

What is the Kingdom of God? – Part 2
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Dallas asks us to think about the question: *What is supposed to come out of human history?* He does not dwell on the question, but says that it is, no doubt, something special and that it is something that involves people. He then begins discussing God's kingdom and reminds us that God has a kingdom, that He is working in his kingdom, that He has made a place in that kingdom for human beings in human history, and that He wants to bring something out of that for his purposes for eternity.

1. The kingdom was the central mission and message of Jesus.

a. *Matthew 4:17 Repent for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand.*

- The kingdom was the central mission and message of Jesus. God saw our kingdom running amok and sends his Son. Jesus comes and his message is, "Repent for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand."
- His message of the kingdom runs all the way through the _____.
- You have a kingdom, God has a kingdom, and Satan has a kingdom. There are lots of kingdoms.
- Even a child has a kingdom: the things under the range of his or her _____.
- The key to kingdom is will – what is under the range of my effective will. This is where what I want done is _____.
- The source of human problems comes from me ruling my own kingdom and not thinking rightly about God.
- Jesus' first word is **repent** (*metanoia*), and it means to think about your thinking. It's your _____ that has ruined you.
- Repentance comes out of a vision of life in the kingdom of God, not in my kingdom. We were meant to live in the influence and presence of God. It's a personal Presence. It's not a law; it's a _____. A kingdom or queendom is a personal thing.

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b. The kingdom was Jesus' favorite topic.

- Matthew 13:33 – It's like _____.
- Matthew 13:31 – It's like a _____.
- Matthew 20:1-16 – It's like a landowner hiring servants and treating them with love and mercy *and* _____.
- Jesus was constantly teaching about and manifesting the kingdom. His disciples understood that it was about ruling or governing because they asked if they could sit at his right hand. They think it's a literal human government.
 - The kingdom of God is a government, but it's not _____. It's the one that _____ human governments (Daniel 2:34, 45). Human government is based on individual human beings. People try to take advantage of it. Human government is troubled by individuals who are pushing their own government.

c. Jesus makes the kingdom available to everyone.

- Jesus teaches what diversity really is.
 - In the Church, _____ is welcome and _____ is loved.
- Jesus comes in a lowly form.
- He breaks the _____. Jesus faced criticism because he was making a new garment, not patching an old one. It was new wine.
- He walks among human beings and associates with people considered "disgusting."

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d. The kingdom of God is present here and now in Jesus Christ.

- "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." What is he talking about? He's talking about himself. Where was the kingdom at hand? In _____. He was "at hand."
- Jesus says the kingdom of God does not come with _____...the kingdom of God is among you already (Luke 17: 20-21). God is here. If you have trouble counting on it, look at _____. He'll help you. The _____ of _____ is present in Jesus Christ.

e. The kingdom does not need authentication from authorities.

John the Baptist and Elijah are examples. You don't need a pedigree or _____ to be a kingdom person. Matthew 11:11, *Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.* Why are they greater than John? Because of the kingdom; they are working with the kingdom in the way that John the Baptist himself didn't know how to do. The kingdom is the action of God.

f. The kingdom of God is power without human position.

- When John was in prison and wanted assurance that Jesus was Messiah, Jesus replied, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them. Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me." Luke 7:22-23. John was looking for a Jewish king with political power, but Jesus was the fulfillment of Daniel 2:34, ...a stone was cut without human hands. He had come to crush human kingdoms, systems of human government.
- In Acts 1, the disciples want to know if he is restoring the kingdom. They are thinking about a Jewish king. Jesus tells them, "...But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (v8). Human beings always think of power in terms of position, but the kingdom is power _____ position.

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2. A final word from Jesus on the kingdom

Matthew 28:18-20 *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

After his resurrection, Jesus came back and what did he talk to his disciples about? That their sins would be forgiven and they would go to heaven when they die? No! He talked to them about the _____ of _____...God's reign.

He tells them:

- I've been given authority over everything in heaven and earth.
- Go ye therefore, to all kinds of people and to all nations. (You are called to be a teacher of the nations.)
- Make disciples.
- I'll be with you.
- Surround people in Trinitarian reality and then teach them to do everything I said.

Jesus went up into _____, and they stand there looking up. A sound comes from heaven. Why is heaven mentioned? Because Jesus preached the kingdom of the heavens is near! He wanted them to know where He went! He wanted to help them make the connection!

And then the _____ falls on them in Jerusalem. They receive power (without position) with Jews from all over the known world there to observe this phenomenon, and the explosion begins. The promise of God to Abraham that he would be a blessing to all the families and nations of the Earth takes off like a rocket.

That's the kingdom! The kingdom of God is not in _____, but in _____.

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Romans 14:17, *The kingdom of God is not in eating and drinking, but in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Spirit.*

The Kingdom of the heavens is at hand. Right there where you are. When Paul said to the Greeks in Athens, *In Him, we live and move and have our being* (Acts 17:28), he was doing nothing but taking the message of Jesus and putting it in the world for everyone.

That's what we do today.

Dallas ends with his version of the Lord's Prayer. He says that once you get the idea of the kingdom, then this is how you pray:

Dear Father, always near us,
(Our Father who art in heaven, heaven is near. Not far away. Not much later.)
Dear Father, always near us, may your Name be treasured and loved.
May your rule be completed in us –
May your will be done here on earth in just the way it's done in heaven.
Give us today the things we need for today.
And forgive our sins and impositions on you, as we are forgiving all who in any way offend us.
Please don't put us through trials, but deliver us from everything bad
Because you are the one in charge,
and you have all the power,
and the glory, too, is all yours – forever –
which is just the way we want it!