

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD

THE KINGDOM OF GOD | VARIOUS TEXTS | SEPTEMBER 27, 2020 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

SERMON OUTLINE:

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

"Jesus is Lord!"

- The closeness of the kingdom and responding to Jesus (Mark 1:15)
- The fundamental declaration of faith (Romans 10:9)
- Everything is subject to Christ and God's kingdom (Philippians 2:10-11)

Kingdom Citizens: Recognizing our Dual Citizenship

- We are citizens of God's kingdom (Philippians 3:20)
- We are citizens of earthly kingdoms

Living by the Spirit as Exiles in the World

- Remember God's kingdom is a different sort of kingdom (John 18:33-36)
- Remember we are a holy nation established by God in Christ (1 Peter 2:9-10)
- Remembering we are exiles scattered in the world (1 Peter 1:1-2; 2:11-12)
- Remember God has delegated authority to earthly rulers and kingdoms (John 19:10-11; Romans 13:1-2)

Living by the Spirit as Exiles for the World

- Living as exiles for the blessing of the places we are scattered by God (Jeremiah 29:4-7)
- Living as good citizens within the structures as established by God (Romans 13:1-7)
- Living in Christian service in relation to the needs of the world (Matthew 25:31-46)
- Living prophetically in relation to the powers and authorities (Acts 4:8-20)

Five Practices of Kingdom Citizens amidst Earthly Kingdoms

- Hold to our primary citizenship
- Discern the times and agendas
- Walk by the Spirit
- Maintain perspective
- Live in the tension of hope

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you experienced conflict between your faith and the world around you? What happened and how did you respond?
2. This week we continue our series "The Kingdom of God" by exploring how Jesus brings the kingdom of God and we live as disciples in the midst of kingdoms in conflict. Begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His Word.
3. Read Jesus' announcement about the kingdom of God in Mark 1:14-15. What do you think it means to repent because the kingdom of God is at hand?
4. The early believers' response to Jesus and the good news of the kingdom was often expressed in the statement "Jesus is Lord." Read Romans 10:9 and 1 Corinthians 12:3 and reflect on what it might have meant to them that Jesus is Lord in a time when "Caesar is Lord" was one of the primary identifiers of allegiance.
5. Read Philippians 3:20-21. According to Paul in these verses, what characterizes the mindset of someone who lives out of their heavenly citizenship?
6. What does heavenly citizenship in God's kingdom mean to you? How does it guide you in these divided times in our own nation? How do you struggle with it?
7. Read 1 Peter 2:9-12. What stands out to you in this passage both about who we are in Christ and what that means for our earthly existence?
8. In John 18:33-36 and 19:10-11 Jesus is interrogated by Pilate before the crucifixion. Read those texts. What do you think Jesus is trying to say about Himself, Pilate, and the entire situation?
9. Read the following passages and describe what you think they say about living in God's kingdom in relation to the kingdoms of this earth. If you're in a small group, perhaps divide up these passages amongst different members:
 - Psalm 2
 - Jeremiah 29:4-7
 - 1 Timothy 2:1-3
 - Romans 13:1-7
 - Acts 4:8-20
 - Mark 12:13-17
10. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study of the kingdom of God? If you are on your own, write that down. If you are in a small group, discuss your answers with one another. Close in prayer. Choose one person in your life with whom you will share something you learned through this study

DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper into the theme of living in the kingdom of God in one or more of the following ways:

- Memorize Romans 10:9 or Philippians 3:20.
- Take time to meditate on Jesus' encounter with Pontius Pilate in John 18:33-36; 19:10-11. Respond to the passage by drawing, painting, journaling, or going for a walk to pray.
- Based on this message and study guide, talk with a friend or journal on your own about what it means to live in the tension of hope as a citizen of the kingdom of God and a citizen of an earthly kingdom.
- Join us for the Leadership Community with Dr. Vince Bacote on Monday, September 28, at 7 pm online, as he speaks on "The Political Disciple: A Theology of Public Life": eastbrook.org/politicaldisciple.