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Preaching Christ and His Kingdom



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #339 ~

The writers of the New Testament epistles thought about and taught the totality of our salvation. They focused on justification, sanctification, and glorification (Rom. 3-4, 6-8:1-17, 8:18-25), and as we saw in the previous post, they often summed up our 3-part salvation in a few verses or less (Ph. 3:8-11, Tit. 2:11-14, 1 Pet. 1:3-4, 1 Jn.3:1-3). They knew it was important for us to see the future in light of the past and present, to know that our life is not static, but that our past justification and present sanctification is leading to our future glorification.

Today we will look at **the gospel of the kingdom**, which speaks about the entirety of our eternal life, including this 3-part salvation. It tells us of being born again and entering God's kingdom with the result that we are members of the church, a spiritual kingdom, and in the future, of His physical kingdom. It talks of Christ dying to pay for our sins and our need to believe in Him to be spiritually saved and then physically saved with the result that we will be able to wholly and perfectly live for Him

in the ages to come. Let's look at the gospel of the kingdom:

* **Matthew 4:23** – *"Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming* ***the gospel of the kingdom****, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people."* The *"gospel of the kingdom"* is good news about Jesus being Savior, Lord, and King. This is shown in that He saves people from their sins, is Lord in their lives, and is head of the church, a spiritual kingdom. In the coming ages, He will be King over this whole wide world, over a spiritual, physical, glorious, God-glorifying kingdom.

The gospel of the kingdom was evident during Jesus' ministry years when He displayed His power over diseases, demons, and storms, and when He defeated sin and death. In the kingdom ages, His power will be absolute, universal, and always visible. This gospel of the kingdom is supreme and comprehensive, embodied in our lives and encompassing the entirety of our eternal life from being justified to being glorified to perfectly worshiping and serving God in the millennial and eternal kingdoms.

* **Mark 1:15 –** *"The time is fulfilled, and* ***the kingdom of God*** *is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."* Again, Jesus taught about the kingdom of God, and it was at hand because He, as God in the flesh, was with people, and was revealing to them His holiness, love, power, and purpose. A primary goal of His teaching during His 1st coming was telling people their need to repent of their sins and believe the gospel, the good news that He was Lord and Savior, that only He could save them from their sins and open the door to His eternal kingdom.

* **Matthew 5:3** – *"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is* ***the kingdom of heaven*****."** A person has to be poor in spirit, he has to be humble to be saved from sin and death and become a member of God's kingdom. He must see his spiritual poverty, his need for salvation, his need for God to show him mercy. A person poor in spirit is desperate,

like a beggar. Once he is humble and believes in Christ to save him, then he is supremely blessed, immediately becoming a member of the kingdom of heaven, one that is forever holy, loving, joyful, and peaceful.

*** John 3:5 –** *"Unless one is born again, he cannot see* ***the kingdom of God."*** A person becomes a member of God's kingdom by being born again, by being born of the Spirit, a supernatural work of God in his soul. Once a person is saved, he can spiritually see Christ, and he knows he is a member of His kingdom. In the coming ages he will physically see Christ and the kingdom of God. *"He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."* Col. 1:13-14

*** Acts 1:6-8, 11** – *"He… appearing to them over a period of 40 days, and speaking of the things concerning* ***the kingdom of God.****.. They were asking Jesus, saying, 'Lord is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or epochs… but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem… and to the remotest part of the earth.'… He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out their sight… This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."*

Jesus had just been resurrected from the dead, and He wanted to be with His disciples and teach them, for He knew He would soon be leaving them. And what was the main subject? It was *"the kingdom of God"*! Jesus wanted them to see the big picture, from the present to the future. But the disciples didn't really understand the full gospel, the good news of the kingdom from the church age to eternity future – they were thinking about prophecies that stated that Christ would be King over a physical kingdom. Jesus, by not denying or dismissing there would be an earthly kingdom, was confirming it was true. But He told

them they didn't need to know the *"times or epochs"* as to when His kingdom would be established on earth. Matt. 24:32-36

The disciples were to concern themselves with being witnesses to the world, with working with Christ in building the church, a spiritual kingdom (Matt. 16:18). He had already instructed them, *"**this gospel of the kingdom** shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come"* (Matt. 24:14). And He had commanded them, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations... even to the end of the age."* Matt. 28:19-20

After Jesus ascends into heaven on a cloud, two angels tell His disciples that He would come back in the same way. Jesus had previously told them He would come back on a cloud, and it was at that time they would be redeemed and gathered to Himself, and after that He would come back to earth and set up His physical kingdom. Matt. 24:31; Luke 21:27-28, 31; Rev. 11:15

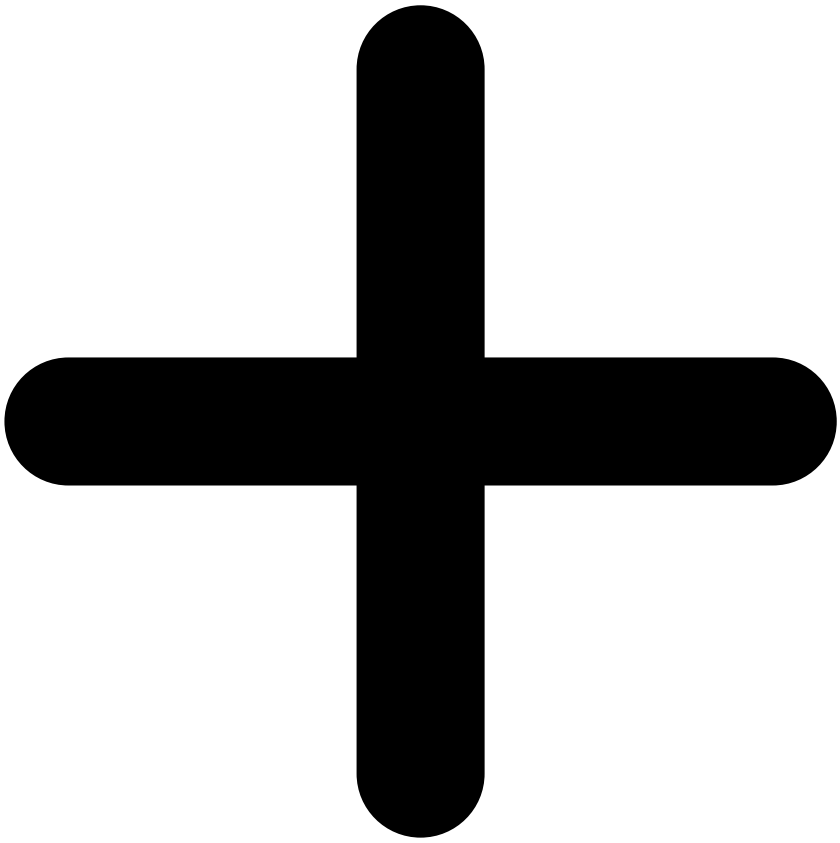
One of the main lessons of Acts 1, this introductory chapter to the early history of the church, is the kingdom of God. And it was the whole kingdom of God that was being proclaimed, from the present spiritual kingdom to the eternal physical kingdom, from the good news about our salvation in Christ to the good news about Christ eternally reigning over His kingdom. Dan. 7:27

The book of Acts clearly tells us that the primary message being proclaimed to the masses, the disciples, and us was Christ and the kingdom of God. *"... Philip preaching **the good news about the kingdom of God** and the **name of Jesus Christ**..."* (Acts 8:12). *"He* (Paul) *entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about **the kingdom of God**"*(Acts 19:8). *"... solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in **our Lord Jesus Christ**... I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself... to testify solemnly*

*of **the gospel** of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching **the kingdom**, will no longer see my face…"* (Acts 20:20-25). *"Paul… testifying solemnly about **the kingdom of God** and trying to persuade them concerning **Jesus**…"* (Acts 28:23). *"He stayed two full years… preaching **the kingdom of God** and **teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ**."* Acts 28:31

Might we realize the importance of Jesus Christ and the truth of the kingdom of God in our own lives, and of preaching Jesus Christ and the truth of the kingdom of God to others. Let's also *"seek first **the kingdom of God**"* (Matt. 6:33). Let's pray, *"Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. **Your kingdom come**, Your will be done, on earth as it is heaven"* (Matt. 6:9-10). Let's *"speak of the glory of **Your kingdom** and talk of Your power, to make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts and the glory of the majesty of **Your kingdom**. **Our kingdom** is **an everlasting kingdom**"* (Ps. 145:1-3). Let's long for that day when we say, *"The kingdom of the world has become the **kingdom of our Lord and His Christ**, and He will reign forever and ever."* Rev. 11:15

P.S. I can't stress enough the importance of understanding the entirety of our salvation, from justification to glorification to the kingdom ages. Here are more posts that tell us about God's kingdom how it relates to us: *"The Kingdom of God"*, *"The King in Your Heart, and His Kingdom on Earth"*, and *"The Gospel of the Kingdom of God."*



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