

Teaching the Kingdom Message

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[The following is adapted from chapter 5 of *The King said: Learn from Me.*]

IN JESUS' FIRST SERMON, He proclaimed, “*repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*” (Matt 4:17b KJV). “At hand” meant that the Kingdom was present and within reach. Learning from Jesus means we should learn to present the same message that He preached—the Kingdom.

I myself had taught on many subjects of the Bible, but I had not made the Kingdom the focus of my messages.

When I first presented the Kingdom message, I was very passionate in my approach. Unfortunately, the Kingdom was such a magnificent idea to grasp; many people felt overwhelmed by it. I decided to adjust my approach and introduce the subject gradually. Please notice that I did not say that I stopped teaching on the Kingdom. I simply modified my approach.

I had to make the Kingdom message a priority for our ministry because it was the message that Jesus preached. I wanted to be obedient to the Lord’s will. As followers of Jesus Christ, we should only teach the Kingdom message. We should not preach the ideologies of a denomination nor teach our traditions. If we want to lead people to the Kingdom, then we should teach the Kingdom.

Although presenting the message of the Kingdom was Jesus’ foremost concern, it is not the focus of some ministries today. Some teach a message of salvation, a message of prosperity, or a message of holiness, but they neglect to share the most important part of Jesus’ message: the Kingdom of God.

It is time for us to rescue the teachings of Jesus! Every minister that stands before people has an obligation to give them the message of the Kingdom.

When Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice for humanity, He finished the work that God assigned to Him. The Spirit of the eternal Christ carries on the work of Jesus through the Church—His new body which consists of all Believers. The “Church” is an Embassy of the Kingdom of God, not a man-made religious organization. It is through the Church that Christ continues to take the message of the Kingdom of God to the entire world.

Teaching on the personage and qualities of Jesus is wonderful. It is beautiful to want to honor the Lord Jesus in this way. However, if we neglect to share the message that He commanded us to teach, then we will not be following His instructions.

Before His crucifixion, Jesus charged His twelve disciples to make the message of the Kingdom a priority:

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt 10:1-7 KJV)

After His resurrection, Jesus' instructions to the disciples were the same. During the forty days before His ascension to Heaven, Jesus met with His disciples to prepare them to carry on His work. What did He share with them? His central theme was the Kingdom of God:

He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3b NIV)

The Kingdom was Jesus' primary focus. We should be like Jesus. Instead of inviting people to join a denomination, we should invite them to come and learn of the Kingdom: the place where they can find rest for their souls and where "all things are added unto every Believer" (Matt 6:33).

Jesus did not come to preach denomination or religion. He came to teach the message of the Kingdom of God. We must prioritize the message of the Kingdom over denominational agendas and individual opinions. When we focus our message on denomination, we cheat ourselves and others out of experiencing the Kingdom message that the Son of God came to impart to humanity. But when we rescue the message of the Kingdom from traditionalism, we will be acting in obedience to the commission that Jesus gave to the disciples and to everyone who would follow Him.

The Lord revealed this to me one afternoon while I was preparing a sermon. In my backyard I have several fruit trees where birds love to gather. As I was studying, the birds were making so much noise I could not concentrate. I went outside to throw a few rocks at the tree to get the birds to fly away, but before I could throw the rocks, the Lord instructed me to stop. He told me that the birds were outdoors and in their domain. Because the birds were in their proper place, they were under His care:

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? (Matt 6:26 NIV)

It occurred to me that the birdcage is symbolic of what ministries do when they persuade people to join a congregation based on a denominational or religious message instead of the Kingdom message.

When a ministry tries to proselytize or "cage" people within a religious group or denomination, God no longer has an *obligation* to add *all things* to their lives; that religion or denomination takes on that responsibility.

God, out of His grace and love, supports all His children's needs, but He is only responsible for "adding all things" to those who first seek His Kingdom:

But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt 6:33 KJV)

As preterists, we understand that the Kingdom is not off in the future, but here now. We do not offer an invitation to a future physical Kingdom, but to a present spiritual Kingdom in which Christ rules and reigns now through us, the citizens of His Kingdom.

Whether you are a pastor, leader, or everyday believer who wants to share your faith, I hope this chapter has inspired you to teach and share the good news of God's Kingdom. If you are unfamiliar with Kingdom teachings, ask the Lord to guide your studies and give you a revelation of the Kingdom so that your words and life will be a reflection of its authenticity and power.

The Apostle Peter offered the following advice on sharing one's faith:

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15 NIV)

Believers should always be prepared to discuss the Kingdom with humility and love. Ask the Lord to give you the boldness, wisdom, words, and gentleness to share His message. Your testimony of encountering the Kingdom will encourage others to seek its truth, power, and privileges.

The message of the Kingdom of God that many have embraced and now teach is incomplete without the correct eschatology.

End Time Prophecy

(First-Century Fulfillment)

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