

The Gospel of the Kingdom

Week 8 - Day 3: A New Kingdom: God's Space

In Genesis, we learned that God's mission does not include an escape of this earth. Rather, it is a complete renewal of the earth we live in today! As God's kingdom continues to overlap with fallen creation, His holiness begins to completely overwhelm the earth that is marked by the curse of our decision to submit to the serpent. We have seen that when Jesus returns, he will overthrow the rule of sin! Here is what happens to creation:

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

In these pictures, God's holy space and the fallen earth completely overlap and scatter all that was corrupted. In its place, God restores the earth into something new!

Revelation 21:2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The city of Jerusalem was significant because this was at the heart of the kingdom land that God promised to Abraham, where the promised Son of David would establish His throne forever! Originally, God was enthroned in the heart of Israel through the temple. Historically, however, Jerusalem found itself at conflict with neighboring nations. Revelation proceeds to describe this new city of peace:

Revelation 21: 22-27 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Did you catch that? In this new kingdom, there is no need for a temple because all of creation has become God's kingdom space. The gates will never be shut because God's presence will be a blessing to all nations who have become a part of God's kingdom family! What a beautiful picture of peace and harmony! Earlier in revelation, we also see a picture of God's loving rule:

Revelation 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God

himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

What an awesome concept! God has restored His kingdom space here on earth for us to experience an intimate relationship with Him! Perhaps page one of the Bible comes to mind when you think of a place where God dwells with His people and engages in a relationship with them in His kingdom space? Check out the imagery used in Revelation and Ezekiel as they describe this new *garden paradise*:

Revelation 22:1-2 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Ezekiel 47:12 And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”

God is restoring ALL things back to the way they were supposed to be by reconciling them back to Himself and His kingdom! This is the *gospel of the kingdom* that is made possible by the blood of Jesus! At last, Jesus returns to finally reverse the curse and shower God's blessings upon those who would recognize that Jesus reigns as king!

Revelation 21:5 And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

What should our response be then to this good and exciting news! Well it is completely up to you! Will you bow the knee to Jesus who is Lord over all? If so, He promises to include you in this process of renewal both spiritually (now) and physically (coming soon)! How? If you are a Christian today, Jesus has united IN you (think communion elements) through the Holy Spirit to give you the same power that allowed him to defeat sin and resurrect from the grave into eternal glory! In Jesus, you have died and Jesus now lives IN you through his resurrection (think baptism)! This becomes your new reality:

1 Corinthians 15:55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”

As we enter into this unified relationship, God re-establishes His *kingdom rule* over us by lovingly walking with us through the Holy Spirit and commissioning us to work that will be fruitful and spread His glory! God brings us back into His *kingdom family* by promising us an eternal inheritance of life! Finally, He transforms our hearts so that God's *kingdom space* overlaps our space here on earth as His Spirit dwells inside of us!

You can be saved and experience God's kingdom TODAY...

Romans 10:9 if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead

When you confess and believe that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead, you are essentially saying that Jesus is alive today and is the rightful king over all things, including each and every aspect of your life.

If this reality is your starting point of faith today, fantastic! We encourage you to continue and dig deeper into God's word through the Bible and prayer to deepen the roots of your faith!

*If you need more convincing, we hope you have discovered that the Bible exists to point us to the **gospel of the kingdom** so we can be assured of the absolute lordship and resurrection of Jesus:*

Jesus is the Son of God to whom all of human history has been pointing!

Jesus conquered the kingdom of Satan by living a perfectly humble, obedient, and sinless life!

Jesus paid for the penalty of sin by dying on a cross; shedding his blood to cover our sins!

Jesus defeated the power of death by resurrecting from the grave!

Jesus is alive today and is the rightful king over all things!

Jesus will destroy the kingdom of Satan when he returns bringing final judgment to some and restoration to others!

If you consciously choose to deny Jesus as Lord, why would Jesus then force you into an eternity of His presence (something you have decided you do not want)? If you consciously choose to deny the resurrection, what hope is there after this life?

Revelation 22:7 And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

Revelation 22:10-13 And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy." "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Revelation 22:14-17 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.” The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

As we stated in the beginning, our response to this good news is to *repent* from our sin and *believe* in king Jesus calling us to return to our Heavenly Father! This kingdom story is nothing about what we have done, but how God chooses to pursue us! While we still live on this earth, we can experience God’s kingdom right now. God’s presence will live in us. At the same time, we long for the day when Jesus appears and the consequences of sin are finally undone. All that was cursed by sin is made new and we are brought into a new existence in the New Jerusalem where The Lord is There!

Revelation 22:3-5 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Ezekiel 48:35 And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The Lord Is There.

God’s kingdom rule, over God’s kingdom family, in God’s kingdom space reestablished through the work of Jesus the Messiah! This is the *gospel of the kingdom* to all nations! This is the gospel of king Jesus to you! What will you do with it?

-AJ Vanegas

Share the Gospel: Will you admit that you have bowed the knee to the serpent and are in need of salvation? Will you trust in the work of Jesus (life, death, resurrection, and ascension) and trust him as the living King over your life? If so, salvation from sin and death is yours now and yours for eternity as you walk with Him! Through the Holy Spirit, you have now become God’s kingdom space, you have been adopted into God’s kingdom family, and God now lovingly rules over you forever and ever! Amen!

Personal Observations, Reflections, and Prayers:

