TOPIC: REVALUING THE KINGDOM

Attaining the Kingdom of Heaven is worth everything we have and anything we can acquire.

KEY POINTS

- Jesus actually spent a lot of time talking about the Kingdom of Heaven.
- In Matthew 13, there are seven parables that speak directly to the topic of the Kingdom of Heaven:
  - 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 show us that 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.
- And one parable speaks of those who are actively seeking the Kingdom of Heaven. Having encountered it, they are willing to sell everything they have to attain it.
- The "Kingdom of God" is "God's people in God's place under God's rule". His Kingdom is both internal and external.
- 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" (Philippians 4:7), along with "righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17b).
- Externally, in the physical realm, we have the promise of residence and citizenship in God's eternal kingdom.
- Human beings have proven over and over that we do not have the skills necessary to rule ourselves or each other.
- In God's Kingdom, He rules!
- How appealing is this to us? Who, or what, is king over our lives? Who or what will we allow to control us?
- The phrase "God's people" refers 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.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Matthew 13; Luke 18:18-30

- "God's rule" is based on His divine character and His divine Word. His Word becomes our 'rule for life'.
- However, having come to the knowledge of His Kingdom, we now come face-to-face with a crucial decision of eternal significance:
- Shall we enter in or stay out? Will we receive His kingdom with joy or reject it with grief? Are we willing to sell everything we have to attain it?
- 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
  - Persecution and affliction cause us to lose our grip on the Kingdom
  - The cares of life and the deceitfulness of wealth ('the good life') quench our desire for the Kingdom.
- However, let us strive to enter in, because attaining the Kingdom of Heaven is worth everything we have or anything we can acquire.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Reflect back on your past experience.
   - Who or what had been king over your life? Was it a positive experience or a negative experience?
   - For those who said the above was a negative experience, was it a struggle to break from that person or thing's hold?
   - Having gained freedom, how did you feel afterwards?
2. Reflect on your experiences in God's Kingdom. How does God show His lordship in your life? When do you most appreciate God's lordship over your life?
3. What sacrifices have you made to secure your place in the Kingdom of God? Are they necessary? Discuss.
4. In your own words, what is the value that you place on the Kingdom of Heaven?

Prayer Time

Lord, it's my desire to be like You, to live for You and to live with You someday. Help me to make Your Word my 'rule for life'. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

L.G. ice-Breaker: What are the things or people that hold special value in your life? Is that particular status well deserved?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, JULY 9, 2017

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✔ (Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

! (Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____