

The Kingdom of God- Part V

- * We often hear ourselves and others refer to “The Kingdom of God”.
- * I am convinced that we are simply parroting a religious word without actually knowing what we are saying!
- * What is *the kingdom of God*?
- * In most instances in the New Testament the original word for “kingdom” is *basileia*.
- * It means sovereignty, royal power, dominion!
- * In short, the Kingdom of God is the “sphere of God’s rule!”
- * This causes the Lord’s prayer to be an even more powerful prayer:

Matthew 6:10 (NIV)

10 Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(Father, Your sovereignty, royal power and dominion be done on earth!)

- * Notice how that changes the feel of that prayer! It invokes God!
- * We are asking for God’s sovereign will, His divine power and dominion to cause our lives, circumstances and situations to reflect His perfect will!
- * With that said, let’s begin a journey of discovering The Kingdom of God.

I. As we have observed over the last few weeks, there are aspects and principles of God’s Kingdom among us:

1. Understanding the Fall and Corruption of God’s perfect creation!
2. The introduction of “another will” besides God’s perfect will!
3. We have seen how the Prophets foretold the re-establishing of God’s “sovereignty, royal power and dominion” expressed in, by and for His creation!
4. We saw how this was the ENTIRE MESSAGE of Jesus! The restoration of relationship and position of Man in creation!
5. Then we realized that our focus is to be THE KING of the kingdom!
6. When I focus on Him, I suddenly realize that He is focused on me!!!
7. I am significant...I am secure...I belong!

II. One of the most important things to realize concerning The Kingdom of God is stated by the writer of Hebrews!

A. In Hebrews 11 we see what some have called the “Hall of Fame” of faith!

1. People such as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Samson, David, Samuel and the Prophets!
2. The scripture says something very interesting about them:

Hebrews 11:13-16 (NIV)

13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. 14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. 15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

3. Do you sense “the longing” of the saints here? We should as well!

B. As we read this passage in Hebrews, we see the “progression” of the longing for God and His Kingdom, His dominion and reign!

Hebrews 11:39-40 (NIV)

39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, 40 since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

1. Then, the writer brings *US* into the picture!

Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV)

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

2. One fact that this passage should instill in us is: How totally connected we all are in this redemption story!
3. How this story is the whole and entire point of EVERYTHING!
4. The common thread found throughout this redemption story is God with us and us with God!
5. This “new country” and a “new city” whose builder and maker is God Himself! This city that John the Revelator calls The New Jerusalem!

II. The writer of Hebrews then seems to transition to what appears to be a little personal responsibility, accountability and growth!

A. I cannot exaggerate the undisciplined nature of Christianity in our cultural context!!! For some of us, we do not in the slightest way resemble OUR LORD!

Hebrews 12:4-11 (NIV)

4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5 And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose

heart when he rebukes you, 6 because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.” 7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? 8 If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! 10 They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

1. Okay, let’s be honest! Who really enjoys this?
 2. Of course, we don’t...it’s hard...it hurts...it restrains!
 3. But, it’s only that way when our eyes are on US instead of our eyes and heart being focused on HIM!
 4. This is what is meant by “fixing our eyes on Jesus!”
- B. We are encouraged to allow change in our lives to align with the new way of life in God’s Kingdom!!!

Hebrews 12:22-24 (NIV)

22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

- C. Throughout scripture and within the “story of God and Man” we see that we are a part of the “restoration of all things” by the redemption and salvation of Jesus Christ!
1. We demean and sell short this awesome salvation when we relegate it to “a ticket to heaven” someday!
 2. The work of redemption and the “restoration of all things” began at the completed work of the Cross of Christ!
 3. Jesus is not “going to be Lord someday”! He is Lord now!
 4. Please, never read the Lord’s prayer the same again!

“Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Hebrews 12:25-29 (NIV)

25 See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven? 26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” 27 The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may

remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our “God is a consuming fire.”