God Forever

God's Forever Kingdom (Part 1)
Mark 1
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Luke 1:31-33
You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.

"We must honestly recognize that the truth is not to be found either in traditional capitalism or in Marxism. Each represents a partial truth. Historically, capitalism failed to discern the truth in collective enterprise and Marxism failed to see the truth in individual enterprise. Capitalism failed to appreciate that life is social and Marxism failed, and still fails, to see that life is individual and social. The Kingdom of God is neither the

thesis of individual enterprise nor the antithesis of collective enterprise, but a synthesis which reconciles the truth of both."

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"A divided nation needs a united church."

- Carey Nieuwhof

The only way to unite a faithful church is around the Kingdom of God.

Mark 1:14-15
After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," Jesus said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Kingdom Defined: The Kingdom of God is an expression that embodied the hopes of the Jewish people that God would one day remove all evil from the world and inaugurate a new, unprecedented age of blessing, prosperity and joy.

Spiritual:

- Power of sin destroyed
- Enemy Satan disarmed
- All people would worship God

Spatial:

- World would not know poverty or hunger (Economic)
- Oppressive governments would be brought down (Political)
- World would not know famine or deprivation and all animals would get along (Environmental)

Close Curtain

This Age

(Satan's Time)

Characterized by:

- Sin
- Sickness
- Demon-possession
- Evil people triumph

Open Curtain

The Age to Come

(The Time of God's Rule)

Characterized by:

- Presence of the Spirit of God
- Righteousness
- Health
- Peace

Isaiah 9:1-6

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish…he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken…For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Mark 1:24

What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?

1 John 3:8

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

“Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, not to submit to them. This whole ministry is portrayed in the Gospels as a mighty onslaught on the works of the devil—whether these took the form of sickness and demon possession among the people, or of hypocrisy, cruelty and hardheartedness among the rulers. And His whole ministry is interpreted as the breaking in of the reign of God into the life of the world, to release those whom Satan has bound.”

- Lesslie Newbigin

Mark 1:14
After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.

If the kingdom of God was inaugurated by Jesus and is really present in human reality, how is it possible that seemingly innocent people still suffer and die?

Luke 11:20
If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

<u>The Already, Not Yet of the Kingdom of God</u>
The Kingdom of God has actually come into history (it’s already here), although we are waiting for its complete realization (it’s not yet).

Too Much “Later”
(Kingdom not yet):

- Cultural Christianity
- Christian Ghetto Escapists

Too Much “Now”
(Kingdom already):

- Social Gospel
- Hyper Fundamentalists

“Much of this cultural engagement is reactive: fundamentalists spot directions being taken by the broader culture that they feel are immoral or dangerous and adopt strategies to confront them and if possible over turn them. At the risk of generalization, they are reasonably effective at combating what they do not like in the culture even while exhibiting relatively little interest in the ways one should support the culture, working into the worlds of art and music. A substantial part of the appeal is to tradition: America may not be a Christian nation, they say, but it was founded on Christian principles—and the movement itself is an appeal to return to such Christian principles. It would be more realistic to acknowledge that the founding of the nation was borne along by adherence to some Christian principles and not others. After all, there cannot be many today from any camp who want to return to slavery.”

- D.A. Carson, Christ and Culture Revisited

“However, the ultimate sign of the Kingdom in the life of this world is the cross—the cross of Him who in the resurrection is manifested as Lord over all powers, even the power of death."

- Lesslie Newbigin