

Upside Down Kingdom
Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds, Part 1

Read Matt. 13:24-30,36-43

Jesus starts the parable saying that the Kingdom of Heaven was to be compared to something. It would be good to define what the Kingdom is, before getting into the parable.

We will define 1) the Kingdom, 2) what the present reality of the Kingdom is, and 3) what is meant by the Kingdom is coming, what the future kingdom will look like, and how to get into God's Kingdom.

1. The Kingdom of God did not start when the earth was created. God's Kingdom has existed as long as God has existed. When the earth was created, it became a part of His Kingdom, with Him in complete rule over and in all of it. Wherever God reigns is His Kingdom.

2. * Since God is sovereign over all His creation, why don't we see that in effect today? What happened to disrupt God's complete sovereign rule over His creation?

* What effects did this have over His creation?

* From this parable, what 2 types of people will exist at the time of the final harvest?

Read Rom. 1:18-22

* What reasons do people give for rejecting Christ outright or perhaps putting Him off?

Some will wait until they have wrung all the fun they can get out of life. Some know the truth and yet will not repent, or maybe put it off to end of life.

* How does this rejection affect their hearts towards God?

* What is wrong with this thinking?

The shooting last Sunday at the little Baptist church in Texas shows that tomorrow is not guaranteed, not even to believers.

* What will be the final end result because of their rejection of the Gospel?

* What is the result of our lack of passion for this group of people?

* What keeps us from telling them of their fate in hell?

* Are these reasons valid?

God is completely sovereign in His universe, which includes everywhere and everything. When Jesus came the first time, He had complete authority over all physical and spiritual forces. God has chosen not to exercise His authority over all His creation since sin entered

into the world. Wherever God rules is His Kingdom, and today, the Kingdom of God exists mainly in the hearts of believers, His Body. The more we are under the rule of Christ, the more we are outward examples of the inward Kingdom. We don't bring the Kingdom to earth, but we advance the Kingdom here. It will only return to its fullness when Christ returns the second time. Our bodies are an embassy of this Kingdom, and wherever we go, whoever we contact, we are ambassadors for the King.

Read Acts 1:6-8

- * What is to be our ultimate purpose here in this life? What were we created to do?
- * What happens when we do not fulfill our purpose?

Because our bodies are embassies of the Kingdom, they are sovereign territory of the Kingdom. You are unique, and have unique contacts with others. As ambassadors, wherever we go, our main purpose is to represent the King in this foreign country to speak to others about the Kingdom.

Matt. 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Sometimes we try to live in God's Kingdom, using the enemy kingdom's currency, language, rules and values. We grab onto currency that doesn't belong to the King and wonder why we don't have peace. We place our affections on things here and wonder why our lives are without meaning and it isn't working out as we thought it should.

Sanctification is becoming more like the reality of what was born within us on the day of our salvation. It's becoming more like the citizens we need to be of God's Kingdom. It's not just salvation, but a total life change.

- * If we claim to be a citizen of God's Kingdom, what should we look like if God were truly sovereign in our hearts, our Kingdom embassies?

Matt. 6:9 "Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven."

*If we really understood the ramifications to our lives of this Kingdom living, why would this be a scary prayer to pray?

3. God's Kingdom is coming and there is nothing that will stop it.

Read Isa. 11:6-9

- * What will the presence of God do to the fallen earth?

Read Rev. 11:17-19
Rev. 21: 3-5

There is only one way to enter the Kingdom of God, but 3 steps that must be taken:

1. We repent in faith in God's provision for our salvation, not in anything we can do. We say, *"I surrender, I can't do this, but You can. I forsake my sin and now want to go your way."*

2. We receive God's forgiveness for our sin.

3. The Holy Spirit comes in and a supernatural new birth happens, we are transformed, a conversion occurs where all things become new, the old has passed away. We no longer want to do the things of the old kingdom, and want to do the things our new King wants us to do. We may do the same things for different Kingdom reasons. But if there isn't a change, death to life, and blind to seeing, changing from one king to another King, then this new birth didn't happen.