

THE WAR OF THE WORLDVIEWS #34

“The Most Important Subject in the Bible”

(An Introduction to the Kingdom of God)

Jesus answered and said to him, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

John 3:3 NASB

Notice Jesus does not say if a man is born again he WILL see the Kingdom of God; He says unless you are born again you CANNOT see it.

Testimony: I was saved in 1971. I did not “see” the Kingdom until 1981. It took me 10 years to realize that Jesus here is not talking about “heaven”! It took me 10 years to discover that the Kingdom of God is the most important subject in the Bible.

When God opened my eyes to “see” the Kingdom, it changed EVERYTHING!

What I want to share tonight and next time can do the same for you...

I. A New Way To “See” The World

A. The Kingdom of God: The Biblical Worldview & Present Reality

1. A worldview is how we view the world.
2. Worldviews are the “glasses” through which we see the world.
3. A Kingdom worldview is like a new “operating system” for the mind’s computer that makes all the programs run; a new way of *thinking*!

“We must make efforts to organize our thoughts. We do not know how to think correctly. The average person thinks at random. He has no clear design in his mind to which he can frame his thoughts.”

Raymond Holliwell, Working With the Law

4. Many good Christian people never move beyond “random thinking”; they

gather new information and truth into their minds but have no unifying context that connects it all.

5. Whether we know it or not, our minds are designed to “organize” truth; we receive new truth or a new revelation and add it the truth we already received. But there is always something at the *center* of our thought system.

B. Something is at the Center

1. When we are born again, we tend to organize truth around the central truth of the tradition we are born into; whether Baptist, Catholic, or Pentecostal.

2. As we move along the road to maturity, we discover new truth, and sometimes we subconsciously “re-center” our understanding of God’s word, arranging new revelation around a new “center” or “point of reference”.

3. In other words, we systematize truth so that new things can harmonize and corroborate things we’ve already learned.

4. Here is a list of 12 important subjects covered in the Bible:

- Salvation
- Faith
- Liturgy
- Holy Spirit (Gifts/Miracles)
- Sovereignty of God
- Praise and worship
- Grace
- Covenant
- Prayer
- Prophecy
- Theology
- Discipleship

a. *We tend to organize our thinking around one of these subjects.*

5. **Most of us begin our journey within a denomination or movement that emphasized one of these subjects as central...**

- For Roman Catholics it would be liturgy
- For Southern Baptists, it would be salvation
- For Pentecostals it would be the Holy Spirit
- For Presbyterians, the sovereignty of God
- Different charismatic churches might focus on faith; or double down on discipleship; or seek to be “presence-centered” through prayer, praise and worship

a. None of these are wrong! All of these are good! Each one is important!

6. And as we journey on in Christ, most of us do a lot of “de-centering” and “re-centering” as we go from faith to faith.

a. Example: Our first church was a Baptist church, the themes of salvation and grace were at the center; when we had an encounter with the Holy Spirit the “center” changed; we received new truth about faith in the “Faith Movement” and were with friends in the “Faith” movement; friends in the “Prayer” movement; **but in 1981 I “saw” the Kingdom of God as the proper center and it changed my life.**

7. I realized that of all these good and great subjects, I saw that none of them serve us best at the center; that place belongs to the biblical worldview we call the Kingdom of God, which is arguably the most important subject in the Bible.

8. The Kingdom of God is the only subject big enough to contextualize and clarify our collection of truth. Let me spend the rest of our time defining...

- What it is
- Why it is the most important subject in the Bible
- Why it matters to you and me right now

II. 3 Points About the Kingdom

A. First: What is the Kingdom of God?

1. It is the term that answers the BIG QUESTION, **“Who’s in charge?”**

2. Every worldview has an answer; in the biblical worldview, it's the Kingdom of God.

3. **First, recognized that “Kingdom” is a governmental term; a Kingdom is a form of government.** It not a dictatorship (one-man rule) or an oligarchy (a few rule) or a democracy (majority rule) or a republic (ruled by Law); the Kingdom of God is a *Theocracy*, it is “God ruled”.

4. The word “kingdom” is a compound of 2 root words:

“King”, which means Lord, ultimate source of all authority

“Dom”, from which we get the words “domain” or “dominion”, meaning the sphere of the King’s authority or reign; a Kingdom is literally, “where the King rules”

Kingdom refers to “Lordship”!

5. **In the New Testament, the terms “Kingdom of Heaven” and “Kingdom of God” mean the same thing.** The Kingdom of God refers to the authority of God; the Kingdom of heaven refers to where the authority comes from.

B. Second: Why the Kingdom of God is the Most Important Subject in the Bible?

1. The Old Testament ends with the Book of Malachi, followed by 400 years of silence! There was no fresh word from God until the arrival of John the Baptist to prepare for the ministry of Jesus. And what was his message?

**In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,
And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
Matthew 3:1-2**

a. But John’s voice was silenced; he was put in prison...

**“From that time, Jesus began to preach saying, ‘Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand’.
Matthew 4:17**

b. Don't miss this! The primary message of Jesus and John is the Kingdom of God!

c. When Jesus preached in the cities of Galilee, they tried to keep Him from leaving; but he said...

"I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."

Luke 4:43

2. Bible scholars use the "law of frequent mention" to determine the importance of a bible subject. The more something is mentioned, the more important it is. Notice that the Kingdom of God and the Gospel of the Kingdom was the most frequently mentioned subject in the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus the Christ:

a. In all 4 Gospels, Jesus only mentioned the "Church" 2 times; but He referred to the Kingdom of God well over 100 times! No other subject comes close.

b. The Kingdom of God was the subject of many of His parables, 7 in one chapter! (Matthew 13)

3. The Kingdom of God is the first thing Jesus told us to pray for!

a. The Lord's Prayer begins with the worship of God; but the 1st petition in the prayer immediately follows: Thy Kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10)

b. Here's we see a simple definition of the Kingdom of God; it is the will of God done on earth as it is in heaven!

4. The Kingdom of God is the foremost thing Jesus commanded us to seek...

a. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is comparing worldviews. He says the Gentiles worry about what they will eat or drink or wear; but to His own He says, "Don't worry about these things..."

But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.

Matthew 6:33

b. In other words: Be delivered from man-centered thinking; Put the Kingdom of God and His Lordship, will, authority, and purposes at the center of your life pursuits! Make this one thing central and all other provisions you need will be given to you!

5. The Kingdom of God was the first message He sent His 12 disciples out to preach!

When Jesus had called the 12 together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases; and He sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

Luke 9:1-2 NIV

6. Later, it was the first message He sent His 70 disciples out to preach!

After this the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

“When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The Kingdom of God has come near you...’”

Luke 10:1, 8-9 NIV

7. The Kingdom message is what brought Jesus to trial; Pilate’s 1st question...

“Are you a king?”

Pilate to Jesus at the Trial in John 18:33

a. To this day, people don’t care if you call Jesus a good teacher, a good man, a prophet or even a savior; but people get offended when you insist that Jesus is Lord, the King of creation!

8. It was the message of the Kingdom that got Him crucified...

a. Jesus did not get the death penalty for being a healer, or a good Bible teacher; it was His claim to the Kingdom, so they wrote over his head....

**And the title ‘King of the Jews’ was written in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin...
John 19:19-20**

9. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples for 40 days prior to the Day of Pentecost. What was His subject?

**“To whom (His disciples) He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking to them of things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.”
Acts 1:1-3**

10. Read the rest of the Book of Acts and you see how the Apostles carried out the mission of Christ by preaching the Kingdom of God as the central subject:

- **Philip preached the Kingdom (Acts 8:12)**
- Paul and Silas preached the Kingdom (Acts 14:22)
- Paul preached the Kingdom (Acts 19:8)
- The church opposed the decrees of Caesar, proclaiming “another King” (17:7)
- The Book of Acts closes with Paul living his last days in Rome...

**And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.
Acts 28:30-31**

ARE YOU BEGINNING TO REALLY “SEE” THE KINGDOM?
ARE YOU BEGINNING TO SEE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE
CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS THAT “TURNED THE WORLD UPSIDE
DOWN AND THE MODERN AMERICAN CHURCH?

Review

We looked at what the Kingdom is
We looked at why it’s the most important subject in the Bible
Let’s close by asking why it matters to you and me right now

III. Conclusion

A. 3 Reasons Why It Matters

#1. Nothing but the Kingdom of God is big enough to contextualize all our thinking and give us a biblical worldview.

a. Any center except the Kingdom center eventually becomes man-centered.

b. Unless the Lordship of Christ and the glory of God are at the center or our circle, salvation becomes the central subject; faith, prayer and even worship becomes all about me.

#2. The end cannot come until the Gospel of the Kingdom is preached in all the world!

a. After the resurrection, the disciples were worried about the same thing...

“Lord, will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?”

Acts 1:6

- This question still consumes a lot of God’s people even today; but they had forgotten what the Lord had told them before His resurrection...

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But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Matthew 24:13-14

b. We can be so busy looking for the 2nd coming we can miss the meaning of the 1st coming. The end can’t come until the Gospel *of the Kingdom* is preached to all nations.

c. The sad truth today is that the Gospel being preached is not the Gospel of the Kingdom! (Explain)

d. The end will not come until the “Gospel of the Kingdom” is preached in all the world. (Is the “Gospel of the Kingdom” even being preached in our city?)

3. Finally, the master key that releases the power of God into the world is the revelation of the Kingdom of God as a *present reality*.

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!'"* For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Luke 17:20-21 NKJV

a. Other translations say “among you” (NLT), “in your midst” (NASB), or “here with you” (CEV).

b. The Pharisees were “futurizing” the Kingdom; “politicizing” the Kingdom; “externalizing” the Kingdom...and we make the same mistakes today!

c. I can declare to you tonight! The Kingdom of God is among us...right now!

Conclusion

The Kingdom of God is the most important subject in the Bible; it is a present reality; but it also has a future and fuller manifestation to come; we'll look at that next time. But for now, do you “see” it?

Title Slide

Closing Prayer