

# What is The Kingdom of God And Are We Preaching it

Lord, give grace, Lord, that the word is of your, the power of your word would go forth. Break chains, break yokes, establish your kingdom, deliver us from all evil, cleanse us from all infirmity and all unrighteousness. We, before you, we stand amazed at the mercy and grace you've had towards us, in Jesus' name.

So, the title of this message is, What is the Kingdom of God, and are we preaching the good news?

So, the question is, are we preaching the good news, the full gospel of Jesus Christ? And so, I want to read a scripture to you, it's Luke 4, 42 and 43. When it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place, and the people sought him and came to him and would have kept him from leaving them, but he said to them, I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well, for I was sent for this purpose. So, the question I ask is, what was Jesus preaching? He was preaching the kingdom of God.

What was he preaching? And in Acts 28-31, Paul lived there two whole years at his own expense and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance. What was Paul preaching? So, in Luke, it says, 9, 1-2, he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. This is just a lot of scriptures, but they're all leading somewhere.

So in Luke 10, he says, after this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he was about to go. And he said to them, in 10-9, heal the sick in it and say to them, the kingdom of God has come near you. In Matthew, in 10, 7-8, it says, and proclaim as you go, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You receive without paying, give without pay. So, again, what is the kingdom of God? This is a scary message for me to preach because it is, I believe what the Lord was trying to establish in the land and in his church and in his people, and in America, we don't see this establishment very well.

We see some salvations, but we don't see the kingdom of God being preached. And we preach Jesus, who is the author and the finisher of our faith, and he is the Lord of the kingdoms. But what is the kingdom of God? What does it mean to them? What was the kingdom of God to Jesus? And apparently, the kingdom of God is a place where God has complete dominion and complete control, and his will is done, and his rule is perfectly carried out.

And the sign of that kingdom was healings and deliverances, raising the dead. And the church was supposed to be doing this. This was the establishment of the kingdom of God in their area.

And we read the reports in the New Testament that that's exactly what the church did when Jesus was raised from the dead, and he gave them power to go out and preach the gospel. And gospel is just an old English word which means good news. To go out and preach good news.

So, we always have been praying for 2,000 plus years, the church has been praying, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, just like it is being done in heaven right now. In other words, we're praying for this kingdom to come on the earth. It isn't necessarily the second coming.

It is the kingdom of God where his dominion is established through the church on the earth. Now. Jesus was doing it now.

He was establishing the kingdom now. And the church was doing the same thing where healings and deliverances were taking place. So, what are the signs of the kingdom? It's not just salvation, it's healing, cleansing, casting out demons, pulling down strongholds, bringing people into the kingdom from their deception and from their slavery to sin.

That's all establishing the kingdom of God on the earth. And so, I ask this question. What good news would it be if the allies came into the prisoner of war camps and then left the German guards in charge of the camp? That would not be very good news.

But the kingdom of God is that they went and they displaced those evil rulers and overlords and they established freedom for the people. So, when we say that Jesus is here to forgive our sins but not to heal our bodies, what we're saying is He's going to leave us a little bit under the devil's power and that's okay. Because it looks...if you look at...Jesus said He came to destroy the works of the evil one.

For this purpose was the Son of God manifest to destroy the works of the evil one. And what are the works of the evil one? Well, you look in history, sickness, disease and death are part of His arsenal. Fear, intimidation, slavery, addiction.

These are part of the arsenal of the devil. And Jesus came to destroy those works. So, we think sickness and disease is normal.

And in this world it is. But it's not what the kingdom of God is supposed to be in the church. And Paul even said this in his scriptures.

Some of you don't...it's not surprising some of you are ill because you don't understand what the body is all about. And I think he's talking about the body of Christ when he says, Our sins are paid for by the blood of the Lamb. But in His body He took our sins upon Him.

And by His wounds we are healed. And he's saying that the body of Christ which we take in communion is what Jesus paid that price so that we would not have to suffer the consequences of our own sins. But that Jesus took them on His body on the tree.

He paid the penalty for our sins. And in that He healed our bodies. He healed us through the blood of the Lamb and through the sacrifice of His wounds on the tree.

Paul talks about Jesus being a curse for us. And the curse in Deuteronomy was sickness and disease and being fearful of your enemies and running from them and lack of food and famine. These are all curses if you didn't obey God.

He promised that in Deuteronomy. Blessing, if you did obey God, you'd be fruitful in your fields. Your baskets would not have holes in them.

You would be healthy and you'd be free. And Paul says, Jesus, because of all our sins, we have been under a curse. But Jesus became a curse for us so that we become the righteousness of God.

We are to be healed by His love and by His presence and by His blood. Why it's scary to preach this is because we don't see this happening in the church today. In isolated places we see it.

In the church that we're helping in Uganda, it's happening. There are healings and deliverances there. And we don't see it as a norm here in the United States.

And there's a stronghold over our mindset that this can't be true because we see what we've experienced in life. Well, our experiences in life are not the Word of God. The Word of God is truer than all of our experience.

Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. It doesn't mean everybody accepts Him, but He did die for all the whole world. Right? Amen? He died for everybody, if they will come to Him.

So the gift is there of salvation not everyone receives. But it doesn't change the fact that He died to save everyone, to forgive our sins. So we're going to look at this situation and say the already and the not yet.

We see what it's supposed to be, and we don't see it yet here. It bothers the heck out of me. I've argued with the Lord for 50 years.

Why don't we see this manifest in your body, in your church today? I mean, it's like myself struggling with several infirmities I've had for years and saying, Lord, where is the evidence of your power? Where are you, God? Where is the God of Elijah? Where is the Lord establishing in His church the freedom and deliverance that we all desire and need? And perhaps it is because we don't have the expectation that God actually does this anymore. When I was first saved, the teaching was that all those miracles all passed and none of that ever happens ever today. That was just to establish the scriptures.

But now it's no longer part of what Jesus and God does. Well, that's a dead God. That's a God of the past and not a God of the presence.

And it is a lie because God says Himself, I am your healer. So if we disagree with that, who are we disagreeing with? God. And this is not an easy message to receive.

I know this. I know this. But that doesn't make it less true.

That that's what Jesus was coming to establish through the body of Christ on the earth. And that this was the sign of the kingdom, was the healings and deliverances. And He's preaching this kingdom of God where God reigns.

And when, you know, in Africa, they are so used to spiritual things. They see witch doctors putting curses on people. They see these things and they know that there's a supernatural environment.

So when Jesus comes in and He's more powerful than the witch doctors and He destroys their power and He heals people, they realize that, you know, they don't have this problem accepting God as a healer and a miracle worker. I told you last week that the church we've been sponsoring, they had two witch doctors and a sorcerer curse the church. And they, two repented, two witch doctors repented.

And another who had tried to curse the church saw that it wasn't working and he repented. Because God, our God was more powerful than their God's. So they don't have a problem accepting all this supernatural stuff but we do.

And it's part of it because we've been grown up in a scientific materialistic age. Where the only way you get healed is by a pill or by a cut. And we rely upon the doctors, which is nothing wrong with doctors.

My dad was a doctor, my brother's a doctor. You break a leg, unless you get healed immediately, go see the doctor. You know, that's not the issue.

But the issue is that we only want the God that we can prove through scientific means. And we have this expectation that those supernatural things are imaginary. But that God doesn't do those things anymore.

But that's not what the scripture says. That's not what they're experiencing in Africa. This is what we should be expecting today.

And when we don't expect it, we don't actually receive. And sometimes we've seen, I've read many reports, where the level of expectation is higher in a gathering for healing and stuff. And people get healed more easily there.

Because their expectation is raised that God is going to move in this conference. And so what I'm saying to you is that we should be expecting it here and today and now. Because for God to get the glory, you have to be the healers.

All of you. Now Paul says that our gifts are different. But the idea is that if you have one man doing all the healing, then this man gets the glory.

But if the church does this, then God gets the glory. Because we're nobodies. But if we're all nobodies together and God moves us, through us, people have to say, well, God did this because, you know, who the heck are you? You're just a janitor or a school teacher or whatever.

But God can use the most humble of people to do His miraculous works. God says, and through the scriptures He says, that the Holy Spirit gives you gifts as He wills. And the manifestation of the Spirit is for the benefit of the whole body.

And some of it is signs, some of it is wonders, some of it is healing, some of it is discernment, some of it is words of wisdom or knowledge, some of it is prophetic. And all these things are to help build the body of Christ into something that resembles Jesus. When we walk, Jesus walks with us.

So through us, Jesus is doing His works. And those works are healing the sick, raising the dead, forgiving sins, bringing people into reconciliation, into the love of God. That's who you are.

Jesus is walking with you. So you should be expecting God to do things through you that you're not capable of doing in your own strength. Because none of us are capable of these things.

It's only God moving through the church through the grace and mercy of God that these things happen. We are, you know, Jesus said, without me you can't do anything. But Jesus is with us.

And if we are submitted to Him and yielded to Him and humbled to Him, then He can use us as worthy vessels. And, you know, the other side of the coin is, just because you have all faith and you can do miracles, but you're not in a relationship with Him, be careful of that. Because you'll build your own kingdom and you'll get the glory for yourself.

And Jesus said, I don't know who the heck you guys are. You're not with me. So, how does God establish His kingdom? It is through the church.

The word church in Greek is ekklesia. It is used of a governing body over a city or a province. God's government is established on the earth through the church acting as His government administering the will of God.

In other words, we have more authority than we realize as a body of Christ. When we stand together in agreement and pray, we have more power than all the political officials on the earth. Because we are executing the will of God in our prayers and we stand in agreement with His word and in agreement with one another.

And we are supposed to establish that authority of Christ in this city. In agreement with other churches who are faithful. That is how God works.

We've got to be very careful of elitism where you think, well, you're the only church in town. That's a very dangerous thought. But when you gather together with others and you pray in agreement in and out of our church, and we're standing together for righteousness over our city, we are beginning to establish the kingdom of God here on earth.

Paul says, likens the church's role to a military one. He says in Ephesians, Finally be strong in the Lord in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand or stand against the schemes of the devil.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against rulers and powers, authorities, and through the cosmic powers over this present darkness against spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places. And so he says in 310, So that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. In other words, our establishment and proclamation of good news of the kingdom of God means that we are fighting against spiritual forces in heavenly places that are resisting it, but we have a name that's above those names.

And we are making known God's wisdom to these authorities and powers that they must submit to the kingdom of God. So we are in a military situation, but we're in a military with prayer and with the spirit, not with arms, weapons. The aggressive force of the church is supposed to break down hell's defensive gates and rescue those imprisoned by Satan.

It says in Matthew, Jesus said, And I tell you, Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not be able to withstand it. The King James says it will not be able to prevail against it. I always interpreted that as Satan attacking the church and it won't be able to prevail over us.

But that's not exactly what it means. It means the opposite. The church is going out with authority and power and it can't withstand the gates.

Their gates can't keep us back. We go in and rescue those who are lost and bring them into the kingdom of God, out of Satan's power, delivering them from sickness, disease, drug addiction, and everything else. These are signs that the kingdom of God is advancing on the earth.

And Jesus said this in Matthew, And the good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. This is the Great Commission. The church is given a Great Commission and Jesus is not coming back until we've accomplished it.

The church is called to disciple all nations, to preach to all nations, and to proclaim the kingdom of God. And that's not just proclaiming. When he says proclaim, he means demonstrate it.

That's what's happening when he sends out the disciples. They are demonstrating the kingdom of God by signs and wonders and healings and miracles and casting out demons. They are demonstrating.

So proclaiming with just a word is not going to actually have the effect that we desire. It's got to be the Lord moving through the words, doing his works that we can't do. That will show and convince the world that he is who he says he is.

Because we're not proclaiming ourselves, we're proclaiming him. And we're establishing his will on the earth as he deigns to use us. He also said that until we do this, he's not coming back.

The end will not come, it says, until this commission, the Great Commission has been fulfilled. He's not looking for a defeated church but a victorious one. One that has followed

his will and done his work and has established the kingdom of God by proclamation throughout the earth, whether all believe or not.

Once we've done that, he's coming back for a bride that's spotless, without blemish, that has been faithful and has done what he told us we have to do, the Great Commission. Didn't Jesus said in Matthew 28, 18, All authority in heaven on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I command you.

And behold, I am with you till the end of the age. Jesus expects the church not just to preach the kingdom or the dominion of God, but to establish it in all nations. Why would he have told us to do that if it's not our calling? When Americans came over and defeated Japan, they set up a military government over that country.

And he's looking at us as a police force that we are establishing God's rule and reign by disciplining the nations to follow Jesus Christ and to serve him. I think I lost my last page. No, it's upside down.

Thank you. No, that's not it. I think I may have lost my last... Well, you've got... Okay, here it is.

Why would he tell us to establish discipleship of all nations if we were going to be defeated? One of the biggest lies that's been spread upon the church is that we're just going to get worse and worse and we're all going to be apostate and lose and fall away. And then Jesus will come and rescue a defeated church. That doctrine started in 1880 with the Schofield Bible.

It is absolutely a demonic doctrine because it makes us look forward to defeat, not to victory. But Jesus said, we're going to do this. We're going to disciple all nations, proclaim the kingdom of all nations, and then the end will come.

In other words, the church fulfills the Great Commission. It is victorious in doing what God has called them to do. And this idea that we're a Latesian church and this is a Laodicean age, it's just crazy.

When you see all the people dying in China for following their faith, that's not Laodicean. I bring in a Voice of the Martyrs magazine every week or two. And when you see that people are loving and dying for their faith all over the earth, they are not Laodicean.

They're willing to lay down their lives for the sake of Jesus Christ. The church can be Laodicean, and I think in the Revelation, each of those churches are examples of what the churches can be, like some Philadelphia full of love, others being lackadaisical, like Laodicea. So the question is, which kind of church are you? Are you going to be a church of love, which I believe we really are.

I mean, this is the healthiest church I've ever been in. People actually like each other, you know, and they actually want to help each other and get along. They're not arguing over the color of the carpet or who's in charge of this or who's in charge of that.

From my experience of being in pathological churches, this was remarkable. It's remarkable how healthy it is. You know, we have our problems, we have our weaknesses, and we have the things we go through, but there actually is love between us, which is, I mean, that's so rare.

And for pastors, that's why I think Gary doesn't want to quit, because God is here with us. And to have people who genuinely love each other, I don't think there's anything better that God can establish on the earth than love for one another. And we do, we care about each other.

I mean, we fall, you know, if somebody gets hurt or something, we're standing in for each other. And that is one sign of the kingdom, and it's one reason why I believe God will bless us with greater works, signs and wonders, and things like that, because we are trying to love Jesus and follow him. And that's, man, some of the mainline churches, I was a Presbyterian pastor in mainline denomination, and man, what goes on in these denominations, in the appearance of religion versus the love of God and this mercy of God, it is, I'm sure it stinks in God's eyes.

It stinks. I think I was telling this story to someone, I can't remember, I might have been at a men's prayer meeting, but I was working as a sextant or janitor in Park Street Church in Boston, and I was really struggling with pornography and lust, and I couldn't, no matter what I did, I couldn't get free of it. And I had a brother from Africa who was visiting in there and laid hands on me and prayed for me to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And I woke up that night in the middle of the night speaking in tongues, and it sounded like gibberish to me, and I said, what the heck is this? And I went, ooh. But I found that the Holy Spirit was able to deliver me from things that I could not deliver myself from. And the Holy Spirit has the power to do things for us and in us that we cannot do in our own strength.

It causes us to rely upon God all the more. And I went out and I said, well, now that God has blessed me with this, let me go out and minister in the street. And I met this guy named Little Whitey.

And Little Whitey was a dock worker, and he was probably this high, and he was built like this. And I said, do you know Jesus? Do you know who Jesus is? And he said, I never met half a man who hasn't. I never met half a man who hasn't, who believes in Jesus.

And he started telling me his story. So rather than witnessing to him, he was witnessing to me. And he said, I grew up in a school of hard knocks.

I didn't look for a fight, but I always finished one if I had that fight. And he told me this great story, and he believed in Jesus, and he was just a rough, rough guy. And I looked on his wrist, and there was a wrist band here from the hospital.

He's in and out of the hospital all the time for being an alcoholic. And then I witnessed all the righteous people walking into Park Street Church every Sunday, coat and tie and all dressed up. And the Lord said to me, the only difference between Little Whitey and Billy Graham, there's no difference between them in my eyes.



He said, the only difference between Little Whitey and the members of this church is that he knows he needs me, and they don't. They think they're righteous in their own strength. So God's seeing Little Whitey and Billy Graham as equals because they both know they need him.

And that's who we need. So Jesus expects us to be victorious, not with weapons of war, but with the power of God, working in and through the church, his body, by the Holy Spirit. And we are worthy vessels, not because of our righteousness, but because of his.

All we need to do is confess our weaknesses and our sins to him, and we become his righteousness because we don't try and defend ourselves. So the last scripture is what God expects of us. It's Isaiah and who he has created us to be.

It says, What I believe that God is going to be doing in the future, we are seeing and have seen thick darkness on this country. It's being exposed like crazy. We've been funding our own enemies and our own deceptions and our own immorality.

And the whole thing.

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