

THE SEED OF THE KINGDOM

1. THE RHYTHM OF THE KINGDOM

- A. Several underlying principles of the Kingdom are helpful to understand to both receive it and give it away.
- B. The where of the Kingdom.
 - I. Where is the Kingdom of God? Is it out there, or is it present with us? Is it accessible and available?
 - II. Matthew, “Kingdom of heaven” vs. Greek, “Kingdom of the heavens.” The Kingdom is within you.
 - III. There is a tension in speaking on the tangible nature of the Kingdom or God’s manifest presence.
 - IV. I never want to lessen the availability nor the access afforded to us as believers through His blood.
 - V. God is omnipresent and He indwells each believer. Christ in you! He’s with us, accessible & available.
 - VI. At the same time, I don’t want to lessen the fact that God shows up, He intervenes, gives life & blesses.
 - VII. When He heals it is a tangible reality of His kingdom.
 - VIII. It is a tangible manifestation of His Kingdom when He saves, delivers, or lets us experience His love.
- C. The Kingdom suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. **Matt 11:12**
 - I. There is a forcefulness of purpose that apprehends the Kingdom. The force of our faith appropriates.
- D. There is a responsibility that comes from having a revelation of the Kingdom.
 - I. God has in part limited Himself to the desire and action of His church.
 - II. “Whatever you release on earth, will be released in and from heaven.” **Matt 16:19**
 - III. We are to give away what we have received. When Jesus sent and instructed the twelve, “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.” **Matt 10:8**
 - IV. The invisible, the stranger, and the outcast are waiting for a demonstration of God’s love through us.

2. THE KINGDOM IS FULL OF GRACE

- A. Note the order of Jesus announcement, “The kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe.” **Mark 1:15**
 - I. It does not mean so much as coming soon as it does mean breaking in right now.
 - II. The very declaration of the Kingdom brings its reality. And it calls for an immediate response.
- B. The message is full of grace. Notice how Jesus didn’t say if you repent and believe you will see the Kingdom.
 - I. The message, “Give your life to Jesus and He will heal you” is not the gospel that Jesus preached.
 - II. But it is often the message presented by the church to those who are not Christ followers.
- C. Also note, not everyone who was healed (a tangible sign of the Kingdom) turned and followed Jesus.
 - I. This didn’t surprise Jesus, and it didn’t stop Him from healing people.
 - II. In fact it gives Him great joy to release the Kingdom to all who will receive it.
- D. Steve Stewart presents a fundamental principle of the Kingdom.
 - I. The tangible presence of the Kingdom initiates repentance and not the other way around.
 - II. If we want to see people open their hearts to Christ, we have to be willing to demonstrate the Kingdom.
 - III. When Jesus sent out the seventy, He instructed them to first heal the sick, and then say, “The Kingdom has come near to you.” **Luke 10:9**
- E. The core of the gospel is to demonstrate God’s love.
 - I. Demonstration of God’s love unlocks the power of the gospel.
 - II. People always remember the experiences they have of God’s love.
 - III. Sociologists say that people, 90 min after hearing the four spiritual laws, can’t remember one of them.
 - IV. It’s time for us to trust the power of the demonstration of the Kingdom to impact hearts.
 - V. Everyone was made for the Kingdom. When people experience it, their hearts and minds are impacted.

3. A SOWER WENT OUT TO SOW

- A. Jesus is by the Sea of Galilee and because of the multitude, climbs in a boat. He then begins to share parables of the Kingdom starting with the parable of the sower. **Matthew 13:1-8, Matthew 13:18-23**
- B. A sower went out to sow. The seed is the word of God. The life is in the seed.
 - I. The teachings of the kingdom hold the seed of God (life) to fruitfulness in our lives.
 - You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.
 - The words that I speak are spirit and they are life.
 - The word of God is living and active - at work in you who believe.
- C. “Don’t assume you are good soil.” – Francis Chan

- D. Are you stuck with your ground? Experience may tell you that are stuck. Scripture tells us another story.
 - I. He gives us instruction how to resist the kingdom of darkness and remove the stones from our ground.
 - II. He teaches us how to avoid and remove the weeds that choke.
 - III. He teaches us how to allow the roots to grow deep and reveals to all that good ground is accessible.
- E. *Prophetic Experience*. I saw Jesus bending his legs and getting close to the ground. He grabbed a handful of soil and was delighted. He displayed how the soil was good. This picture occurred during pre-service prayer. During worship the same morning, Jesus stood up in the field and began to dance and sow seed in the field. He was very joyful, spinning around, laughing and sowing seed. I felt as if the field had been prepared and Jesus was ready to plant His crop. He had done a good work to prepare the ground and it was rich and fertile.
- F. This parable reveals four different types of response to hearing the gospel (or experiencing the kingdom).
 - I. This is really is the heart of the parable. However there is something that is of interest to note.
 - II. Context: Farmers would consider seed to be precious and seed would always be sown in good soil.
 - III. This parable describes the extravagance of the Kingdom.
 - IV. Note how the sower scatters seed everywhere. This parable is about the fiery, extravagant love of God.
 - V. It is about a Father who can't help Himself out of His love for people from scattering seed everywhere.
- G. In the past, I know we have been so careful with the seed.
 - I. Outreach is often looking for the one, asking for divine appointments, or for the one we should pray.
 - II. But the kingdom is about extravagance. It is for everyone and we are to scatter the seed like this sower.

4. THE "ALL BY ITSELF PRINCIPLE"

- A. **Mark 4:26-28 (NIV)** He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. 27 Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. 28 All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head.
- B. Steve has a couple of remarkable stories demonstrating the "All by itself" principle. I'll let you read them.
- C. The life of the Kingdom is in the seed. It holds the DNA of the Kingdom.
 - I. It's the DNA of a cell that allows it to replicate itself. Exact replication that can create exact replication.
 - II. DNA of the Kingdom. It is present. It may seem insignificant. It is here. It is coming. It is increasing.
- D. By grace, we come to realize, we cannot build the Kingdom. We cannot cause it to grow.
 - I. We can yield. We can allow the Kingdom to advance.
 - II. We can sow. We can invite, welcome, yield and proclaim the Kingdom.
 - III. The seed contains the life in itself to grow and multiply.
- E. Our assignment is to scatter the seed of the Kingdom extravagantly and trust in the life of seed to do the work, "All by itself."

5. MINISTRY TIME

- A. Workshop, "How to pray for someone to experience the love of God."

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 13:1:8 (NKJV) *On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. 2 And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. 3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. 5 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. 8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*

Matthew 13:18-23 (NKJV) *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. 20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. 22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. 23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*