

Understanding

The

Kingdom

Part IV

Matthew 6:33

Key Verse:

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)

*33 But seek **first** THE KINGDOM OF GOD and His righteousness,
and all these **things shall be added to you.***

Why Study This Series....

*It Is Difficult To Seek Something That You Don't **Know** What It Is
You Don't Know What It Looks Like
You Don't Know What It Consists Of*

The Proper Perspective Enhances My Pursuit

Review....

Let's Define The Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is GOD'S SOVEREIGN RULE AND REIGN

The Kingdom of God is where God Is King and His Will Is Obeyed

*The KINGDOM AGENDA is God's Redemptive Plan to establish His rule,
reflect His righteousness, and advance His reign in the earth—
through people who live under His authority.*

Week One Key Points

*Man was given **Dominion** over all things*

*Man forfeited his **Dominion** because of **Disobedience** to God's Word*

*From the Beginning there has been a **System** of Violence, Crime, and Division*

*We Must Not Choose Our **Preference** over God's **Principles** and God's **Plans***

*God's desire was to **Re-establish His Kingdom** On Earth Through Jesus Christ*

*Religion Looks Toward **Heaven**, The Kingdom Agenda Brings **Heaven to Earth***

*This Agenda can be seen in My **Prayer Life**, My **Priorities**, and My **Peace***

Week Two

The Kingdom Has 4 Key Elements

A King ~ Territory ~ Principles ~ Citizens

Compare This To The Church or Religious System

A Pastor/Bishop ~ Local Assembly ~ Bylaws ~ Members

Last Week....

Focused on Kingdom Citizenship vs. Church Membership

Shifting Believers from

A Membership Mindset to a Citizenship Mandate....

From just Attending Church to Advancing the Kingdom...

Done Through

Monitoring Our Conduct

Understanding The Commission

Overcoming Conflict

Tonight Focus on....

The KINGDOM IMPACT and KINGDOM INFLUENCE

On

THE CULTURE

Key Passages

1 Corinthians 4:20 (NLT)

20 For *THE KINGDOM OF GOD* is not just a lot of talk; it is **LIVING BY GOD'S POWER**.

Matthew 5:13 (NKJV)

13 "**You are the salt of the earth**; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NKJV)

14 **You are the light of the world**. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.
15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Key Terms

The Culture ~ The shared beliefs, behaviors, and values of a society
What a society celebrates, tolerates, and rewards

The Kingdom ~ the unseen authority of God's rule and reign
operating through the lives of Kingdom citizens.

Kingdom Influence ~ the capacity to shape
values, thinking, priorities, and behavior without force.

Kingdom Impact ~ is the visible outcome
of sustained Kingdom influence.

Influence shapes hearts/minds ~ Impact reshapes systems.

Introduction

If we are not careful, we will become comfortable with impressing the world rather than impacting the world.

*Many believe, **In Order To Stay Relevant**, They Feel They Need To Be Impressive*

*In Matthew 5, Jesus preaches what is commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. He uses two powerful metaphors to describe His people. HE CALLS US BOTH **SALT AND LIGHT**. Both substances are **valuable and useful**, but they both are **UNIQUE AND DISTINCT**. There Should Be Something **Unique and Distinct** That Causes Us **To Impact Our Surroundings***

*In Jesus's final message to the disciples, He commanded us to **GO AND MAKE** disciples **by teaching them to observe His commandments**.*

The Kingdom of God was never designed to be hidden within the church walls it was designed to be expressed through God's people in every cultural space.

*He reminds us that we have **the opportunity and the responsibility** to be make an **IMPACT ON THE WORLD**.*

So, The Question Becomes.....

*How can we remain **engaged in culture** without **compromising Kingdom convictions**?*

5 Key Principles ...

That Help Stay Engaged In Culture

While Maintaining Kingdom Convictions....

#1 ~ We Must Make The Kingdom Our Priority

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)

33 But **seek first the kingdom of God** and His righteousness,
and all these **things** shall be added to you.

The Culture Prioritizes Certain Things...

Lifestyle ~ Success ~ Fame ~ Popularity ~ Comfort ~ Convenience ~ Personal Preference

The Culture Views God as an ADD-ON ~ A Spiritual Accessory ~ A Weekend Option

YOU CANNOT **INFLUENCE** CULTURE WHILE BEING GOVERNED BY THE SAME PRIORITIES.

The Kingdom Prioritizes **God's Will, God's Word, God's Way**

We Don't Pursue Cultural Influence, We Pursue The King and The Kingdom
Influence Happens Naturally

Our Aim Is Not To Fix The Culture ~ Our Priority Is To Advance The Kingdom

WHAT YOU PUT FIRST EVENTUALLY SHAPES WHAT YOU INFLUENCE

In 1 Kings 17:8 ~ God Sends Elijah to Zerephath, a **corrupt culture**, He Was Obedient To God's Word

He Meets A Widow Who Is **Living In LACK**... In The Corrupt Culture

He Teaches Her A Kingdom Principle ~ **Take Care Of God First**

She Did Not Leave The Culture ~ She Experienced Abundance In The Same Culture ~ **IMPACT**

#1 ~ We Must Make The Kingdom Our Priority

Daniel 1:3-9 (NASB)

3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles,

4 youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

5 The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

9 NOW GOD GRANTED DANIEL FAVOR and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials....

Notice ...

He Purposed In His Heart ~ Influence Begins In The Heart Of Kingdom Citizens

Eating From The Table Was Not Wrong ~ It Was Not His Priority

He Prioritized God's Way Over The Culture

Colossians 1:18 (NLT)

18 Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all....

SO, HE IS FIRST IN EVERYTHING.

#1 ~ *We Must Make The Kingdom Our Priority*

We Don't Prioritize *Prosperity and Popularity*

We Prioritize *Kingdom Purpose*

1 Kings 3:5 (NLT)

*5 That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said,
"What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!"*

1 Kings 3:9-14 (NLT)

*9 Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference
between right and wrong. For who by himself is able to govern this great people of yours?"*

10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom.

*11 So God replied, "Because you have asked for wisdom in governing my people with justice
and have not asked for a long life or wealth or the death of your enemies—*

12 I will give you what you asked for!

I will give you a wise and understanding heart such as no one else has had or ever will have!

*13 And I will **ALSO** give you what you did not ask for—**RICHES AND FAME!***

No other king in all the world will be compared to you for the rest of your life!

When They Ask How Did You Get That.... There Will Be Power In Your Testimony

When You Reveal... GOD DID IT!!!

#2 ~ We Must Maintain A Kingdom Perspective

Colossians 3:2 (ESV)

2 *Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.*

Kingdom Citizens *EVALUATE EVERYTHING* Through A Kingdom Lens

Culture reacts to circumstances by Complaining ~ The Kingdom responds through Our Convictions

Before Culture Is Influenced By Our Words... They Are Monitoring How We Handle...

Pressure, Pain, and Particular Problems

PERSPECTIVE determines How You View/Handle Difficult Circumstances

The Culture Says, "We Are Living In Dark Times... We Need To Regain Power Through Politics"

The Kingdom Says, It's Time To Let Our Light Shine ~ Light Shines Brightest In Darkness

It's Time To Add Flavor To This Bland Situation ~ We Are The Salt Of the Earth

HOW WOULD MY REACTIONS CHANGE IF I VIEWED CHALLENGES THROUGH GOD'S PURPOSES

Kingdom citizens DISCERN what God is doing beneath the surface.

Genesis 50:18-21 (NLT)

18 Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said.

19 But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you?"

20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.

21 No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children."

So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

#2 ~ We Must Maintain A Kingdom Perspective

Be Mindful Of Cultural Conformity

Romans 12:2 (NLT)

2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world **BUT**
let God **TRANSFORM YOU** into a new person by changing the way you think.

Philippians 3:17 (NLT)

17 Dear brothers and sisters, **PATTERN YOUR LIVES AFTER MINE**, and learn from those who follow our example.

When Kingdom Perspective is Maintained,

Pressure becomes Preparation,

Oppositions becomes Opportunities

THE CULTURE BEGINS TO NOTICE THE DIFFERENCE...

Jonah 1:4-6 (NLT)

4 But the Lord hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart.

5 Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. But all this time Jonah was sound asleep down in the hold.

6 So the captain went down after him. "How can you sleep at a time like this?" he shouted.

"GET UP AND PRAY TO YOUR GOD! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives."

Jonah 1:14 (NLT)

14 Then they cried out to the Lord, Jonah's God. "O Lord," they pleaded, "don't make us die for this man's sin.

#3 ~ We Must Establish A Kingdom Presence

Acts 1:8 (NLT)

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. *And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*”

God places Kingdom citizens inside culture, not away from it.

Our Presence is not accidental—it is assigned ~ We Are Strategically Placed

WE ARE DISTINCTIVELY PRESENT - VISIBLY DIFFERENT ~ STAY ACTIVELY ENGAGED.

Esther did not choose the Persian Palace, but God used it ~ For Such A Time As This

Her position became a platform for a nation’s deliverance.

Placement reveals purpose WHEN VIEWED THROUGH KINGDOM EYES.

Application:

Job ~ Neighborhood ~ Classroom ~ Community ~ This is not just a location—IT’S A MISSION FIELD.

Kingdom citizens don’t withdraw from culture; they show up with conviction.

Jeremiah 29:4-7 (NLT)

4 This is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, the God of Israel, says *to all the captives he has exiled to Babylon from Jerusalem:* 5 “Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens and eat the food they produce.

6 Marry and have children. Then find spouses for them so that you may have many grandchildren. Multiply! Do not dwindle away! 7 *And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile.*

PRAY TO THE LORD FOR IT, FOR ITS WELFARE WILL DETERMINE YOUR WELFARE.”

#3 ~ We Must Establish A Kingdom Presence

Matthew 5:13 (ESV)

13 "You are the salt of the earth...."

YOU CANNOT INFLUENCE WHAT YOU REFUSE TO ENGAGE.

Salt only works when it's close enough to touch.

ONE OF THE FUNCTIONS OF SALT IS TO PRESERVE

IN GENESIS 18.... God Did Not Say...

"If the laws change..." "If leadership reforms..." "If the culture improves..."

God was willing to **SPARE SODOM** for 50 (and eventually 10) **RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE** to demonstrate his mercy, justice, and willingness to spare a wicked city for the sake of a few...

The Presence of the Righteous Preserves Territory From Destruction

*The issue was not **JUST** the sin of Sodom.*

*The issue was **THE ABSENCE** of righteous presence.*

Proverbs 11:11 (NLT)

11 Upright citizens are good for a city and make it prosper... but the talk of the wicked tears it apart.

#4 ~ We Must Practice Kingdom Principles

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works
AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.”

Influence is **SUSTAINED** when **Belief Becomes Behavior**

Titus 2:7 (NLT)

7 And you yourself **must be an example** to them by doing good works of every kind.
Let everything **you do** reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.

THE KINGDOM IS NOT ADVANCED BY INFORMATION ALONE
CULTURE is skeptical of **hypocrisy...inconsistency... empty words**

Our Practice Is Proof — Lived Truth Validates Spoken Truth

Many lose **CULTURAL INFLUENCE** not because of opposition—**BUT BECAUSE OF INCONSISTENCY**.
Culture may reject sermons—but it remembers **servanthood, generosity, and forgiveness**.

PRACTICE MUST CONTINUE EVEN WHEN
IT'S UNNOTICED ~ IT'S UNREWARDED ~ IT'S NOT CELEBRATED

Culture is rarely **ARGUED INTO CHANGE**—but it is often **persuaded by consistent righteousness**.

#5 ~ We Must Demonstrate Kingdom Power

1 Corinthians 4:20 (NLT)

20 For THE KINGDOM OF GOD is not just a lot of talk; IT IS LIVING BY GOD'S POWER.

Culture is **INFUENCED** when THE KINGDOM IS DEMONSTRATED, not just talked about...

The Kingdom of God is not merely a message to be **debated**—it is a power to be **demonstrated**.

CULTURE IS SATURATED WITH OPINIONS, INFORMATION, INFLUENCERS

But culture is **persuaded** by 1) transformation, 2) **authority** and 3) **evidence**

WHEN THE KINGDOM IS ONLY DISCUSSED... IT CAN BE DISMISSED.

When the Kingdom is **demonstrated**, it makes an **Impact**.

You don't have power because of **who you are**—you have power because of **who you represent**.

Acts 4:13-14 (ESV)

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And **THEY RECOGNIZED THAT THEY HAD BEEN WITH JESUS**.

14 But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition.

Acts 4:7 (ESV)

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "**By what power** or by what name **did you do this?**"

#5 ~ We Must Demonstrate Kingdom Power

Acts 16:25-34 (NLT)

25 Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening.

26 Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations.

All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off!

27 The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself.

28 But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! **We are all here!**"

29 The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.

30 Then he brought them out and asked, "SIRS, WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household."

32 And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household.

33 Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds.

Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized.

34 He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God.

**GOD'S POWER WAS NOT DEMONSTRATED FOR THEIR EXIT
BUT FOR THEIR PURPOSE.....TO BE A WITNESS**

In Conclusion

*WHEN THE KINGDOM IS PRIORITIZED,
PERSPECTIVE IS RENEWED
PRESENCE IS ESTABLISHED
PRINCIPLES ARE PRACTICED
POWER WILL BE DEMONSTRATED.*

*AND WHEN KINGDOM POWER IS DEMONSTRATED,
CULTURE IS NO LONGER JUST WATCHING...
IT IS RESPONDING....*