



Part 12: Gospel of the Kingdom – Presence & Power for New Life
Matthew 4:23-25

*The gospel is the good news that God has kept His promises to Israel to rescue and renew His groaning creation from Satan, sin, and death through King Jesus (his life, death, resurrection, and ascension). **Life in God's beautiful kingdom is available now and forever to all who entrust themselves to King Jesus and follow him as Lord.***

I. Gospel Confusion

The word “gospel” is a trigger word today. People today think of many different things when they hear this word.

As we saw last week, the gospel of modern evangelicalism that presents the gospel as the minimum entrance requirements to go to heaven when you die (illustrated by the bridge diagram).

“Saving faith becomes the minimum amount you have to believe so that, if you believe it, God has to let you into heaven. Other beliefs are optional as far as salvation is concerned.” – John Ortberg, *Eternity is Now in Session*, 34

The reality is that Jesus and the Apostles preached a very different gospel as we began to see last week (sermon to Easter are very important).

The Christian gospel is like a beautiful diamond that has many facets to it. Put most simply, we could say Jesus is the gospel. When we hold up Jesus in the light of God’s grace, we see many different truths that together make up the beauty of the gospel.

II. The Gospel of the Kingdom

A. The Gospel Jesus Preached

“From that time on Jesus began to preach, ‘Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near.’” Matthew 4:17

“Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the **good news of the kingdom**, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.” Matthew 4:23; 9:35

“And this **gospel of the kingdom** will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all peoples, and then the end will come.” Matthew 24:14

“To speak of God’s kingdom arriving in the present was to summon up that entire narrative [Old Testament], and to declare that it was reaching its climax. God’s future was breaking into the present. Heaven was arriving on earth.” – Tom Wright, *Simply Christian*, 100

The Kingdom of God is the rule of God, mediated through King Jesus and the Holy Spirit, that rescues and renews repentant sinners into new life lived in a community of creativity, love, and justice.

B. God’s Presence & Power for New Life

Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the **good news of the kingdom**, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. Matthew 4:23; 9:35

Matthew is telling us that Jesus’ ministry was one of teaching, preaching, and demonstrating the reality of the Kingdom through healings and deliverance from demons. The Kingdom comes with God’s Presence and Power to give new life.

“You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached – how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.” Acts 10:37-38

“‘Go, stand in the temple courts,’ he said, ‘and tell the people the full **message of this new life.**’” Acts 5:20

“So then, God has granted even the Gentiles **repentance unto life.**” Acts 11:18

“And this is the testimony: God has given us **eternal life**, and this **life** is in his Son. He who has the Son has **life**; he who does not have the Son of God does not have **life.**” 1 John 5:11-12

“...life is the comprehensive concept of salvation which contains everything that the Savior of the world, sent by God, brings to man.” –G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Gospel of Life*, p. 13.

C. Healing is a Sign of the Kingdom

Healings are signs of the reality of the Kingdom; the presence and power of God are present to give new life.

“In traditional terms, Jesus saves us from personal sin and from the effects of original sin, which includes ignorance, weakness of will, disoriented emotions, physical illness, and death.

“Some of this freedom will unfold only in the deepened life that takes place after our physical death. But even now the process has begun: ‘The kingdom of God is at hand.’ Jesus is freeing us from sin, from ignorance (‘the Spirit will lead you into all truth’), from weakness of purpose, from disoriented emotions, and from physical sickness – from all the sickness, therefore, that destroys or lessens our humanity – in order to give us new life, a new relationship of love and union with his Father through the power of the Holy Spirit. The saving power of Jesus frees us from all those elements of evil that prevent us from entering our new life with God.

“Jesus, therefore, came to do two things:

- 1) To give us a new life, a loving relationship of union with his Father and with himself, through the Holy Spirit.
- 2) To heal and free (save) us from all those sick elements in our lives that need to be transformed so that the new life may freely enter in.”

–Francis MacNutt, *Healing*

Our greatest healing is our spiritual healing – our regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being “born again” (John 3:3-8).

“I tell you the truth, **no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.” John 3:5-6

“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. **He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit...**” Titus 3:4-7

III. Our Response to the Gospel of the Kingdom

*The gospel is the good news that God has kept His promises to Israel to rescue and renew His groaning creation from Satan, sin, and death through King Jesus (his life, death, resurrection, and ascension). **Life in God’s beautiful kingdom is available now and forever to all who entrust themselves to King Jesus and follow him as Lord.***

Jesus says we must “repent and believe the good news” (Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:14-15).

“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:9-10

Additional quotes that may be helpful:

2.19.23

“The gospel message embodies three distinct elements: an announcement, a command, and a call. It announces the good news of redemption accomplished in mercy; it commands all men everywhere to repent and it calls all men to surrender to the terms of grace by believing on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.” A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 112

“Conversion is coming to faith in Christ, trusting him for forgiveness through his death and resurrection, repenting of your sinfulness and sins, and humbly asking for forgiveness, while believing that He hears you, and receives you. This trusting in Christ leads to a change of inclination towards following Jesus, and a teachability in the person’s posture. You become like a child in that sense, and desire to learn how God wants you to live and seek to follow that, albeit imperfectly.

“This is all precipitated by an inward change of desire that causes you to want to be forgiven. So, the new birth, as Jesus describes it, is the impartation of new life – the dynamic, ultimately irrepressible seed of spiritual life – and this continually draws the believer to Christ, in pursuit of holiness, and ever on to fulfill Christ’s commission on the earth. This dynamic new life will finally bring the believer home to Christ in eternity.”

– Lex Loizides, quoted by Adrian Warnock, *Raised With Christ*, 133

“The need which the Christian faith answers is not so much that we are ignorant and need better information, but that we are lost and need someone to come and find us, stuck in the quicksand waiting to be rescued, dying and in need of new life.

– N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian*, 92

Discussion Questions:

1. How was the gospel presented or explained to you? Was there any communication about the Kingdom of God?
2. Look at Matthew 4:17, 23; 9:35; 24:14; Acts 28:23, 30-31. How does this help or challenge your thinking about the gospel?
3. Consider Doug’s definition of the gospel (top of the notes). Does this help you or confuse you? Why?
4. What is “good news” about this?
5. How might this change the way you would explain the gospel to someone? What kind of response would you invite them to make in response to the gospel?

Recommended sermon on healing as a sign of the Kingdom: Tyler Staton, Bridgetown Church Portland (Feb. 5, 2023).

Recommended reading:

1. *Eternity is Now in Session* by John Ortberg
2. *Simply Christian* by N.T. Wright
3. *The King Jesus Gospel* by Scott McKnight