

The Kingdom and the Cross

The Kingdom

“He delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” - Colossians 1:13-14

“The Kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” - Matthew 13:31-32

“And he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.” - Luke 9:2

The kingdom of God/Heaven is a central theme in scripture. The word kingdom means the rule & authority of God through King Jesus. From Genesis to Revelation, we see that God's intention is to have a people for himself that he will use to expand his kingdom on the earth exercising his authority. We are ambassadors of his Kingdom. God's purpose is to expand his Kingdom rule on the earth like it is in Heaven. The way that he chooses to accomplish this is through his people, the Church. This is accomplished through God filling his people with the Holy Spirit and by bringing the lifestyle of the Kingdom wherever we go. The Kingdom advancement doesn't take place through carnal means like force and political posturing. It comes as God's people walk in relationship with him and bring his love, character, and glory to situations that he places us in.

The Kingdom is about God's Authority

“And to him was given dominion (authority) and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” -Daniel 7:14

“For I too am a man under authority with soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘go’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come’ and he comes, and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”
Matthew 8:9

All authority belongs to God. God gives authority when we are under his authority. This is not a power that we control, but an authority that we steward as we walk under the direction of the Holy Spirit in full submission to Him and His Word.

The Kingdom is also about:

- Repentance and being born again. Matthew 4:17, John 3:3
- The proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Matthew 9:35
- Healing and restoration. Matthew 4:23-24, Luke 9:2
- Obedience. Matthew 7:21
- Righteousness, peace, and joy. Romans 14:17

The Cross

“For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” - 1 Corinthians 1:18

“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” - Colossians 1:19-20

The message of what Christ accomplished for the world on the cross is the power of God. The cross was an execution instrument that was used to punish people during the Roman Empire. Although Jesus was perfect and totally innocent, the cross has come to represent Jesus' physical death. It became the spiritual place of the death for sin and by which God restored relationship between himself and mankind. Jesus perfectly obeyed the Father and laid down his life for us on the cross at Calvary. In so doing, he accomplished the forgiveness of sins for the world, victory over the powers of darkness, and demonstrated what the Kingdom of God looks like.

The Cross is about obedience, substitution, reconciliation, and victory. It is the message that we proclaim to a dying, lost world that is separated from God.

How does the cross play a role in our lives?

“Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” - Luke 14:27

Any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.” - Luke 24:33

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” - 1 Peter 2:24

The cross is not only about repenting of sins and receiving salvation, but living a life totally surrendered to God. It is a fundamental core in the sanctification process for us as Christians. To carry our cross means to die daily to self and our old sinful nature. It is a life emptied of selfish ambition and human desires. Carrying our cross is to take on the character of Christ. It encompasses a life lived for the will of God empowered by the Holy Spirit. When we embrace the cross, we come into who we are in God and God’s purpose for our lives.

How do the Kingdom and the Cross come together?

“Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.” - Isaiah 9:7

“And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” - Philippians 2:8

Jesus Christ is the focal point and summation of the Kingdom and the Cross. He is both Lord and Savior. God has established his King, his kingdom and one day the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ (Rev: 11:15). Every knee

will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:10-11).

The Kingdom and the Cross are the lifestyle that we live and the message we proclaim. As we do, God advances his Kingdom as we partner with him through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are co-laborers with God (1 Cor 3:9). The Kingdom is the supreme goal of the cross, and the Cross is how the Kingdom is advanced.

Scriptures on the Kingdom

“From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” - Matthew 4:17

“For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.” - 1 Corinthians 4:20

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” - Matthew 6:10

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my father who is in heaven.” - Matthew 7:21

Scriptures on the Cross

“Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” - Hebrews 12:2

“And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” - Colossians 1:20

“By canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demand. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.” - Colossians 2:14

“May I never boast except in the cross of Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” - Galatians 6:14