

Are We Preaching the 'Gospel of the Kingdom' to This Generation?

Jesus, in Matthew 24:14 (NKJV), declared, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." These words of Jesus should raise the question in our minds, "What is the 'gospel of the kingdom'?"

It should also cause us to ask, "Are we preaching the gospel of the kingdom?" These are questions that I seek to answer in this article.

The Kingdom of God Is His Authority

From both Acts and the Epistles, it is obvious, that the preaching of the kingdom of God was a primary theme in the early church. In his very moving dialogue with the elders of Ephesus, Paul reminded them how he had gone about in their midst, "preaching the kingdom of God" (Acts 20:25). In describing Paul's ministry while under house arrest in Rome, Luke says that he "Received all who came to Him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:30b-31a).

The Greek word for "kingdom" is *basileia*, and the Hebrew word is *malkuth*. Both terms refer to the right and authority of a king to reign, rather than to the territory or people over which he reigns. Jesus told a parable to illustrate this, saying, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom (basiliea) and then return" (Luke 19:11-12). The realm over which he wanted to reign was the place he left. He needed the right and authority to reign over that territory and went into a far country to obtain that right and authority.

Interestingly, an event like this had happened in Israel not many years prior to Jesus' telling this parable. In 40 B.C., political conditions in Israel were chaotic. The Romans had subdued the country in 63 B.C., but stability was slow in coming. An Edomite by the name of Herod, who later became Herod the Great, travelled to Rome and talked the Romans into declaring him king. He literally went into a far country and received a kingdom, which was the right and authority to reign over the Jews in Judea.

The kingdom of God is His kingship. It is His sovereign rule and authority, Psalm 103:19 makes this clear: "The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all." When Jesus, in Matthew 6:33, exhorts us to "seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness," He does not mean for us to seek a certain territory, people or structure, but to seek His rule and reign in our lives

The Kingdom of God and Pentecost

In describing one of Jesus' post-Resurrection appearances before His ascension, Luke says that He spoke to them, "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). This was necessary because they had to understand the significance of His life, death and Resurrection, as well as the events of Pentecost that were soon to follow.

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Indeed, first century Jews believed that Joel's prophecy of an outpouring of God's Spirit "on all flesh" (Joel 2:28-29) was to be part of the messianic kingdom that would be ushered in by the coming of Messiah. Peter made this point when explaining to the crowds the meaning of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Peter explained that what was happening was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, but he

added the words “in the last days” (Acts 2:17). Professor George Ladd says:

“‘The last days’ in the prophets was the time of Messianic redemption when God’s rule will be perfectly realized among men, the Gentiles will be converted, and peace will reign in the earth. In other words, it is the kingdom of God.

Miraculous Gifts of the Spirit Are Signs of His Kingdom

✖ In explaining the meaning of events on the day of Pentecost, Peter ties the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to Jesus’ resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God. He points out that Jesus’ Resurrection was the fulfillment of the prophecy of David, who said, “For you will not leave My soul in Hades [hell], nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 2:27-28). Peter goes on to say:

“This Jesus God has raised up of which we are all witnesses Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:32-36).

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This article was derived from Dr. Eddie Hyatt’s latest book, “Discovering the Real Jesus,” scheduled for release Aug. 1 and available from Amazon and his website at .