

“The Time is Fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at Hand”

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Read Mark 1:14-15

All of Scripture points to this singular idea: God reigns over all He creates. There is no area, anywhere, at anytime that does not fall under His reign. Although this reign shows itself in various ways, there can be no question that He reigns. Often we are found struggling against the idea that God’s kingdom is present. Our Lord offered a simple prayer to guide His disciples in prayer, “Our Father who is in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth even as it is done in heaven.” Such a request suggests that there is a kingdom that is yet future. If future, then it cannot be present. This thinking, however, diminishes the “already-not yet” theology of the New Testament.

The Gospels clearly portray Jesus Christ as king and His kingdom as present. His miracles and teaching all speak to this idea. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ secured for Himself the citizens of His kingdom, and His rejection and death did not stop the kingdom from existing. The kingdom Jesus brought still exists today. It looks differently than it did before Jesus came, when Jesus came, and will look differently when He comes again, but there is still a present kingdom.

The book of Acts likewise continues the kingdom theme begun in the Gospels. Paul preached kingdom truth. His letters explain kingdom reality. The church of the New Testament is a real part of God’s kingdom work. The church is securing for God citizens of this kingdom. The church is the body of Christ and this body exists inside of God’s kingdom. The body of Christ is made up of those who are kingdom citizens.

Presently God’s kingdom co-exists (as it has since the fall) with the presence of evil. But there is a day coming when He will confine sin to a limited context (i.e. hell) and sin will no longer be present among His people (i.e. heaven). There have been periods when the power of God was directly and immediately manifested. Currently this power appears cloaked. It is still present, but open manifestations are limited, and when it does happen it is primarily through secondary causation. Because all things are from Him, through Him, and for Him, there is nothing that is random or unintentional.

This kingdom is an expression of who God is and what He has done. This kingdom reflects God; it radiates Him. It is the kingdom of God because God is the centerpiece of its existence. His presence makes the kingdom what it is.

- It is a kingdom where love exists without condition.
- It is a kingdom where acceptance exists without requirement.

Continued on the other side...

- It is a kingdom where forgiveness exists without limit.
- It is a kingdom where service exists without reward.
- It is a kingdom where grace reigns.

- It is a kingdom where His touch brings healing.
- It is a kingdom where His look brings comfort.
- It is a kingdom where His voice soothes agitated souls.
- It is a kingdom where there are no longer tears.
- It is a kingdom where all aspects of sin have been completely abolished.

This is the kingdom of God. This is where I want to be, and this is where I desire for all of you to be, but we are confronted by a problem. How does a sinful, fallen, undeserving, and incapable individual, such as myself, gain entrance into this kingdom? How do I become a citizen of this kingdom? Jesus tells us how. It is the message of John, and it is the message of Paul. We must repent and believe this gospel, this good news. Have you? Are you a citizen of His kingdom?

It is for us to pray that God will open our eyes to see His rule in the present form of the kingdom. God reigns over all things created and this reign is mighty in the fulfillment of His purpose. May the Holy Spirit bend our wills to conform to His. This I pray in the mighty name of Jesus in behalf of His people.