

Jesus taught that if we are going to live with Him in the Kingdom of God, we must live lives of warfare, committing our lives to defeating darkness and expanding His reign. We have had a peaceful religion of weakness far too long!



Bible Study: Read the following verses and describe what they teach you about warfare and the Kingdom.

- 1) Matt 11.11-12 2) Luke 11.21-23 3) Luke 12.49-53 4) 1 Tim 1.6-12
5) 2 Tim 2.3-4 6) 1 John 3.5, 8 7) Rev 12.10-12

One of the great aspects of David's kingdom as a prophetic picture of the Kingdom of God is that he forcefully advanced the outer boundaries of his kingdom through warfare. David was both a lover of God and a mighty Kingdom warrior. In fact, the one time in his life when he decided he would NOT go out to expand the kingdom, he was seduced by his own flesh, had an affair with Bathsheba, one of his warrior's wives, and then had his friend killed. (2 Sam 11.1-5) Could it be that the church has been seduced so much by the world, because we have lost this aspect of the Kingdom of God?



Jesus calls us to a to live a very odd life: in one way, we are to be the most tenderhearted people of love and in another way to be violent and aggressive against the powers of darkness to gather and set men free.

He says . . .

- ***Mt 11:11 –Mt 11:12 “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.***
- ***Lk 11:21 –Lk 11:23 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.***
- ***Mt 28:18 –Mt 28:20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.***

The final record of these first Kingdom men’s lives was. . . ***Mk 16:20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.***

We must become a mighty warring people knowing how to engage in spiritual warfare, how to cast out demons, heal the sick and preach the good news of the Kingdom of God. We must become those who are constantly moving into new territories, driving out the ruling powers of darkness and establishing new churches for the sake of His kingdom.

We begin to forcefully advance His Kingdom because we become like Him – ***we begin to love as He loves and hate what He hates.***

- *We begin to hate what He hates and forcefully pray against all forms of darkness in people’s lives. - sin, sickness, divorce, children being abused, broken lives, etc.*
- *We begin to love what He loves – people. We begin to live in His sacrificial, self-giving love carrying the light and life of God to people*



Discussion: ***Describe how you and your church has been forcefully advancing the Kingdom. What are you doing in prayer and spiritual warfare? What are you doing with people themselves?***



Lesson 8: The Gospel of the Kingdom

As Jesus came on the scene, He preached a central message to all . . .

“Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’” Mark 1:15



Discussion: What is the word ‘gospel’ mean? What made it good news? Are you and is your church preaching the good news about the Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom Has Arrived

Jesus and His followers over and over preached the gospel of the Kingdom. The word Gospel simply means **good news**. What made it such good news? Why was His message so very radical for His day and ours?

Jesus message was **GOOD NEWS** then, and it is just as good a news to a broken world today, but it is critical that we understand the good news that He preached and demonstrated to the world.

The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand. . . Satan had controlled earth for thousand of years and had established a despotic tyranny over men’s lives. He had brought them into bondage to sin, sickness, disease, demonic torment, depression, poverty, and above all, to enmity with God thereby ensuring an eternal damnation for man.

The best man had offered was dead, lifeless religion that became just as great a curse to men because it was dependent upon man’s own wicked heart to change, live for God and love God. It was impossible and people were beaten down and depressed.

Jesus said, “the time has finally arrived, another Kingdom has come. It is here, it is at hand. You can now reach out and touch it, receive it, live in it and experience something totally new. This Kingdom is God’s own Kingdom and it is a taste of heaven today.” That is why He called it both the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of heaven.

But what made this new Kingdom of God so much better than the old one that they had lived under for so many years?



David Announces the Good News of the Kingdom

David was truly a Kingdom man long before Jesus came. The Bible teaches as we have already discovered that his 33 year reign was a prophetic picture of the reign – Kingdom – of Christ. Many of his Psalms were written in the tabernacle of David in the very presence of God. David had a mighty revelation of the gospel, the good news about the Kingdom. . .

- **Ps 103:2 –Ps 103:5 Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.**

David while in the presence of God sees the glorious goodness, blessings and benefits God has for His people. He tells us the good news of the coming of Christ, but what was he really seeing?

- **Ps 103:19 The Lord has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.**

He was seeing the Kingdom of God! He was seeing into the future when Christ would come, smash the rule of the devil and begin to bless His those who would willingly and lovingly submit to His rule.

It is Good News Because. . .

#1 It is a Kingdom founded upon love, forgiveness, mercy and great grace, and all men who enter the Kingdom can experience this for themselves. Satan's rule over men's lives is characterized by selfishness, anger, hate, and separation from God and one another.

#2 There is complete forgiveness from sin and reconciliation with God.

- There is complete forgiveness for our sins in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1.7)
- God is no longer counting men's sins against them in Christ (2 Cor. 5.19)
- We can have all enmity removed between us and God and be given His own righteousness as our own. (Col 1.20)

#3 We are no longer slaves or beggars, we have been adopted as His very own sons and can live in the full rights of sonship. (Gal. 4.4-7)

- Under the old Kingdom, God was seen as one who could never be pleased or appeased.
- In the Kingdom of God, He is revealed as a Father who longs to love and bless His children.
- We are therefore, children of this great Kingly Father (1 John 3.1)



#4 The Power of sin, selfishness, and bondage to this world has been broken and we can live in glorious freedom as sons of God serving our Father and His will.

- Sin and selfishness are some of the most miserable curses of living under Satan's rule
- In the Kingdom of God, Jesus Christ has fully dealt with these enemies of God and man and we can know glorious freedom.
- **Scripture:** John 8.36; Rom 6.14; 2 Cor. 5.15

#5 The Power of sickness and disease has been destroyed by Christ Jesus.

- We no longer have to live under the torment of sickness and disease. Jesus Christ is the healer of men's bodies.
- There is divine health for the people of God Deut. 7.15; 1 Peter 2.24; James 5.14-15
- There is a miraculous Jesus who want to heal the sicknesses of a lost world too. Mark 16.15-18

#6 The Curse of Poverty and Lack has been destroyed at the Cross.

- Poverty is a curse that began at the fall of man just like sin and sickness Gen 3.17-19
- Jesus bore our curse of poverty in life and death so that we might have blessing and prosperity 2 Cor 8.9
- All through the Old Testament, God also promised to bless His people with a good supply of things for the daily lives Deut 7.13-14
- ***This prosperity must be for a purpose though.*** It is NOT just to be used upon ourselves. We must have a Kingdom heart and lifestyle characterized with loving God first and loving others through which the blessing in our lives will flow out in generosity to others.

#7 This Kingdom is not just in this life alone, it offers eternal life and blessing with God in the Age to Come.

As believers in Jesus Christ, we have a glorious assurance that this Kingdom is an eternal Kingdom and when this life is over, we have our greatest inheritance with our Father and the Son in the heavens for eternity! John 14.2-3

Our Response to the Good News of the Kingdom

In our opening Scripture, Jesus gave us a clear response to make to this fantastic Kingdom that had come. He said. . .

We must repent. . .to repent means to change our minds about, to do an about face and go a completely different direction.

And Believe the Good News. . .the second response we must make is to believe the Good news.



The Bottom Line –

We must believe the Jesus Christ is truly good as He has said, and that His Kingdom really has come. We must believe that the Cross really has accomplished what He said it did, and we must believe so strongly that we are willing to repent, give up our independent, self-serving life and come completely under His Lordship. Only under His complete control is their freedom and blessing.



Application: Have you understood the Good News of the Kingdom of God? Have you genuinely believed and repented? Have you given up your independence and come under the Lordship of Jesus Christ? Have you believed and received all of these glorious promises of the Kingdom? Why not do so now!

Do you preach the Good News of the Kingdom to others who need Jesus? Why not thoroughly apply yourself to this Good News and learn to share with others bringing them into the saving grace of Jesus?



Lesson #9: The Culture of the Kingdom

In the Sermon on the Mount, **Matt 5-7 & Luke 6.20-49**, Jesus outlines the very nature of the Kingdom of God and what the heart attitudes, motivations, lifestyles, holiness, and love of the sons of the Kingdom will be like.

Blessed = to be happy, to be envied, one upon whom God has placed His ability for abundance, success, and satisfaction.



Discussion: Every nation and Kingdom has its own culture. A culture is first seen on how people live outwardly, but the heart of the culture is the underlying values and beliefs that drive people's lives. How do you know when God's Kingdom is beginning to find its way into your heart and His own eternal life begins to live in You? What are the marks? Have you begun to live out the culture of the Kingdom of God?

a. Poor In Spirit- To be poor is to have nothing, to be broke, bankrupt. To be poor in spirit is to come to the understanding that you have nothing in yourself, even in your most valiant efforts. It is the attitude of the man who has come to the end of himself and found that he has nothing. This leads us to utter dependence and utter reliance upon the Lord.

The result? All of the KOG is now at this man's fingertips to inherit. He has become one in whom the kingdom can truly come.

As you become poor in spirit, people either give up and quit because of the deep emptiness and despair they see in themselves, but others gone on beyond this point into truly finding the riches of Christ and His Kingdom.

b. Those who mourn – This does not speak of a sad person, but rather of a broken hearted person. The truth of this heart attitude is describing a person who has so identified with the Lord that he/she has become broken hearted and moved by what moves God. This speaks of two areas. . .

Moved with hatred and the disdaining of sin, sickness and all works of darkness and a deep desire to see it eradicated to the glory of God and good of people.

Moved with compassion to see people saved, healed and set free.

This is the mourning Jesus describes here. This is the beginning of true spiritual ministry, receiving of the love and hate of God. It puts an end to self-fulfillment, selfish ambition, and self-love.



And to these people, **the promise is** . . . comfort, God's own comfort. When you join the Lord Jesus in His great burden for the world, in some indescribable way, He releases His comfort into your heart.

c. The Meek – Meekness is not weakness, it is strength brought willingly under the control of another to bring about good. This is *blessed is the man who has seen my great authority and brought his life completely under Me*. Some of the primary signs of this is obedience to Christ, humility, and gentleness with others. It is a very opposite spirit of the world.

Example of a great stallion being broken, Quote from Hidalgo about his horse

The reward . . . you shall inherit the earth. Wow! The world tells us to get ahead in life we must fight, scratch, look out for self, run over people, and be selfish. Jesus says to win the world you must submit, give up your rights, live and serve in humility, put Him and others ahead of yourself. Moses is the supreme example of a man who *was the meekest man on the earth* but was filled with authority and power from heaven.

d. The Hungry – A deep, passionate desire for Christ and His Kingdom is the next heart attitude of the KOG. There are so many things that we are hungry for, but the real question is how hungry are we for God? How desperate are we for His kingdom to come upon the earth?

Our hunger will determine our life pursuit. Most are not hungry enough to change and to seek and go after Him fully. Our hunger level must exceed our comfort level or nothing will happen. What you are hungry for is what you pursue. Most believers are hungry for a good, safe Christian life with just enough of God and His kingdom's work to make them happy.

The promise . . . you shall be satisfied. There is a deep inward satisfaction that comes with finding Him, His love, the goodness of His house, and your place in His service. Nothing else can satisfy like Him. Ps. 90.14, 17.15

e. The Merciful – This is one of the most neglected heart traits in Kingdom living today. Mercy is the very nature of the kingdom. Our lives entered the Kingdom through forgiveness. It is His mercy through forgiveness that daily maintains my fellowship with Him. I must have His mercy everyday. And yet, we don't live in mercy. We judge, we criticize, we form opinions about people in our hearts. We are like Olympic judges passing out ratings on people's lives and performances saying who are the good & the bad, who are the winners and losers.

The reward . . . we will be shown mercy. So many sons and daughters have cut themselves off from the mercy of God because of their attitudes. We must deal with the attitudes of criticism, judgmentalism, and unforgiveness to live well in this kingdom or we will forfeit our lives under the mercy of God. This may well be one of the most neglected attitudes of the kingdom heart and life. Mercy or judgment becomes the funnel everything passes in and out of our lives through.



f. The Pure in heart – The attitude of One Thing living – Jesus is All! I exist for one purpose – to know Him and make Him known. Pure orange juice has only one thing in it, orange juice. A pure heart has only one thing in it – Jesus. In this attitude, Jesus says that the happy man is the one who all the other options have fallen away and he has settled only upon Jesus. A man with true simplicity of heart called simple and pure devotion to Him (2 Cor 11.3)

Mary of Bethany in the Gospels is a great example of the ONE THING LIFE.

The Promise . . . they shall see God! Wow! This is the greatest reward of all. We shall know Him, see Him, have continually deeper more intimate revelation of Him in our lives and ministry. We shall also see what He's doing and be able to join Him in that rather than always flailing around looking for His will and most of the time just doing our own good works in the ministry. We shall see God!

g. The Peacemakers – those who seek to bring His peace into every situation and circumstance of life. Those who seek to bring the peace of being under His rule and His reign into others. This does not mean that everything around you is always peaceful. Sometimes there is a peace that comes only on the other side of war, on the other side of confrontation, on the other side of repentance, on the other side of hardship. True peace is only found in those who have fully yielded to His will and way.

This could also mean the shalom peace of God – that blessing, harmony, prosperity, total life blessing and success that only God can bring to a man. How blessed is that man who seeks to bring this into men's lives.

The reward . . .they shall be called the sons of God. We will truly be seen by the world and heaven as sons of God for we are living upon the earth like God is in heaven. . .trying to bring His great shalom peace into men's hearts and lives.

h. The Persecuted – This is the final attribute listed by Jesus in these great heart attitudes of the Kingdom. This describes the men and women who . . .

- Love Him more than man's opinion
- Have chosen to live differently and go against the stream of life
- Have become warriors with Him against wickedness and for life
- Love not their lives unto death
- Are making a significant difference in life

The reward . . .It began with the inheritance of possessing the kingdom and it ends there also. These will truly move into and enjoy deeply the blessing of kingdom experience and life.



Lesson #10: *The Kingdom and the World*

One of the great problems in Christianity has been a Church viewpoint instead of a Kingdom viewpoint. They are very, very different.



Reflection: Describe as many differences as you can of a Kingdom mindset and a church only mindset.

Church Mindset

Kingdom Mindset

God's goal was never to reign in the Church only; His goal was to reign in the world. In Revelation 11.15 we hear a mighty angel proclaim. . .

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign.”

This has always been the will and desire of God. Even the devil knew it for he took Jesus up on a very high mountain and showed Him all of the kingdoms of the world and their glory in a moment of time. Then he said, “All of this has been handed over to me and I give it to whomever I wish. . .” Notice that Jesus did NOT debate him about this. From this passage we conclude:

- Jesus Christ came to make ALL of the kingdoms of the world God's!
- Satan has had almost unlimited control of these since Adam
- Satan knew that Jesus wanted to reign over all of these kingdoms

Jesus taught His men to pray, ***“Thy reign come and Thy will be done one earth as it is in heaven.”*** He did NOT say in the church, He said on earth, in every area, every kingdom. We must change our minds about the kingdom and the world. Jesus is a passionate aggressive King who desires to reign over **every kingdom** in this world, not just the Church.

Salt and Light

In the book of Matthew (5.13-16), Jesus teaches two principles of the Kingdom moving out of the religious environment (the Church) into the world. He teaches the principles of Salt and Light. These two principles teach that we must NOT stay contained in the Church, but be spilled out into the world in varying degrees.



Salt

Jesus principle of salt speaks of sons of the Kingdom bringing His flavor and healing virtue into all of their relationships and environment. Salt does not completely change its environment, but it does provide . . .

- A definite change of the flavor
- A preserving of the food beyond its normal lifespan
- A healing to wounds

When a person becomes salt to his world, he carries Christ's light, life and power into the situation around him and influences people on a relational person to person basis. It will affect his family, his co-workers, and everything around him bringing a change of taste to the situations, a healing virtue, and a preserving of people's lives. At the salt level, the man does NOT totally change or bring forth the Kingdom to everything though.

Light

Light is very different than salt. Salt has an effect on a much smaller scale than light. When light is turned on, it drives out much if not all darkness. This speaks of the kingdom coming on a much larger scale. This would speak of people in situations bringing their . . .

- Entire family under the reign and blessing of Jesus
- A business being given over to the Lord for His purposes and glory
- Government officials bringing all of their authority to glorify Christ and serve men
- A media or publishing company coming under the reign of Christ

When men and women become light, they begin to have powerful and major influence in the world and Christ and His Kingdom come to have first place in everything pertaining to that person.

The Kingdoms of this World

Sociologists have determined that there are seven fundamental kingdoms that rule the affairs of men. Each of them exerts power over people's thinking, values, culture, and lifestyle. Until Jesus Christ rules in these, the Church really has very little power to make a major difference in the world itself. We can see people saved, but the world is not changing.

The Kingdom of Religion

This is the single area we have focused in on – religion and the church. It is very true that this IS one of the great kingdoms that rule in the hearts of men, but it is only one!

The Kingdom of Politics

For years, people have stayed out of politics and yet God desires to reign in the political arena. Many say it does NOT matter what happens in this realm, but that is a great deception of the Enemy.

In The Babylonian Captivity of Israel, God and His people prayed and worked hard toward influencing a king (a politician) who would favor God's people and



the Kingdom. Cyrus was raised up by the Lord who worked with God's people for the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple. When he died, an evil politician took his place and for about 15 years, he forced the rebuilding of the Temple to cease and created a difficult environment for the people of God. The people prayed and worked in this political arena and God raised up another king much more generous and favorable to them.

We must see the Kingdom of Politics become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

The Kingdom of Education

All through history, it has been very clear that whoever controlled the educational world, controlled the thinking of the children. In many nations we know that there has been definite attempts to take control of these educational institutions by the powers and workers of darkness. Here are some things that have taken place in America:

- In the mid 1900s, a group led by John Dewey brought secular humanism as a basis for public education and pushed that the Christian basis for schools be secularized.
- In the 1960s-70s, prayer and the reading of the Scriptures were removed from schools.
- Text books were altered to take God's place in American history out
- Many liberal professors were introduced to the University system bringing liberal theology and philosophy.

The Kingdom of Business and Industry

This area of life determines the work and production life of people. It also controls much of the generation and distribution of wealth as it is created. For many years, the powers of darkness have controlled this arena and the church has had to little finances.

The Muslims certainly know about the power of this area. They are funding the radical expansion of Islam with oil industry money throughout the world. When will we wake up and take up our authority in this realm?

The Kingdom of Finance

The financial kingdom controls the flow and distribution of money. It is a system built upon corruption and greed and has been under the powers of darkness for many years. The banking system and other monetary institutions favor the rich and the powerful and the common man is often a pawn in their hands. Money has to flow into the hands of God's people for the creation of new businesses to generate Kingdom finances. Christ must come to have first place in the Kingdom of Finance.

The Kingdom of Arts and Entertainment

When Alexander the Great conquered peoples, he knew that one of the ways to their hearts was through entertainment. There is something in people that loves to laugh, cry, and cheer for another. He would establish a theatre, amphitheatre or coliseum in most larger cities. He knew that you could rule the human heart if you could rule this area of their lives. The world system has controlled this area



for centuries. Theatre, music, sport, etc. has been controlled by greed, sex, and violence for too long. The Kingdom must come!

The Kingdom of Media and Communications

This is one of the most powerful kingdoms on the earth. It is absolutely controlled by the secular, godless powers. The problem is, people believe (even God's people) what they see and read and hear through the media. Television, radio, newspapers, and magazines fill our world with godless philosophy and even God's own children are under its control. He who controls the printed page and the airwaves, controls the minds of the people. We must have Kingdom men and women invade this area to bring righteousness and justice again. Thy Kingdom Come!



Discussion: What would it look like when Christ's Kingdom comes into these other areas of life? How will His reign come there? Will He or His people forcefully impose it?

Examples from the World Today

- 1) Nigeria – there is a growing church in Nigeria that has had a clear revelation of the Kingdom of God coming into the kingdoms of this world. The church has grown to almost 1 million but it has leaders in almost every sector of society. The legal counsel to the government, medical, telecommunications, etc. They have saved over \$250 million in tithes and offerings in order to build a complete Christian University to train doctors, lawyers, politicians, media people, etc. so that the Kingdom of God can fully come to Nigeria.
- 2) S. Korea – in the 1950s a man named Yongi Cho began a church in Seoul, Korea. Over the years, the Kingdom of God has begun to come. The church is over 750,000 and has planted many more churches. But beyond that, the followers of Jesus have much influence in business, education, politics, finance, etc. Pastor Cho himself is one of the most influential men in the nation.

God's Total Answer to Man's Total Need

The Kingdom of God is the only answer to man's needs and to the needs of the world. We live in a time when there seems to be no answers and the world is looking for answers that NO ONE IS GIVING. We are looking to our governments, to business, to world leaders, to the United Nations but they are bankrupt; they have no answers.

Look at the following examples:

- 1) **World Hunger and Poverty** – The world is in the most desperate times it has ever seen as millions, if not billions are crying out for the basic



- necessities of life. Food, clothing, shelter. The world is trying to respond, but they have no answer. There is plenty of money to meet the daily needs of the world but it is held in greed and corruption. There is only one answer – THE KINGDOM OF GOD. If God begins to reign in men's hearts, they will release the necessary provision for those who have need. We see this clearly in Acts 2 & 4. When the Kingdom comes men give and share!
- 2) **Wars and rumors of war** – In many places of the world today, governments and the United Nations are being called upon to solve major conflicts that are leading to war. Nation against nation and faction against faction within countries are ripping our world apart. We have been able to end the outer conflict in some areas, but the underlying tensions are still there. Remove the UN troops and the conflict will surface again. Governments cannot solve these problems, they are only getting worse. The solution – THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Only Christ can bring peace to men and unity in the midst of diversity. When Christ comes to hearts and begins to reign and rule, love becomes the deciding factor. Love wins.
 - 3) **Totalitarian Dictatorships** – There are so many peoples ruled over by harsh totalitarian regimes today. The United Nations is powerless to solve this travesty. Diplomacy, sanctions, and threats of invasion have done nothing. Only the Kingdom of God can change the human heart and cause men to rule with love and be ruled over with love.
 - 4) **Domestic Violence** – As we move throughout investigating the home-life in ever culture, we discover that domestic violence and neglect are ripping lives apart. Governments are passing laws and trying to place children in better situations, but the devastation goes on. Man's laws cannot solve the problems of men's hearts. There is only one solution – THE KINGDOM OF GOD!
 - 5) **Depression & Suicide** – One last example is the deep inward darkness invading people's hearts called depression which often leads to suicide. This is a malady that is on the rise today in every nation of the earth. The hopelessness and despair is growing. Our suicide prevention plans and psychiatrists best efforts are helping little. There is only one solution to man's inward problems – God's reign and blessing in the human heart – THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

The Kingdom of God is God's Total Answer to the World's Total Need!



Application: In what areas are you called to bring Christ's Kingdom rule and blessing to? Are you being salt? Are you moving into the power of light? What would it look like if Christ genuinely came to have first place in these areas? How would it change the world?

Imagine a world in which Christ ruled all and blessed all, what would it look and be like? This is the Kingdom of God!



Appendix 1: Scriptures for Further Study on the Kingdom of God

Study the passages below and make some notes in the margin to the right on what Jesus is teaching us about the Kingdom.

1. Matt 4.23
2. Matt 5.3-10
3. The seven parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13.
4. Mark 4.26
5. Mark 9.1
6. Luke 17.20-21
7. Luke 12.31-32
8. Luke 18.16
9. Luke 19.11-27
10. Luke 11.17-23
11. John 3.3-8
12. Acts 8.12, 28.23, 31
13. Acts 14.22
14. Romans 14.17-18
15. 1 Cor 4.20
16. Colossians 1.13
17. Hebrews 12.28

¹ *The Kingdom in All Its Glory* by Alan Vincent. Tapes series transcribed into written materials. Copyright – Outpouring Ministries.