

Inheritance – The Kingdom of God

Daniel 7:13-14, 27 “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. (14) And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.... And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’

- The Kingdom of God / Kingdom of Heaven is where God rules over angels, spiritual beings and human hearts in perfect love and obedience. The Kingdom of God is ancient and is much larger than the Church, and contains angels, archangels, and living creatures (Hebrews 12:22-24, Revelation chapters 4&5) as well as people. The Church is just part of the Kingdom of God.
- It is a spiritual and heavenly Kingdom and the center of the Kingdom is the heavenly throne. Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of the Father in the midst of the throne. (Revelation 4 & 5)
- It is a permanent and abiding Kingdom that cannot be shaken (Hebrews 12:28,29)
- The Kingdom is present through the Holy Spirit wherever two or three are gathered in the Name of Jesus. (Matthew 18:20)
- The Kingdom is only entered through the Narrow Gate (Matthew 7:13) and the Door (John 10:9) which is Christ Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life (John14:6)
- The Kingdom does not come by observation (Luke 17:20,21) and has no physical location on earth and it is not a church, a nation, a city, a place, or a political party.
- Apostate, unbelieving churches and false Christians are not really part of the Kingdom of God and will be removed from it on Judgment Day (Matthew 13: 37-43,47-50).

Matthew 25:34-36 *Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (35) For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, (36) I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.*

The Kingdom of God is ancient, it has been in preparation for us from before the foundation of the world, it exists presently and is an everlasting Kingdom that given as an inheritance to the saints of the Most High. It is given to those who love their neighbor as themselves thus fulfilling the commands of Jesus Christ who is the King of this kingdom.

Luke 12:31-34 *Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. (32) “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (33) Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. (34) For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

God wants to give us the Kingdom, and we will have treasure in that Kingdom that is proportionate to our love, generosity, kindness and saintliness.

The Sermon on the Mount tells us how to enter the Kingdom of God:

Matthew 5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:19,20 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Being able to trust God completely is part of entering into our inheritance:

Matthew 18:3-4 and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (4) Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

The Kingdom Is For Those Who Are Truly Born-Again:

John 3:3-8 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (4) Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” (5) Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ (8) The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

The Kingdom of God is not of this world (John 18:36) and flesh and blood cannot inherit it (1 Corinthians 15:50). It is a spiritual kingdom prepared by God for His righteous, generous, kind and merciful saints from before the foundation of the world. It is entered through faith, trust, humility, being poor in spirit, and by being born-again. Those who pursue Christ's righteousness to the point where they are persecuted will enter into the Kingdom of God.

We Must Do The Father's Will If We Are To Receive An Inheritance:

Matthew 7:21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 21:28-32 “What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ (29) And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. (30) And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go. (31) Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. (32) For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

Those Who Flagrantly Disobey The Father's Will Do Not Inherit The Kingdom Of God:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, (10) nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

Galatians 5:19-21 *Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, (21) envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Ephesians 5:5 *For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

There are several kinds of people that do not enter the Kingdom: Rich and selfish people do not enter (Matthew 19:23-24), the Pharisees (Matthew 5:20), the spiritually apathetic (Matthew 25:11-13), unfaithful servants (Matthew 25:28-30), those who callously ignore the needs of others (Matthew 25:44-46) and unbelievers (Hebrews 3:19) do not enter the Kingdom of God.

The Prodigal Son wasted his inheritance and the inheritance went, in the end, to the elder brother, see verse 31 below:

Luke 15:28-32 *But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, (29) but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. (30) But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ (31) And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. (32) It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”*

Paul emphasizes the importance of sanctification in his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders:

Acts 20:32 *And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

Seeking First the Kingdom

A certain amount of energy and dedication is required to enter the Kingdom of God. We are exhorted to seek *first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33, Luke 12:31). The Kingdom is compared to wedding feast to which many are invited but which few attend. Those who are distracted by the world and who have to marry a wife, or try out five yoke of oxen are banned from the banquet of the King (Luke 14:16-24, Matthew 22:1-14). In fact, many are called but few are chosen (Matthew 22:14). It is a narrow gate and few are those that find it (Matthew 7:14, Luke 13:23,24). God will send out His servants to gather people from the highways and byways (Luke 14:21-24, Matthew 22:8-10) in order to fill the banquet hall. We are to be always ready with our lamps burning for the Master's return (Luke 12:35-48). So, the foolish virgins, who fail to do this, do not enter (Matthew 25:11-13).

One of the great distractions is mistaking religion for the Kingdom. The Pharisees and Sadducees were highly religious; however, they were not seeking the Kingdom of God. They were busy manufacturing their own social, political and ecclesiastical kingdoms! They desperately wanted their power and positions in the synagogues, in the Temple or among the politicians of their day. In fact, one of their main motives for crucifying Christ was this terrifying fear of losing power:

John 11:47-48 *So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, “What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. (48) If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”*

Church growth is not the same as Kingdom growth, especially if the church growth is at the expense of smaller local churches, or is unholy or unethical, or is built on showmanship not on Christ and convictions.

Seeking first the Kingdom seems risky at first but there is a promise attached to it:

Matthew 6:33-34 *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (34) Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

Also, the terrible cost of not seeking the Kingdom and being locked out of it, must be borne in mind.

The Kingdom Is Within You

The Kingdom is now and not yet. It is here on earth now in humble forms, however it is yet to arrive in its full grandeur when Christ returns. It is often hidden, and it is growing. Jesus' parables in Matthew 13 tell us that the Kingdom of God is present amongst us now as a tiny mustard seed, as a hidden pearl of great price, as treasure hidden in a field, and as leaven in a loaf of bread. Now let's look at a controversial Scripture:

Luke 17:20-21 *Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, “The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, (21) nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”*

“Within” - Greek: “entos” – inside, as in the inside of a cup. In your soul. Also, secondarily, in the midst of a group of people. The Kingdom of God is an invisible, unobservable, non-physical, manifestation of God's Presence in your soul, and also among a group of Christian believers.

The Kingdom came amongst us in power at Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out, and the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:14). At the moment, the presence of the Holy Spirit is the presence of the Kingdom; either as within an individual believer or as present in a local church, or even a group of two or three Christians in prayer. We need to be careful of “over-realized eschatology” which is thinking that the Kingdom is fully here now and that we are already reigning and ruling with Christ, this mistaken belief was rebuked by the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 4:8).

However, there will come a day when the mustard seed becomes a great tree, and the loaf is fully leavened! Transformation will take place and the Kingdom will be enlarged and reach maturity.

Matthew 24:14 *And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*