Kingdom Come Series ©: God's Kingdom Come(ing)

G Strauss April, 2010

I. The Bible as the foundation for establishing the kingdom

A. Intro: What is the significance of having the actual word of God?

1. Is the word of God simply a moral guide, a compass towards goodness, or perhaps simply a book of inspiration? And, it is not only Christianity that makes this claim of course.
2. Creation story is the foundation for understanding God's word-
   - -God is a communicator
   - -he spoke creation into existence
   - -he chose to use our words to reveal himself
   - -the scriptures as canonized for us are a validation of what was self-evident: the scriptures are God-breathed truth
3. The Christian bible makes unique claims to authority and relevance for living the life God intended. The work of God through His Spirit is God's validation of the scriptures

B. 4 key verses that help us understand the significance of having the Word of God in our time

1. The OT has much to say about the Word of God- light, life, comfort, understanding, wisdom. But not until Jesus comes as the Word to bring the kingdom of God and the Spirit comes to indwell His followers with power to expand that kingdom do we begin to see the full significance of having the ACTUAL Word of God.

2. I Pet 1:23-2:3 the Word is the perfect beginning for eternal life and our source of nourishment for living this life

3. II Tim 3:16-17 sufficiency of the Word to guide our growth in the ways of God.

4. Heb 4:12-13 the promise of rest for those who obey the Word. Entering the kingdom by obedience to the Word. The Word is better then our swords for establishing the kingdom- it is sharper and able to change people's lives.

5. John 1:1-5 the Word is the Voice of Jesus. We are listening to the voice of the One we are following. It provides a source of fellowship with the One who made us.

C. Conclusions

1. The Word is the foundation for the building of the kingdom. There is no hope for man without divine revelation and illumination of our hearts to the truth
2. It is what we need for spiritual birth, life, and rest
3. It is the source of fellowship with the King

II. Qualifications for kingdom service: the rabbinic teachings of Jesus

A. God's desire to pour out His favour on the nations through the establishment of His kingdom

1. The call of Israel: blessed to be a blessing to all nations
   Gen 12:1-3 How was the nation blessed? Land, victories, food, temple
2. Jesus teaching that "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17) sets the stage for his rabbinic teaching. Nation had none of its blessings.
3. His followers are to be the founders of the new kingdom.
4. In this new kingdom, God's blessing is poured out on individuals who are ready to receive it.

B. Preparation to be a blessing to the nations begins with receiving God's divine favour individually (not nationally) 5:3-10

-5:3 It is only when we are empty that God will establish His kingdom within us. Emptiness is blessed with fullness.
-5.4 It is in our pain at our responsibility for the fallen world that God provides comfort (comfort = to be made strong)
-5.5 it is only when we hold our own desires in check (bridled like a horse) that God is prepared to give us our inheritance (responsibility for the kingdom on earth)- (see Ps 37:11)
-5.6 it is only when we hunger for righteousness that God enables us to live out His kingdom standards (see Prov 10:24)
-5.7 it is when we show mercy that God is willing to pour out His mercy
-5.8 it is only in the purity of our pursuit of God as our highest treasure that He is willing to get personal with those in the kingdom.
-5.9 it is only when we pursue peace that God makes us his sons to represent Him in the work of reconciliation (see 2 Cor 5:18-19)
-5.10 it is through our perseverance through suffering that God has chosen to establishes footholds for the kingdom to grow.

C. What about faith and grace?

-It is only through the outpouring of Gods favour that we are able to be His disciples and serve in the kingdom.
-its all about God's grace and our faith!

Our task	**God's response**
Emptying of self	Establishes His kingdom in me
Mourning loss of God's order	Provides strength
Putting aside personal desires	Gives us responsibility for the earth
Hunger for righteousness	Enables us to live out His standards
Showing mercy	Gives mercy
Pursuing God as our treasure	Gives Himself to us
Pursuing peace	Makes us His sons to represent Him in the work of reconciliation
Persevering in trials	Enables the Kingdom to pour out of us

III. The inner workings of God's kingdom

A. Matt 13:31-32, 33 the kingdom may seem unimpressive but it is miraculous like a seed or like leaven.

1. Like mustard seed and leaven, the kingdom infiltrates quietly and unobtrusively
2. The kingdom develops like a tree from a seed not like an earthly kingdom.
3. We add nothing to the life that is in the seed. It is all from God!

B. Matt 13:3-8, 18-23 kingdom work is like sowing seed. The harvest depends on the conditions.

1. The kingdom is not coercive. It is depends on receptiveness
2. There will be a crop but not all seed will yield fruit.

C. Matt 13:24-30, 37-43 enemies may attempt to destroy the good crop with bad seed but in the end the wheat will be separated from the tares.

1. Evil flourishes with the good but it will not take over.
2. Don't risk damaging the good crop by pulling the weeds

D. Matt 13:44-46 The kingdom is built by those seeking eternal treasure.

1. The kingdom may be hidden or in plain sight but is discovered by those seeking treasure.
2. The kingdom is a personal investment
3. It will cost all that you have but brings great joy in owning it.

E. Matt 13:47-50 It brings in the good and the evil like a dragnet but in the end, only the good will be used.

1. The kingdom will not avoid evil but seeks to reconcile evil with good.
2. Like Jesus choosing Judas knowing he was a thief and a traitor but hoping for his salvation.
3. God will judge the evil in the end.

F. Matt 18:23-35 The kingdom is rooted in mercy but is conditional

1. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others Matt. 6:12
2. Mercy is not the absence of justice- it is the application of justice for the greatest good.
3. Ultimately, the kingdom is about establishing the glory of God which is now seen in a time of mercy but will require God's justice.

G. Matt 20:1-16 The kingdom of God may not seem fair to us.

1. The kingdom blessings are based on God's promises not our efforts.
2. The kingdom is ruled by a King- it is not a democracy!

H. Matt 22:2-14 A proper response to the invitation to the kingdom is required no matter who you are.

1. Formal guests demonstrated improper responses: unwilling, uninterested, hateful
2. Even those from the highways and byways were thrown out if they were not properly dressed.
3. All are invited but only those fit for the wedding may attend

IV. The outward workings of God's kingdom

A. God's kingdom has infiltrated this age but obviously has not overtaken it

1. Biblically, our history is divided into two ages.
   Eph 1:21, Gal 1:3-4, Matt 24:3
   This "age" began at the fall. The "age to come" refers to God's eternal reign on earth (see week 1)
2. Because of the ministry of Jesus, this age has now been infiltrated by the blessings of the age to come. The Kingdom has "come near" and **is offered as a gift: Matt 10:5-8**
3. The Kingdom is at work offering men the benefit of God's rule but without abolishing the social structures of man or sin from the earth: Matt 22:21, Dan 4:17
4. Current reality of the Kingdom is in the inner spiritual redemptive blessing, and new birth. Rom 14:17, Jn 10:10, I Cor 13:12

B. The Kingdom behaves like the wind: Jn 3:3-8

1. Nicodemus wants to know the nature of Jesus work
2. Jesus uses play on words (wind & spirit) to describe the Kingdom being like the wind:
   a. not visible physically but **powerfu**l
   b. you know it is there by its impact- **irresistable**
   c. may show up anywhere, anytime- **unpredictable**
3. we can only enter it by being born of water and the Spirit (wind)

C. God allows His rule to be actively opposed and challenged

1. Adam and Eve, Noah, children of Israel,
2. Evil remains because of blindness, darkness, and unbelief
   John 3:17-21, Heb 3:12, 16-19,
3. Satan is a defeated enemy but still the ruler of this age.
   Eph 6:10-13, I Peter 5:8, Matt 4: 3-11, (temptation by Satan-confronted by the enemy on his turf)
4. **Submission to the Sovereign God who is allowing His will to be challenged by a defeated enemy makes us a target.**
5. God does not make it easy for those who are following Him in His kingdom now. He just makes it possible to follow Him-blessing is God's divine enablement to follow Him. I Cor 10:13
6. The gospel is actively resisted. Matt 13:22, I Cor 1:18

D. Satan is "destroyed" in five steps:

1. cast out of heaven Rev 12:9,
2. cursed in the garden Gen 3:14,
3. death defeated at the resurrection Heb 2:14-15,
4. thrown into the abyss during the millennium Rev 20:2-3
5. thrown into the lake of fire at the final judgment Rev 20:10

V. We must view Missions in light of God's overall redemptive plan and the workings of His Kingdom in this age.

A. It is not just you He loves- get used to it! He loves the whole world. Jn 3:16

B. God is not totally preoccupied with us. His highest good for the world is the demonstration of His own glory! Is 42:5-8, John 17:5, 2 Cor 4:3-4

C. The gospel of the Kingdom is God's chosen message for us to use to expand the influence of the kingdom. Rom 1:16

D. The bible reminds us that we live in this present evil age but should live in light of the world to come: Lu 12:27-34, Lu 11:2 (thy will be done), I Peter 2:11-12, II Peter 3:11-13

E. This present evil age is pivotal to living out our mission. It is not a mistake.

-It is essential for the world to see the love of those who are following God: to see us motivated by love not power

F. Jesus did not send us to go and fix- He sent us to go and love.

-We must be motivated by love, not our ability to control.

-You fix machines- you love people. John 15:12, 2 Cor 5:13-15, 1 John 4:10-11

-missions is about love not about power!