

The KINGDOM of GOD Part 2: “Kingdom Living”

Last week I spoke about what I believed to be the ONE thing that makes the Church different to the World, makes us different from every other successful humanitarian community serving agency.

I stated that I believed it is only ONE THING and that has to be the MANIFEST PRESENCE OF GOD that sets us apart from the world.

MANIFEST: revealed, plainly apparent, displayed, bare, clear, distinct, evident, glaring, open, obvious, overt, palpable, unmistakable, undeniable, visible.

I asked what was needed in the Church for that to happen and concluded that God was looking for someone, a people, a Church; who would give Jesus complete unhindered and irrevocable Lordship of their life.

I described how I am becoming more and more convinced that the Church of today is filled with Christians who are operating out of a JUDAS SPIRIT.

Judas was near to Jesus, sat with Jesus, ate with Jesus, was taught by Jesus, cared for Jesus ... all of this is good ...but Judas wanted intimacy without covenant. Judas wanted to ‘co-habitat’ with Jesus, not ‘covenant’ with Jesus.

We cannot have a defacto cohabitant relationship with Jesus!

THE DIFFERENCE?

Defacto Cohabitant = I want you to meet my needs.

Covenant = I will lay my life down for you.

So today I am going to be teaching on the very foundation of having the Manifest Presence of God evident in our lives, and the foundation of that is living with the Kingdom of God within ...hence the name to this message “KINGDOM LIVING”.

I stated last week that this may be *the most important message I will preach this year!*

WHY?

If we get this message in our hearts and let it become the foundation, the power and purpose of our lives – everything in our lives will come into order.

Order is established through an understanding of the Kingdom- ‘The Kingdom of God’.

We must understand and implement this message if we are to live the complete and abundant life that Jesus declared was to be ours.

The “Kingdom of God” was the central message, theme and point of all of Jesus’ teaching. Over 100 times in the New Testament we read the term “The Kingdom of God”.

It was the central message Jesus came to preach. People may say that is wrong ... it was Salvation. No, no – Jesus said in:

LUKE 4:43(NKJV)

“...but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”

Western thinking makes the Kingdom of God / Kingdom of Heaven an “*after death destination*”.

It is not some territorial or geographical place, not a physical location ... such as the United Kingdom or the Kingdom of Tonga.

KINGDOM = (Gk –Basileia) = ‘the dominion & rulership of’ ‘a foundation of power’

In the gospels we read both the Kingdom of God & the Kingdom of Heaven ...these are one and the same. The reason they are stated differently is ‘whom’ the Gospels were written to. Where you read the Kingdom of Heaven the writings are from Jew to Jew. It is written this way because such was the reverence towards God that the Jews when writing His Name out they would leave out the vowels ...e.g. YHWH or G-D

The Kingdom of God more clearly stated is where the Rulership, Authority & Supremacy of Christ is invited, established and hosted.

The truth is that as a fully committed Christian & Follower of Jesus, the Kingdom of God is within you – the dominion, the Lordship and the authority of God is within you.

MATTHEW 19:16-22 The Rich Young ‘RULER’ – rich, young, ‘ruler’ & still unsatisfied

19:23-24 The thought that it was easier for a Camel passing through the eye of a needle *than* a wealthy man entering the Kingdom of God.

Unfortunately the Church has read this and concluded that wealthy people will not get into the Kingdom of God. This is wrong.

I believe Jesus was addressing two issues here:

1. Many in those days were of the mindset that if there was misfortune or poverty in your life it was a judgement of God being enforced, thus they would not help the poor in anyway. Jesus' instruction to this rich young ruler was to "*sell what you have and give to the poor ...*"
2. Jesus was addressing the reality that usually wealthy people are generally well 'self-governed'. They usually have great influence and make the decisions ...they actually do the directing.

Let's deal with the incorrect mindset right now ... This difficulty is not limited to financially wealthy people, or materially wealthy people ... IT IS ANYONE! - **the more we are 'self-governed', 'self-ruled', 'self-made' ... the harder it is for us to receive, understand & accept the Kingdom of God – the Lordship, Governance & Rulership of God.**

Why can the Kingdom of God be 'in us'? If our lives are yielded to God & submitted to His Lordship, then we are 'in Kingdom' & Kingdom is 'in us'.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS wherever GOD is LORD & RULING & has DIRECTING INFLUENCE.

Here-in is the crux or point of separation between man and God that took place in the Garden in Eden with Adam and Eve.

The Kingdom of God can only operate where God has Lordship and Dominion.

DOMINION = where there is directing influence & control

Let's get back to the point of separation between God and Man ...

GENESIS 3:1-5

∞ Adam and Eve have run of the Garden

- ∞ Allowed to eat of the fruit of every tree except ONE – the Tree of the Fruit of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (**GENESIS 2:16-17**)
- ∞ Serpent deceives Eve and she eats the ‘Fruit’ – what was the ‘fruit’ ...it was the ‘knowing’ – the ability to judge, discern, govern, rule, have dominion!
- ∞ **Vs.5** - For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
- ∞ GOD RESERVED THE RIGHT TO DECIDE WHAT WAS GOOD AND EVIL. It was the ‘fruit of the tree’ – the fruit was the ‘knowledge – the knowing’
- ∞ In disobeying God, man stepped out from the Kingship, the Kingdom of God, *creating their own dominion, their own lordship*. Man made the choice to be their own king.

Since that time mankind has been on a journey of discovery to try and rectify the result of that disobedience.

All forms of religion have been mankind’s attempts to reinstate the Lordship of God, to reinstate the original and correct established Kingdom.

This is what we are instructed to do:

MATTHEW 6:33 (NKJV)

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

This instruction is to:

- ∞ Seek the Lordship, the directing influence & dominion of God
- ∞ The Lordship of God needs to be ‘first & continual’
- ∞ And it is ‘after’ this that the ‘all these things’ can then be added by God.

So now we come to the point of the result of Kingdom Living – it is the released and manifest presence of God.

Many third world countries see the manifest presence of God; the revealed & undeniable power of God. This is because they understand ‘Kingship’ & ‘Kingdom Authority’.

If the King drives past in these countries – the citizens will acknowledge instantly and perhaps bow or drop to the knee in a sign of complete respect and reverence.

In NZ we often refer to them by the first name and not their title and if they were to drive by we would probably slander them or perhaps give them some '*other internationally recognised hand gesture*'!

In 1 **SAMUEL 8&9** we read how the nation of Israel demand a King from God and Saul is chosen.

1 SAMUEL 10:24

And Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?” So all the people shouted and said, “Long live the king!”

Samuel then begins to explain to the people the behaviour of Royalty AND THE RESPONSIBILITY of the people towards royalty but even though the people wanted a King they did not want to be ‘governed’ by the King.

Vs.27 - But some rebels said, “How can this man save us?” So they despised him, and brought him no presents.

They wanted the King but not his Lordship!

How then do we change? How do we change millenniums of conditioning? How then can we have the original and correct re-established?

1 SAMUEL 5 – Philistines stole and abused the ‘Presence of God’ (The Ark of the Covenant) – by ‘adding it’ to their temple of their idol god (Dagon).

1 SAMUEL 6 – Philistine wise men instruct on what to do:

- ∞ New cart
- ∞ Two ‘milk cows’, ‘never before yoked’, ‘removed from their new-born calves’
- ∞ Place the ‘Presence of God’ on the cart
- ∞ Release them and see if the ‘head straight for Israel’

When released, the cows went directly – straight toward the land of God!

1 SAMUEL 6:12

Then the cows headed straight for the road to Beth Shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and did not turn aside to the right hand or the left.

How could they do this?

How could they go against the deepest most powerful influence in their internal programming? What gave them the ability to ‘over-ride’ the deepest ‘conditioning’ or natural even primal programming?

How could they go against their worldly character, their natural instinct, the unbending powerful deep rooted urgings?

They were CARRYING the ‘PRESENCE OF GOD’!

The ‘PRESENCE of GOD’ will ESTABLISH His Lordship EVERYTIME!

In the Old Testament we see the real and actual that can be overlaid into our Spiritual Lives in the New Testament as Children of a Risen Saviour!

In the OLD: the real and actual ... the Cows and Cart carrying the Presence of God went ‘straight’ for Israel

In the NEW: the overlaid Spiritual ...

1CORINTHIANS 6:19-20

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

The Temple of the Holy Spirit ... the residing place for the Power, the Presence, the Person of God!

EPHESIANS 2:22

“...in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

Are we in danger of being exposed and a lovely ornate box that actually holds nothing ... or are we going to let God be God and actually establish His Kingdom first in our lives and then out from there?

You have been created by God to carry and release His Manifest Presence!

Jesus came and died to re-establish the correct order for the Kingdom of God here on Earth. We are taught to pray ... Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done ... Here on Earth as it is in Heaven!

LET'S POSITION OURSELVES NATURALLY TO LIVE SPIRITUALLY IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD SURROUNDED AND EMPOWERED BY HIS MANIFEST PRESENCE!

Next Week: Visiting Ministry - Kristen Williams (One who has pursued this and lives it daily)

Following Week: The Kingdom of God & Our Cultural Mandate
(‘In the World’ but not ‘Of It’)