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Christ Church Anglican

The Kingdom of God Breaks Through Into the Kingdom of Men

By George Miley

In Matthew 3, John the Baptist gives us the main theme of his life message: Repent! For the kingdom of heaven has drawn near.

This is also the main theme of Jesus' life message. Matthew 4:17. Repent! For the kingdom of heaven has drawn near.

We will never understand Jesus or his teaching until we understand the Kingdom of Heaven—the Kingdom of God. This is what Jesus was talking about!

There is something so sad about Jesus. He came bringing new information, information critical to human life, information no one else had brought. Yet he was not recognized as bringing crucial information, and is not recognized thus today. The new information he came to bring was about the Kingdom of God. How does one enter? How does one live there?

The Kingdom of Heaven is the same as the Kingdom of God. (See *The Divine Conspiracy* by Dallas Willard for a thorough dealing with this.)

Ten Characteristics of the Kingdom of God

1 - ***The Kingdom of God is the sphere in which God rules.*** Doesn't God rule everywhere?

No. There are two areas in which God has allowed, for a time, things to happen other than his will: the human heart and the Satanic.

God has given human beings the freedom to make choices that are in opposition to his will. (But we don't have freedom to escape from the consequences of doing so.) Choosing the way other than God's way severely damages the human being.

2 - ***The Kingdom of God is spiritual.*** It is non-physical. You can't touch it, hear it, see it, taste it, smell it. God himself is spirit.

3 - ***The Kingdom of God is real.*** It is by far the greater part of reality.

4 - ***The Kingdom of God is found in space all around us.*** Jesus ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. But he is also here, in the space all around us.

Although the Kingdom of God is non-physical, it is constantly influencing and creating effects in the physical world of humans.

John and Jesus were not announcing that the Kingdom of God was new. It had existed from the beginning. They were announcing that it was now available—accessible—in a whole new way and depth.

5 - *The Kingdom of God is the environment for which we were created.* We belong there, created to live there as a fish is created to live in water. Jesus sees the things we do to run the other way, and the damage they do to us and others. And he is waiting for us to come.

6 - *The Kingdom of God operates completely differently than the kingdom of man.* We grow up, trying to learn how to live in the kingdom of man. Then we come to Christ and discover the things we thought worked don't work any more. We have to unlearn all the things we thought we had learned and learn the ways of God. We have to come as little children. A little child knows that he/she has to learn. Godly wisdom is teachable.

7 - *The Kingdom of God is the source of spiritual authority.* Do we recognize spiritual authority when we see it?

How do we train leaders in the church? The same way Jesus trained the apostles. In my opinion, the church has no greater need than men and women who carry spiritual authority. Spiritual authority is different from human authority. It is the hand of God upon a person.

8 - *The Kingdom of God is immediately accessible.*

9 - *The Kingdom of God is available to anyone—no exceptions.*

John sent his disciples to Jesus asking, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" Jesus answered, "Go and tell John what you see. The lame walk; the blind see; lepers are cleansed; the dead are raised; and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

That is the Kingdom of God breaking through into the kingdom of man.

Anyone can come. Prostitutes can come. Drug addicts can come. Rich people can come. Poor people can come. People with cancer can come. Undocumented people can come. Whatever our brokenness is, we can come. God loves us. He waits for us to come.

10 - *The Kingdom of God is available by relying on Jesus.*

The Kingdom of God is continually breaking into the kingdom of man.

How Do We Become Able to Live in the Kingdom of God?

Answer: Relying on Jesus becomes increasingly our inner default setting.

The Christian life is not in essence about behavior. It is about becoming. It is not about learning good things to do. It is about the transformation of the inner life. Godly behavior comes from a Godly interior, and a Godly interior is formed by relying on Jesus.

If we lose our job—default setting: rely on Jesus.

If we get sick—default setting: rely on Jesus.

We start the day—default setting: rely on Jesus.

We get in the midst of an argument—default setting: rely on Jesus.

People don't like us—default setting: rely on Jesus.

We know inner fears—default setting: rely on Jesus.

It's a process of transformation that takes place in the Presence of God.

The more this default setting is formed within us, the more natural, normal, attractive, fulfilling, beautiful living in God's kingdom becomes.