

Joyce Meyer: Practical Ways to Live in God's Kingdom

During His ministry on earth, Jesus' message was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matt. 4:17, NIV). And throughout the New Testament, there are Scriptures about the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven.

This kingdom isn't one that we see with our natural eyes, but it's more important than the physical world around us that we do see. That's why the apostle Paul prayed for the Ephesians "that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people" (Eph. 1:18).

The eyes of our heart see things by faith in God as we come to believe His Word more than what we see and feel in the natural world around us. And as we believe what God says more strongly than anything else, we begin to experience the promises of God-kingdom living.

Benefits of Living in the Kingdom of God

One of the most important things we need to believe by our faith in God is the knowledge that He loves us and wants to fill us with "all the fullness of God" (see Eph. 3:17-19). Romans 8 says that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him" and "we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (see Rom. 8:28, 37).

Being "more than conquerors" means that we know we've won the battle before it even starts. And when we're walking through it, we have assurance that it's going to end well. When difficult times come in my life, I often say, "This is going to end well." I believe I will know something I didn't know before, and I'll be a better person than I was before.

We can encourage ourselves to stay in faith by realizing there is a lot going on in our lives that we can't see. I like to remind myself that just because I may not see anything happening in my circumstances, it doesn't mean nothing is happening. God is always working as I put my faith in Him, and He does a lot before I actually see the results.

Set Your Mind to See With Your Heart

In order to stay in faith and live in the kingdom of God, we need to keep it in mind more consistently. Colossians 3:2-3 says to "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."

Real life is found in Christ, by having a personal relationship with Him, receiving Him as Savior and trusting that as you confess your sin and give Him your heart, you are born again (see 2 Cor. 5:17, 21). In Christ, you are a new creation and you have right standing with God. He is not mad at you, and He not only forgives your sins, but He forgets them; He removes them from you "as far as the east is from the west" (Ps. 103:12a).

When you really know this in your heart, you can live by faith and experience kingdom living here on earth! You can have God's peace that surpasses your understanding and be anxious for nothing in every situation (see Phil. 4:6-7). You can be "filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy" (1 Pet. 1:8b).

You can know that "the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4b) and you can do everything He is calling you to do through Christ who strengthens you (see Phil. 4:13).

Living by Faith in God's Kingdom

Hebrews 11:1 says faith "is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." Having faith is easy

until you're tempted to give in to doubt and unbelief. A lot of doubt and unbelief comes by paying too much attention to what we see and feel, rather than believing what God says about who He is and what He wants to do in our lives.

I want to encourage you to stir up your faith! Spend time with God in prayer. Study the Scriptures in this article and look up others that help you get a better perspective of the life God has planned for you.

Choose to believe that something good is going to happen to *you* and *through you* as God works in your life. This is the key to actually living in His kingdom more than the world around you—by faith! {eoa}

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