

UNDERSTANDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The kingdom of God is the central point of Jesus' teaching

It is mentioned over 90 times in the Gospels:

- 13 times in Mark
- 28 times in Luke
- 38 times in Matthew
- 15 of the parables of Jesus are directly concerned with the kingdom of God

Jesus did three things while on earth

According to the Scriptures, Jesus focused on doing three things while He was here on earth:

- 1) Healed the sick
- 2) Set people free from demonic powers
- 3) Preached the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus was going about . . . proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness (Matthew 4:23).

Jesus was going about the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness (Matthew 9:35).

He began going about from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God (Luke 8:1).

They brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill (Matthew 8:16).

You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil . . . (Acts 10:38).

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (has come near) (Matthew 3:2; 4:17).

To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:11).

The kingdom of heaven suffers violence (Matthew 11:12).

Jesus also told his disciples to proclaim the kingdom

Jesus also told his disciples to go and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (come near) and heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons. (Matthew 10:7)

John the Baptist proclaimed the kingdom too

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 3:2).

So did the Apostle Paul preach the kingdom

Went about preaching the Kingdom (Acts 20:25| 28:31).

Preaching the kingdom of God (Acts 28:30).

For He delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Colossians 1:13).

Testifying about the kingdom of God (Acts 28:23)

To open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God . . . (Acts 26:18).

For He delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Colossians 1:13),.

Jesus expresses the reality of the kingdom in metaphorical images

In Matthew, 12 of His parables are introduced with the kingdom of heaven is like:

A merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it (Matthew 13:45-46).

A treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field (Matthew 13:14).

Leaven which a woman took and hid in three pecks of meal, until it was all leavened (Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21).

A man who sowed good seed in his field (Matthew 13: 24).

A dragnet cast into the sea and gathering fish of every kind (Matthew 13:47).

The kingdom of God can be found within us

The Kingdom of God begins within a person.

The Pharisees wanted to know when the Kingdom of God was coming. Jesus answered and said it is not coming with observation (something you can see with your natural senses); "nor will they say , Look here it is; or There it is. For behold the Kingdom of God is in your midst*" (Luke 17:21).

*In the early church, this preposition was invariably translated "within."

Major premise of New Testament Christianity

The major premise of New Testament Christianity is that God has come to dwell within the hearts of men and women. The essence of the New Testament experience was that of being intimately in touch with the Living God, some sort of inner communion or inner experience. They nourished an inner way of knowing God.

Entrance into this kingdom requires radical step

Jesus was a spiritual being, He could function as a spiritual being, but in order to become like us, he had to be born a second time, as a natural human being. We are born and function as

natural beings, but to function as a spiritual being we must be born a second time—and this time from above, the spiritual realm, so we too can function as spiritual beings.

Unless one is born (from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3,5).

The Kingdom of God is . . .

It is not about a list of rules or persuasive words of wisdom by people,

The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17).

The Kingdom of God does not consist in word, but in power (I Corinthians 4:20),

My word and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God (I Corinthians 2:4,5),

It is an inner, spiritual reality that produces changes in our inner being; changes that affect our entire being. The Early Church Fathers recognized the existence of an inner reality, asserting we have both a visible, *seen* side of our personality as well as an *unseen* side. While we recognize the outer realm of reality directly through physical senses, we often experience the unseen reality through dreams, visions and our spiritual senses.