

Manchester School of Theology

Kingdom of God in Matthew

1. Enter the Kingdom (Matt 4:17-25)

John Wimber

“The word means reign, not realm and refers to actual dynamic power effective in ministry. Thus the kingdom invades the old age through the person and ministry of Jesus and that ministry consists of both proclamation of the kingdom with its accompanying call to follow Jesus, and the effective demonstration of the power and reality of the kingdom.”

“Here comes the kingdom of the heavens!”

Does it suggest a **future** or a **present** kingdom? It means **both**: it is on its way, it is just about to break in, in fact it is breaking in, in some ways, as Jesus speaks – “here comes!” (This “here-coming” is what newscasters call “breaking news”, the announcement of an event taking place at the time of its telling.” Bruner

“I now tend to speak much more about the “coming” of the Kingdom now and in the future. We expect to see the Kingdom coming now but recognise that it will come fully in the future.” David Devenish

“The kingdom is the presence of the future.” George Eldon Ladd.

What is Repentance?

Huge transition from v 17 to v18. From big, cosmic concept to specific place, specific people, specific (normal, even smelly) jobs.

Widening Influence

2. Clash of Kingdoms (Matt 12:22-30)

In this passage we learn that there is actually another kingdom, a rival kingdom. And a zone of conflict between the two kingdoms. That the kingdom of God isn't coming into a vacuum; it is replacing an existing system, displacing and subverting an existing ruler.

There is a clash of two kingdoms.

Some people are blind - there are many kinds of blindness.

Some people are mute - there are many kinds of muteness.

Silence is a great strategy for maintaining the status quo. Speaking about things is an expression of the freedom Christ brings. It can be messy and overwhelming, and talking about things sometimes makes things worse before they get better, and may just get you in trouble, but it's how things change.

So the work of the Devil is never just individual - it's always systemic. And it's never just systemic - its always individual. And the two are connected.

The Darkness Fights Back

There are two kingdoms, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan. Both express themselves through people. One is oppressive, one is liberative. One makes people blind and mute, one releases people to see and speak. One hurts, one heals. One accuses, the other announces. One is advancing, the other is being invaded, supplanted, removed.

But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

3. Kingdom Mystery (Matt 13:10-23)

This chapter is about the kingdom going through us.

- Massive idea: kingdom of heaven
- Tiny way in – like a seed
- Significant fruit

Parable about parables:

- A parable is like a Tardis
- A parable is like a Trojan horse

- A parable is like a slow-release pill
- A parable is like a seed: the whole tree is in the seed.

Jesus never teaches methodology – only theology.

Revelation begets revelation. Understanding produces more understanding.

Contrary to expectations

<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Very visible	mostly invisible
All at once	gradual
Fully-formed	small and growing
Direct from heaven	through God's people

RT France, "Parables are 'hidden things.' In this way the medium (parables) is itself integral to the message it conveys (the secrets of the kingdom of heaven)."
thirty."

"Evidence of the presence of the Kingdom of God is thick wherever and whenever people stand on the promise of God that there is more to this world – more to this life – than what we see. There is more than the getting over, getting by, or getting mine. There is more than the brokenness, the destruction, and the despair that threaten to wash over us like the water of the deep. There is a vision of a world where God cuts through the chaos, where God speaks and there is light." Lisa Sharon Harper

What do we learn about the Kingdom of God from this passage?

1. The Kingdom is a gift – unmerited, undeserved, unearned – "to you it has been given to know"
2. The Kingdom needs to be understood. Digested. Thought about. Talked about. That takes work. Chew it 20 times!
3. The kingdom comes gradually, not all at once.
4. The kingdom starts small and then grows.

5. The word of the kingdom works inside your heart
6. The word of the Kingdom produces much fruit through your life.