

The Greatest... (Week One)

March 10th, 2024

“Kingdom”

We are kicking off a sermon series this week entitled “**The Greatest...**” and we will be looking at:

- The Greatest Kingdom
- The Greatest Commandment
- The Greatest in the Kingdom
- The Greatest Sacrifice
- The Greatest Victory
- The Greatest Commission

This week we will be looking at the Greatest Kingdom.

1. What makes the Kingdom of Heaven so great?

- God with us
- Garden of Eden
- God walked with Adam and Eve
- Tabernacle in the desert—Temple in Israel
- Jesus on Earth (Emmanuel)

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV) *From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

- The Holy Spirit in us

Luke 17:20-21 (NKJV) *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;²¹ nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”*

With each step, we get closer and closer to experiencing “**The Greatest Kingdom**”—the New Heaven and New Earth of **Revelation 21**.

2. 7 things to be excited about for “**The Greatest Kingdom.**”

Most of us have heard about the streets of gold and the pearly gates and the great city with the huge walls, and the river coming from the throne of God BUT...For me, it’s the things that are not there that get me more excited about “**The Greatest Kingdom.**”

Revelation 21 and **22** tell us about 7 things that will not be in this great kingdom that we have to look forward to:

a) The Sea (**Revelation 21:1**)

Possibly literal, and if so, there will be something so much better:

- The Sea in that time represented turmoil, chaos, fear, uncertainty, and danger...
- The Sea is what divides nations from other nations.
- The Sea in reference to the temple (*priest would use to wash hands and feet...purify themselves before entering into God’s presence*).

b) Death (**Revelation 21:4**)

c) Mourning (**Revelation 21:4**)

d) Weeping (**Revelation 21:4**)

e) Pain (**Revelation 21:4**)

f) Night (**Revelation 21:25**)

No more darkness! The glory of God will illuminate the entire universe and He will be the ultimate source of light, both literally and figuratively.

g) Any Curse (**Revelation 22:3**)

The curse of **Genesis 3** will be removed and gone forever, and complete Shalom (*peace*) will be restored. **Revelation 21** is what we all desire, but Jesus is the way to get there; not what John Lennon suggests or any other religion/way/belief, etc.

3. Part of being in “**The Greatest Kingdom**” is having a King. Who is that?

- **John 14:6; Zechariah 14:9 (NLT).**

4. The Greatest Commandment.

- Love God; Love Others.

Matthew 22:37-40 (NIV) “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*”³⁸ *This is the first and greatest commandment.* ³⁹ *And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’*⁴⁰ *All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”*

- Love is? (**1 Corinthians 13:1-8**).

- Love is both something that we do, and also a desire that we have. If you are struggling with the desire, then ask God to help you desire to love the way that God is commanding you to love.

So, What Now?

- Are you a part of His kingdom? Do you want to be (**John 3:3 (NLT)**)?
- Are you living as if His kingdom is the greatest and the one to fight for (**Matthew 6:33 (NIV)**)?
- When I live with His kingdom in mind it changes the way I live my life. How I think determines what I do and it’s a constant battle for the mind (**1 Timothy 1:17 (NIV)**).

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Ice Breaker: *What is the most recent time when someone was kind to you? What did they do?*

Read/Tell the Story: **Luke 10:25-37** (*The Good Samaritan*)

1. Why do you think the priest and the Levite passed by without helping?
2. Was there ever a time that you were “*passed by*” (*ignored, looked over, etc.*)? What happened?
3. God commands us to love God and to love others. What do you do when your feelings don’t match the command?
4. In a court of law, would you be convicted of loving your neighbor (*the people in your life*)? And why?
5. When was the last time you got to help someone? How did that make you feel?
6. Which “*neighbor*” is God asking you to show kindness or mercy toward? What are you going to do about it?

Supporting Scripture: **Matthew 22:36-40; 1 Corinthians 13:1-8**