

What is the Kingdom of God? – Part 1
Renovaré Institute Series Video #4
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Dallas begins with the hymn “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” to help us think magnificently of God.

1. Summary regarding spiritual formation

a. The real issue is obedience to Christ.

Spiritual formation is not about spiritual formation or spiritual disciplines. It is about _____ into Christlikeness.

- This keeps us out of legalism and bondage to practices and comparisons of ourselves with others on how we are doing the things that go into spiritual formation.
- Spiritual formation essentially involves practices.
- Spiritual disciplines are essential to the process because character is not changed by talk, but through _____.
 - Change of character then changes action.
 - What we do on the _____ (action) begins to change who we are on the _____.

b. Spiritual formation, without regard to any specifically religious practice, is the _____ by which the human spirit or will is given a definite form.

- Everyone gets a spiritual formation. Everyone is expressing in their lives the spiritual formation that they have had.

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible, hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the
Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we
praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as
light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in
might,
thy justice like mountains high soaring
above
thy clouds, which are fountains of
goodness and love.

To all, life thou givest, to both great
and small.
In all life thou livest, the true life of all.
We blossom and flourish as leaves on
the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught
changeth thee.

Great God of all glory, great God of all
light,
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their
sight.
All praise we would render; O help us
to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth
thee.

Walter C. Smith (1867)
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- Spiritual formation is something that is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, but you have to be engaged. As you act, the _____ acts with you and in you. Your thoughts become different, your feelings become different, your body behaves differently, your soul begins to work the way it's supposed to.
- c. Spiritual formation for the Christian refers to the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner world of Christ Himself.
 - That happens in the status of a disciple.
 - It is the formation of your spirit, your will.
 - Your will solidifies into _____, and then your character gets farmed out to your body and your social context.
 - Spiritual _____ in _____ is what comes from the process.

2. We have been invited to be transformed.

a. Matthew 5:14 *You are the light of the world.*

- That's what we get to be because that's what God appointed us for.
- Light primarily refers to _____, _____, and _____. Paul calls us to respond.

b. Philippians 2:12-13 *Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed— not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose....*

- Work _____ your salvation, not work to it. Your salvation is incorporation into the life of _____. That's your salvation.
- *With fear and trembling* means *with respect and awe*.

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- c. Philippians 2:14-16 *Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life....*
- This is the _____ of the spiritual formation process. It doesn't take any special financing or education. It's just keeping company with _____.

3. The importance of knowledge

- a. The world is desperate for knowledge and reality, but the teachings of Christ have been moved out of the realm of knowledge.
- Society considers Christians "people of faith," not "people of knowledge."
- b. Search the New Testament for the word *knowledge* and you will find that knowledge is the fundamental _____ that comes to us from Christ. For example, see 2 Peter 1:1-11.
- The loss of knowledge is a disaster.
- c. Nothing is more important today than the recovery of the Church as the unique purveyor of essential _____ in response to the Four Great Questions of Life:

Four Great Questions of Life

What is the ultimate reality?

Who is well off?

Who is a "good person"?

How can one become a "good person"?

- Today no one thinks there is any knowledge at all about the questions. This makes for a society that is irrational and lives by power.

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- Three stories are generally available to people in our culture.
 - The Theistic Story. That's basically the one that _____ brings. Reality is a _____ with His activity and its results. This is still the framework of our society and our culture, but, for the most part, it isn't presented as knowledge, but as tradition.
 - The Scientistic Story. The idea that the sciences alone bring knowledge. Reality is _____ (the "natural" world) and its complications; not *scientific*, but *scientistic*.
 - Nirvana/New Age Story. The oldest story on human record. Reality is non-differentiation. Individuation and separateness are _____. "Enlightenment" sees through the illusion.
- Each of these stories has a response to the Four Great Questions.

4. What is the kingdom?

a. The kingdom is a government.

Every person has a government – not just God. But _____ is the place where we flourish as human beings.

Genesis 1:26 *And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air..."*

- You are made to have _____, to reign, to take responsibility.
- You're given a kingdom by your creation.

b. The kingdom of God is God reigning.

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS ...
The range of God's effective will.
It is where what God wants done is done.

The Gospel of Jesus is that life in the Kingdom is available to us now. We can experience the Kingdom and live in it by placing our confidence in Jesus for everything and by being His constant students precisely because we have confidence in Him.

THE ONLY SAVING ADVICE IS SIMPLE
Trust Jesus – Acts 4:12
Not just something He said or did, but Him!

God's kingdom is the place where we _____ as human beings, but we have the _____ of living in the range of God's effective will or not. And we've chosen not to.

It's a wonder that human history has lasted as long as it has; God must have something special in mind....

So the question before you is this: *What's supposed to come out of human history?*