

Why the kingdom of God?



Why is the message of hope which Jesus Christ & his apostles taught fundamentally different from what most churches teach today? He spoke about a future kingdom on earth called the kingdom of God & said it was good news. Why isn't it taught now? What happened to the kingdom of God? Why is it necessary? The answer to these questions are crucial to personal happiness and the survival of humanity.

Jesus spoke throughout his ministry of a coming kingdom of which he was to be king. From the start we read of his mission: Mark 1:14 *"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel (good message) of the kingdom of God,..."* (clarification added) This mission extended all the way to the end of his life: John 18:37 *"Pilate therefore said to Him, 'Are You a king then?' Jesus answered, 'You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, ...'"* If he is a king what will that kingdom be like?

There are a number of prophecies about the kingdom of God. A good example is Isaiah 9:6 *"For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* Jesus is that son and the government is the kingdom of God. A kingdom consists of a ruler, laws, subjects and territory. With Jesus as the perfect king what laws will his kingdom be based upon?

There is only one set of immutable divinely inspired laws recorded in scripture; The Law or The Ten Commandments. They existed before creation and are the foundation of conduct. We see God invoking the fourth commandment at the end of his creation by blessing his Sabbath. (See Gen 2:3) In Genesis 4:7 we see the Lord cautioning Cain about the cause of unhappiness which is sin or lawlessness, the breaking of the Commandments This happened many centuries before they were stated as a part of a covenant between God and Israel. They were reaffirmed by Christ and his disciples. In Matthew 5-7 Jesus magnified them to encompass spiritual aspects. The apostle John made a clear proclamation that breaking them is a sin: 1 John 3:4 *"Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."* The Ten Commandments will form the basis for the kingdom of God and will be the standard by which the Messiah will judge righteously (Psa 67:4) and righteousness is defined by God's commandments (Psa 119:127)

Who will be his subjects & what is the extent of the kingdom which Christ will govern? At his return he will subjugate all other nations as shown in Revelation 11:15 *"Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!'"* If he will lovingly rule all nations then the territory which he will reign is the entire world. Every human on earth will be subject to his gracious authority and he will not permit the outrages acts of our current governments.

Jesus will not rule alone but he will have others to assist him. They will be those who were once human who will be resurrected from the dead & transformed into immortals at his return. Their purpose is to support and assist him in governing. There is an amazing verse in Revelation which describes this new world order: Revelation 20:6 *"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."* The ultimate potential

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of every person is to join God's family at his level of consciousness and existence, a limitless dimension which no human has experienced. The Apostle Paul gives us a glimpse of that future in Philippians 3:20 *"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, vs21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body..."*

Now the most important question: Why is this all necessary, why the kingdom of God? Human history has proven we are completely incompetent to rule ourselves no matter what form of government. We collectively have been led by the god of this age as shown in 2 Corinthians 4:4. No matter how clever a scheme of democratic checks & balances, autocratic rule, enlightenment of an absolute king the result is identical; greed leading to suffering, poverty, depravity and unbridled desire which ultimately results in warfare & chaos (James 4:1-4). With the invention of weapons able to ravage an entire planets population we now have the ability to annihilate humanity. Jesus warned of this possibility while stating the exact reason he needed to return to earth to reign. In Matthew 24:22 he states: *"Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved (preserved); but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."* (NASB clarification added) He will "cut short" those days by returning to replace human rule (see Rev 11:15) just before this worlds governments empty their lethal arsenals on one another.

Why has this message been ignored? Jesus announced the message of hope about the kingdom of God and the first century church taught it. The encouraging message about the kingdom of God was substituted for the story of Jesus, the messenger. While there can be no kingdom without the king, and there can be no immortal family of God without a savior willing to pay for human lawlessness; the fact is clear that they are inseparable. All the fanciful invention about heaven, hell and the immortality of a soul now taught are unsubstantiated by the Bible and the original teaching of Jesus and his disciples. The false message which subverts the understanding of the phenomenal destiny of humans is the invention of the devil who is god of this world (2 Cor 4:4). He lied to the first humans, he continues to lie, deceive, and blind humanity to the truth. This is the same being is who was characterized by Christ as the "liar and the father of it" (See John 8:44)

Knowing the truth about the future can lead to a stunning change in our lives based on the formula Jesus clearly enunciated: Mark 1:14 *"After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee and told the good news that comes from God. vs15 He said, 'The time has come! God's kingdom will soon be here. Turn back to God and believe the good news!'"* (CEV) The coming of a divine kingdom based on God's definition of love, the Ten Commandments (See Matt 22:36-40) is the best news ever proclaimed. It is a way of life we can experience now and the only hope for human survival. It will eventually lead to world peace as it has never been experienced. Isn't it time to turn to God and prepare for the kingdom of God?

