

The Gospel of the Kingdom

Text: Colossians 1:9-18

Introduction

1. John the Baptist came preaching, “*Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” (Matt. 3:2)
2. Jesus began to preach, “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” (Matt. 4:17)
3. This is the message that is described as “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matt. 4:23)
4. Let us consider the good news of this message.

Discussion

I. Two Kingdoms:

- A. The Scriptures affirm, God is sovereign over all – over heaven and earth.
 1. Exodus 19:5: All the earth belongs to God, and...
 2. Psalm 47:8: God reigns in the kingdoms of men. (see Dan. 4:34-37)
- B. Yet, within the realm of God’s dominion, there is an unseen kingdom operating in rebellion to God, seeking to subvert the whole world and bring mankind under condemnation, contrary to God’s will.
 1. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11: Jesus referred to Satan as the “ruler of this world.”
 2. Luke 4:5-8: The devil to Jesus, “*All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.*”
 3. Matthew 12:24-29: Satan’s kingdom was not divided. Jesus came to “*bind the strong man*” and “*plunder his house.*”
 4. Ephesians 2:1-3: Paul describes him as, “*The prince of the power of the air.*”
 - a. “Prince”: GK *archon*, as in “arch”, “chief”, “ruler.”
 - b. “Power”: GK *exousia*, as in authority, domain, realm of one’s authority.
 - c. “Air”: GK *aer*, as in the realm touching the surface of the earth. “This world”, John 12:31.
 5. UNDERSTAND: When the Scriptures say, “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*” (Rom. 3:23), the implication is that all men, before coming to Christ, are held under this power of darkness in condemnation.
 6. Acts 26:18: “*to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.*”
- C. In Contrast: The Kingdom “**of Heaven.**”
 1. “Of heaven” identifies several things:
 - a. Its origin: “Not of this world” (John 18:36).
 - b. Its nature: “Not with observation” i.e. not identified by physical territory or location (Luke 17:20).
 - c. It’s capital, throne, source of authority – “of heaven” meaning its origin and nature are heavenly, “from above” (John 19:11) and “in the heavenly places” (Eph. 1:20).
 2. See also Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45.
 3. Matt. 6:10: “*Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*”
 - a. God, in Christ, was establishing a kingdom that would bring men out of their condemnation.
 - b. That kingdom, contrary to Satan’s kingdom, would do God’s will.
 4. Matt. 6:13: “*Deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*” In the kingdom that is from heaven, which belongs to God, Jesus delivers His people from the power of Satan or “the evil one.”

II. The Gospel of the Kingdom

- A. The “gospel” in the days of John and Jesus was the good news that the kingdom of heaven was “at hand.”
- B. Now that Jesus has risen, the gospel is the good news that this kingdom has been established and that men are being conveyed into that kingdom in Jesus Christ (Col. 1:13).
 - 1. Jesus had to become flesh to accomplish this. His death and resurrection paved the way for our entrance into the heavenly kingdom.
 - 2. Matthew 28:18-20: Therefore, in the Great Commission, Jesus sent His disciples to proclaim, “*All authority has been given to Me.*” i.e., He is alluding to His kingdom that has been set up and is ready to receive men into it.
 - 3. Authority = *exusia*. Power, authority, domain, dominion, jurisdiction, “In heaven and on earth” (See Col. 1:16-18; Phil. 2:9-11)
 - 4. Vs. 19: “Go therefore”: Why? ***Because of the kingdom!*** It is the reason for going.
 - 5. To be delivered from the power (authority) of darkness, we must believe in, confess, and obey the authority of Jesus Christ.
 - 6. Vs. 20: “*Teaching them to observe...*” Those who have entered His kingdom must become true disciples, learning to observe all that Jesus has commanded.
- C. The Kingdom Message:
 - 1. Gospel preaching in the first century centered on the message of the kingdom.
 - a. Acts 8:5, 12: Philip “*preached Christ...things concerning the kingdom of God.*”
 - b. Acts 19:8: Paul “*reasoned concerning the kingdom of God.*”
 - c. Acts 20:25: “*I have gone preaching the kingdom of God.*”
 - d. Acts 28:23: “*testified of the kingdom of God.*”
 - e. Acts 28:31: “*preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ*”
- D. Because of this gospel, we have hope!
 - 1. Jesus is risen! His kingdom has been established!
 - 2. By faith and obedience to His gospel, we are granted entrance and transferred into His kingdom by the grace of God.
 - 3. Because there is a great day coming in which judgment will come upon the world and those who refuse the invitation to enter God’s heavenly kingdom will be judged with the devil and his angels.
 - 4. Romans 8:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25: We do not “see” the heavenly kingdom now, for we walk by faith not by sight. In that day, His kingdom will be fully revealed in its full glory in the resurrection.
 - 5. The kingdom of darkness has been overcome, but at that time it will be destroyed utterly and thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10; 21:8)
 - 6. Our call to action: Repent, turn your hearts to God and believe in Jesus Christ. Be delivered from the kingdom of darkness before that time comes!

Conclusion

- 1. All who have not yet come to faith and obedience of Jesus Christ are still under the power of darkness.
- 2. Only Jesus Christ can deliver us from darkness and death and convey us into His kingdom.
- 3. Will you repent by turning your heart to serve the living God? Will you believe in the name of Jesus Christ?
- 4. If you have already obeyed the gospel, does Jesus Christ reign in your heart as king?