

Monday Morning Rewind – March 22, 2010

Good morning. Concerning the amount of Kingdom life you're experiencing, are you at the wide or narrow end of the funnel?

On Sabbath we began a new series on the Lord's Prayer. However, we didn't start at the beginning of the prayer. Instead, we focused on the phrase, "Thy Kingdom come" asking "What does it mean for God's kingdom to come into our lives?" And "What prevents us from receiving the kingdom in its fullness?"

The first thing that prevents the kingdom from coming into our lives is **unbelief**. For the Jews, their unbelief was rooted in a **preoccupation with an earthly, rather than a spiritual kingdom**. Unwittingly, we repeat the same mistake of the Jews of Jesus' day when we are preoccupied with the politics of man. Our hearts become so attached to this world that we overlook as insignificant the Kingdom of righteousness that the King brought to live in us.

The second thing preventing us from receiving the kingdom is **failure to make the kingdom supreme in our affections**. Jesus said to seek His kingdom *first*. (See Matt. 6:33.) We're seeking His kingdom all right, but just not seeking it *first*. In reality many don't see the kingdom at work in their lives because they seek it only every 7th day. They seek it 7th, or 13th, or 27th behind "all these things." What things? Eating and drinking, food on the table, dining with friends, clothing, shopping, and making money.

Jesus is saying that unbelievers give their time, attention, and focus to material things. They seek food, clothes, shelter, portfolios, etc with all their heart *to the point of worship*. Not so with those who belong to Him. We are to search for, intensively demand, crave, and give our time, attention, and focus to the Kingdom *first*. Then He promises that the food, clothes, shelter, portfolios, etc. will be added to you as well. **If you seek the other stuff first, you don't get the Kingdom. But if you seek the Kingdom first, you get it and the other stuff too!**

The third thing preventing us from receiving the kingdom is a **partial understanding of all the benefits of the Kingdom**. Rewind to Matthew 4:17, 23; 9:35; and 10:1, 7-8. Notice the three repeated elements of proclaiming the kingdom of God: teaching, preaching, and healing. This three-fold combination was "Good news." **To preach the kingdom is to preach the benefits that God has made available because Jesus the Messiah has come.**

Many think that the works of miracles and healing, etc. are part of the kingdom of glory yet to come, and is the reason we don't see much of this today. Not so. The Kingdom of grace that Christ told his disciples to preach as "near" was confirmed by miracles of healing and the casting out of devils. This proves that these works of the Kingdom are part and parcel of the kingdom of grace—the kingdom that Christ told us to proclaim. The kingdom that Christ said was "inside us." (Luke 17:21)

How do we know this aspect of the Kingdom belongs to us? According to Jesus, we've got the keys! "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:19)

What does it mean to have the keys to something? See Isa. 22:20-22. Eliakim was royal chamberlain to the king. As Royal Chamberlain, Eliakim would carry the keys of the palace. A Chamberlain is an official charged with the management of the living quarters of a sovereign or member of the nobility. He was the high steward or factor of a member of the nobility. Today we'd call him a "prime minister."

What does God expect of "Stewards" or managers? [Rewind to Matt. 25:14-30] It's clear that God expects an abundant return on His investment. **The kingdom has been entrusted to us and we are to multiply it.** The wicked steward took his talent ("key") and buried it! Are we doing that?

Christ has opened heaven's door (see Rev. 3:7) and given us the keys. Every spiritual blessing in Christ is open to those with the keys of the kingdom! (See Eph. 1:3.) With those keys, we are to "bind" (or tie) up what has been tied up in heaven; and we are to "loose" (*loo'-o* = A primary verb; to "loosen" (literally or figuratively): - break (up), destroy, dissolve) whatever has been broken up or destroyed in heaven.

What has been tied up and destroyed in heaven? "But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house." (Matt. 12:28, 29) "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." (Luke 10:18, 19)

Satan, the strong man, has been tied up because the kingdom of heaven has come and we are to “rob his house.” Every time we help lead someone to Christ, we rob Satan’s house!



Picture a funnel. The wide, open end represents all that God has made available to us in the Kingdom. The narrow end represents how much kingdom life we may be experiencing. What narrows the flow? Unbelief, pride, cherished sin, seeking the kingdom 5th, 12th, or 32nd instead of first, lack of knowledge, or even burying the “keys” (talents).

How can we be sure to receive the fullness of the kingdom? The answer is contained in the simple prayer we will be examining over the next several weeks. **The Lord’s prayer reveals the treasures of Kingdom living right now.**

Today, I invite you to let your heart become His perfect dwelling place. *Today*, I invite you to let the King fill up the empty, dark space. *Today*, I invite you to ask God to flood every room, every part of your body temple, so He can build His throne in your heart.

Lord Jesus, let your kingdom come! –Pastor Randy

p.s. Next Sabbath’s message: “Our Father in heaven...”

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2 Chron. 7:14

"The need is great. The key is prayer. The time is now."