

**RE-  
VALUING  
THE  
KINGDOM**

## RE-VALUING THE KINGDOM

November 9, 2014

Congregational reading: Matthew 10:1-8

Sermon in a sentence: Attaining the Kingdom of Heaven is worth everything we have or anything we can acquire.

Scriptures: Matthew 13; Luke 18:18-30

Matt. 10:1-8 KJV And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, **he gave them power *against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.*** <sup>2</sup> Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son of* Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup> Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son of* Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. <sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not:** <sup>6</sup> **But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.** <sup>7</sup> **And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.** <sup>8</sup> **Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.**

Jesus actually spent a lot of time talking about the Kingdom of Heaven:

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

**Luke 4:43 NKJV ... but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”**

**Matt. 12:28 NKJV But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.**

**Matt 6:9-10 KJV ... Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.<sup>10</sup> Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.**

**Matthew 13 is another prime example. In that chapter alone, there are seven parables that speak directly to the topic of the Kingdom of Heaven:<sup>1</sup>**

- Parable of the sower
- Parable of the tares
- Parable of the mustard seed
- Parable of the leaven
- Parable of the hidden treasure
- Parable of the costly pearl
- Parable of the dragnet

**Two parables (tares and dragnet) show us the God will do everything in His power to save us, even though He has to put up with a host of “tares” growing alongside the “wheat”, or bad fish in the dragnet along with the good. (Both of these situations will be dealt with at the end of time.)**

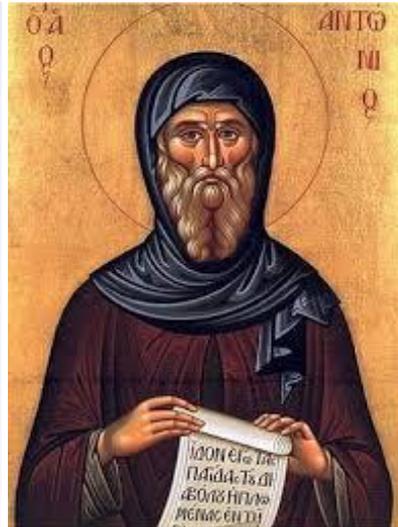
**Three parables show how exceedingly small investments on our part can yield tremendous, eternal results: (mustard seed, leaven, hidden treasure).**

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<sup>1</sup> Some consider Mt. 13:52 to be another parable, bringing the total to eight.

And one parable (costly pearl) speaks of those who are actively seeking the Kingdom of Heaven. Having seen it, they are willing to sell everything they have to attain it.

***Illustration re 'costly pearl' parable:*** Saint Antony of Egypt was born in 251AD and died in 356 at the ripe old age of 105. His parents died when he was still a teenager, leaving him very wealthy. One day in church, he heard the story of the 'Rich Young Ruler', (as we also heard last week (Lu. 18:18-30)). His response to Jesus' words however, was the complete opposite to that of the young man in the story. Antony sold everything he had inherited and went out into the wilderness to become a monk. (He is often called the father of the Christian monastic movement.) He actually believed that what Jesus promised would come to pass and that treasure in the Kingdom of Heaven far superseded any treasure he had accumulated on Earth.<sup>2</sup> (Images of Antony, both as a young and old man.)



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<sup>2</sup> Biographical information regarding St. Antony:  
<http://www.ewtn.com/library/MARY/ANTONY.HTM>,  
accessed Nov. 4, 2014.

So what really is this “Kingdom of Heaven”, (or “Kingdom of God”, as all the other Gospel writers refer to it)?<sup>3</sup>

As one writer puts it, it is “**God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule**”.<sup>4</sup>

Let us consider His Kingdom, which we experience both internally and externally.

Internally, He establishes His lordship over our hearts and minds, changing and re-making us in ways we could not possibly have done ourselves. He gives us benefits like “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:7 KJV), along with “righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17b KJV).

Peace illustration: Bro. Hines upon receiving his cancer diagnosis: “Well, I have a God!”

Joy illustration: Bro. Teklemariam responding to his young son being murdered.

Externally, in the physical realm, we have the promise of residence and citizenship in God’s eternal kingdom:

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<sup>3</sup> This term appears only in Matthew’s gospel (32 times). He likely shied away from using “Kingdom of God” because of the sensitivity of his mainly Hebrew audience to the use of the name “God”.)

<sup>4</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy in *Gospel and Kingdom*, quoted by Eugene Wilson in the Pentecostal Herald, Nov. 2014, pg. 37.

**John 14:1-3 NKJV “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.**

**Our experience with earthly kingdoms has led us to desire better. Corruption, political intrigue, wars and rumours of wars and wickedness in high places seem to be the order of the day. Human beings have proven over and over that we do not have the skills necessary to rule ourselves, let alone each other. In God’s Kingdom, He rules!**

**Over 4,000 years ago, Abraham saw this through the eyes of faith, and kept looking for the revelation of the eternal city, “whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10b KJV).**

**How appealing is this to us? To the rich young ruler, it was somewhat appealing, but when he realized that God demanded total rulership over everything he had, he went away grieving (Mt. 19:22). Antony, as we have observed, willingly embraced the Lordship of Christ over His life and quickly gave everything over to Him.**

**What is our response? Who, or what, is king over our lives? Who, or what is it that we will allow to control us?**

**The phrase, “God’s people” speaks to our status when we enter the Kingdom through His amazing grace and mercy. Calvary opens the door, and as we enter in, He seals us as His people through the infilling of His own Holy Spirit.**

**“God’s place” refers to the world to come and all the joys He has in store for us.**

**“God’s rule” is based on His divine character and His divine Word. His Word becomes our ‘rule for life’, (an old monastic term).**

**However it is that we have come to the knowledge of God’s eternal Kingdom, we all face the same crucial decision. Shall we enter His Kingdom or stay out? Will we receive it with joy or reject it with grief? Are we willing to sell everything we have to attain it, or would we rather maintain our earthly treasure?**

**The parable of the sower tells us of three great impediments to receiving and responding to the message of the Kingdom:**

- The devil steals the Word (“wayside”)**
- Persecution and affliction cause us to lose our grip on the Kingdom (“stony places”)**
- The cares of life and the deceitfulness of wealth quench our desire for the Kingdom (“thorns”)**

**Let us therefore fight against these impediments and strive to enter in, because attaining the Kingdom of Heaven is worth everything we have or anything we can acquire.**