



**Part 13:** Gospel of the Kingdom: Already, Not Yet  
Matthew 11:1-11

*The Kingdom is here, but it will not be fully here until King Jesus returns to finally rescue and renew all things. We live in this present age by faith in King Jesus to bring us home to the Father.*

## I. Confusion, Questions & Disappointment

“After Jesus had finished instructing his disciples, he went on from there to **teach and preach** in the towns of Galilee.” Matthew 11:1

Review last week...

“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

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.**

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.

“When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, **‘Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?’**” Matthew 11:2-3



### C. The Gift of the Holy Spirit

“And you were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked with a seal, **the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance** until the redemption of those who are God’s possession – to the praise of his glory.” Ephesians 1:13-14

“We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we who have **the first fruits of the Spirit**, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope, we are saved.” Romans 8:22-24a

“We know that Christ has already purchased our healing (1 Peter 2:24; Matthew 8:17), but we still groan with sickness (Romans 8:23; 2 Corinthians 4:16). We have already passed from death to life (1 John 3:14), but we still die (1 Corinthians 15:26). We already have the sanctifying Spirit as a down payment of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:14), but the war between flesh and Spirit goes on every day (Galatians 5:16-18). We have already been acquitted of all sin in Christ (Romans 5:1), but most go on every day praying, “forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us” (Matthew 6:12). We already have our citizenship in the kingdom of God (Philippians 3:20), but for now must still submit in measure to the rulers of this world (Romans 13:1).” – John Piper (sermon: “How the Kingdom is Present”)

### D. God’s Loud Power & Quiet Power

Sometimes the Lord’s power is manifested in obvious or “loud” ways such as the healing of the sick or rescue from demonic strongholds. We are commanded to pray for the sick and free people from demonic strongholds.

Often, however, the Lord’s power is manifested in subtle or “quiet” ways to empower us to live holy and righteous lives and to remain faithful in suffering or persecution.

“God is glorified when he heals. God is glorified when he enables us to suffer with hope and dignity. God’s compassion extends to us when he lifts us out of our pain. God’s compassion extends to us when he holds our hand and walks through our pain with us. ...God uses pain and power to glorify his name and make us more like him.” – Doug Banister, *The Word and Power Church*

## III. Living in the Valley of the Shadow of Death: Pastoral Reflections

### A. Lament together (Psalm 13).

We must help one another honestly acknowledge and grieve our losses without allowing bitterness to blind us to the Lord's character. Guard our hearts together (Proverbs 4:23).

Resource: <https://greenwoodcc.libsyn.com/practices-of-jesus-audio-devotional-5> 3

"I learned that you can have God or you can have understanding. Insisting on knowing why only increased the suffering. We can demand answers, or we can fall on God." – John Eldredge

B. Pray for the grace to fight against Satan's attempt to slander the Lord in your mind. As the "father of lies," this is always his first strategy (Genesis 3:1-5; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 4:4-6).

C. Meditate on Jesus' great love for you, his identification with you in your sin and suffering, and his presence with you always (Isaiah 53; John 10:14; Hebrews 5:7-10; 1 John 4:9-10).

D. Practice gratitude. See Greenwood's practice of gratitude: <https://greenwoodcc.com/gratitude/>

E. Pray for the grace to keep an eternal perspective. V-E Day is coming (Psalm 30:4-5; 2 Corinthians 4:7-12, 16-18; Hebrews 11:13-16; 12:1-3; Revelation 21-22).

F. Pray for the faith to keep offering the good news of the Kingdom to everyone including praying for healing (*The Chosen* Season 3, Episode 2, "Little James").

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**Resource:** Song "Held" by Natalie Grant.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Have you ever heard an explanation about the Kingdom of God being already present, but not fully present (sometimes referred to as the "mystery of the Kingdom")? If so, how was it explained?
2. What difference does it make that we realize this reality? How does it change the way we think, pray and live?
3. In the service, we showed a scene from the Chosen (S3, E2) where Jesus has a conversation with little James about James's commission to pray for healing although he's not healed. Can you relate to little James? (may want to watch this as a group).
4. How can we encourage one another to keep offering the gospel of the Kingdom in word, deed, and prayer for healing despite our questions and disappointments?