

## Your Kingdom Come

WEEK 34

**Read Matthew 4:23; 6:10, 33; 16:13-19;  
Luke 9:1-2.**

We are to live under the rule of our King, Jesus Christ, and extend His rule throughout the earth.

The Bible teaches that Jesus went everywhere “preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” (Matthew 4:23). Jesus taught His disciples that they should pray, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done” (Matthew 6:10). Jesus sent His disciples out “to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick” (Luke 9:2). Jesus told many stories, or parables, about the kingdom of heaven to explain how His kingdom functioned and how it would be advanced on earth. (Read Matthew 13:1-52.) So it is very important to understand what the kingdom of God is and how to function powerfully and fruitfully in it. This lesson shows how God wants to use your life to help see Christ’s kingdom mission fulfilled in the earth.

1. **The meaning of the kingdom.** Missions author Steven Hawthorne defines the kingdom of God as “the exercise of God’s kingship, His authority, His right to rule based on His might, power and glory.” In this age we are not to view the kingdom of God in terms of a *domain* (a physical place), but rather of a *dominion* (God’s absolute rule in our hearts). It is not so much a physical realm as it is a righteous reality, a dynamic power released to defeat hell and deliver fallen humanity. (Read Luke 17:20-21.)

2. **The message of the kingdom.** The subject of God’s kingdom invading the kingdom of darkness and defeating it was central in all of Jesus’ teachings. He called His followers to advance His kingdom into the hearts and lives of people wherever they ministered.

**Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in the heaven saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”**

**Revelation 11:15**

(Read Matthew 12:22-30.) John the Baptist came commanding people to “repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 3:2). He was announcing that the power of the age to come had invaded this present evil age in the person of the King, Jesus Christ. When John the Baptist was put in prison “Jesus began to preach and to say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” (Matthew 4:17). This message was the prevailing theme of Christ’s ministry and mission. It should be our prevailing theme as well.

**3. The mission of the kingdom.** Jesus told Simon Peter and His other disciples that He was giving them “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” in order to do the work of the kingdom of heaven on earth. (Read Matthew 16:13-19.) Jesus was giving His disciples *kingdom authority*. When a person gives keys to someone else, he is giving them the right of entry and access. Jesus gave His followers the right of entry and access into the redemptive resources of His kingdom. They would have Christ’s very authority as their own. The counsels and strategies of hell would never be able to prevail against those believers who walk in the knowledge, wisdom, strength and power of Jesus Christ.

This same kingdom authority is yours by faith. We have been given the privilege and responsibility to “bind,” or forbid, what God forbids and to “loose,” or permit, what God permits. (Read Matthew 16:19.) These keys are to be used by us to advance God’s plans and purposes on the earth.

**4. The present and future kingdom.** In his book *The Gospel of the Kingdom* George Eldon Ladd writes that we are living in a kingdom that is both “already” and “not yet.” He asserts that “the kingdom of God has present realities and future expectancies.” The kingdom of God actually appears twice. The first coming of His kingdom was to destroy the power of sin and Satan. (Read 1 John 3:8.) The second coming will be to completely restore righteousness on the earth. (Read Revelation 11:15; 12:10.)

Steven Hawthorne views the kingdom victory of God being accomplished in three great acts:

- Christ’s first coming: *breaking Satan’s power*. This was Jesus’ mission on earth by His life, death and resurrection.
- Between His comings: *undoing Satan’s works*. Jesus continues His mission with His church to all nations.
- Christ’s second coming: *destroying Satan’s kingdom*. Christ comes in His full glory and reign over the earth.

**5. The mandate of the kingdom.** A mandate is an official and often a royal command. Jesus gave His followers this command to help focus our lives: “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added

to you” (Matthew 6:33). It is so easy in our lives and ministries to get our priorities out of place. We often treat secondary things as primary and primary things as secondary. Jesus, our King, is very clear concerning our primary purpose. We are to advance the kingdom of God in the hearts of people everywhere, making sure that the spiritual, eternal rule of Christ and His redemptive purpose are at the forefront of our faith and focus. Jesus means for His redemption to touch every strata of society and every part of our lives. He promises that if we will “put first things first,” all our other needs will be met by Him. (Read Matthew 6:33.) When Jesus gave the Great Commission to His disciples, He was entrusting to them what was the focus of His heart for all the peoples of the earth. (Read Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15.) These *final words* of Jesus must be our *first works*.

**6. The miracle of the kingdom.** This miracle of Christ’s kingdom is that it is a supernatural, Holy Spirit-infused, irresistible force in the earth. It simply cannot be stopped by any human or demonic enemy. Jesus promised, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed . . . when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree (Matthew 13:31,32.) He further said, “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened” (Matthew 13:33.) Jesus was assuming us that though our efforts in advancing the kingdom of God may look small or insignificant, there is divine potential that causes our simple acts of obedience to grow and multiply greatly.

The expansion of Christ’s kingdom through His church has been resisted severely over the centuries. Yet nothing and no one has been able to long withstand the flood and force of God’s liberation and life. So, go forward for Jesus Christ with the *meaning, message, mission and mandate* of His kingdom. As you go, know that you are advancing a *miraculous* kingdom – existing, empowered and expanded by the power of the Holy Spirit, all for the glory of King Jesus.

Notes

**MEMORIZE:**

*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you (Matthew 6:33).*

**KEY TRUTH:**

It is vitally important to understand what the kingdom of God is, to know how to operate powerfully and fruitfully in it, and to commit to seeing the King's kingdom mission fulfilled in the earth.

**YOUR RESPONSE:**

- Meditate on what it means to "seek first the kingdom of God." Ask the Lord to reveal to you places where you are placing secondary things first.
- As you daily go to God in prayer, picture yourself having the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" as a gift of privileged power to exercise Christ's authority on earth.
- Since unity in the body of Christ, the church, is necessary to seeing the kingdom of God strengthened and advanced, make a point to develop nourishing relationships with Christian leaders in other groups or denominations.
- Wake up every day declaring that this day is dedicated "to the King and His kingdom!"