

Chapter 5

The Message of Jesus and Paul

I don't know if you have ever considered it or examined the scriptures closely, but I challenge you to ask yourself, what was the message of Jesus and Paul? All the apostles were taught by Jesus, so the apostolic teaching of the apostles should be the teaching and message of Jesus (Acts 2:42). The Apostle Paul argued in the book of Galatians that the gospel that he received came not from man, or any church or denomination, but directly to him by the Lord Jesus (Gal. 1:11-12).

While the kingdom of God was the central message of Jesus, many modern-day evangelists have virtually ignored it. A gospel of American invention has replaced the New Testament message of the "gospel of the Kingdom." Many evangelists and even professors of Bible colleges would be hard-pressed to expound on the "gospel of the Kingdom." Yet it is one of the first words from Jesus and the last message He spoke before returning to heaven (Mk.1:14-15; Acts 1:3).

When John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness he said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:1-2). His hearers understood he was referring to the future age prophesied by the Old Testament prophets. It would be a time when the Messianic King would defeat the enemies of Israel and usher in the Messianic Age of an everlasting kingdom of peace and prosperity. The long awaited expectation had arrived in Jesus.

Jesus told the crowds, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: because that is why I was sent" (Luke 4:43). The 12 Apostles also traveled with Him and were commissioned by Him to preach the same message as He did (Mt. 10:1,7-8). They went out and preached that people should repent (Mk. 6:12), showing the connection of accepting the rule of God (kingdom) by the call of repentance. They also confessed their sins and were baptized as they believed in the Messianic King-Jesus (Mt. 3:1-2,6,8; John 4:1; Acts 19:4-6). Jesus tried to explain that He had to be a suffering Messiah to overthrow Satan's authority legally and permanently (Luke 24:26; Col. 2:15). Later 70 others were commissioned to preach the kingdom message also (Lk. 10:1,9).

The gospel of the Kingdom has to be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then the end will come (Mt. 24:14). In the interim Christ's disciples would be the witnesses of the Messiah King. The gospel of the Kingdom is not an invitation to "invite Jesus into your heart," neither is it centered on heaven awaiting believers at death. It's focus is on accepting the rule of God by rejecting Satan's, receiving the grace of the cross that results in personal relationship with God (Acts 26:18-20), for its by grace that we are saved (Eph. 2:5). The kingdom is received through the New Birth (Jn. 3:3, 5). The kingdom is the realm in which one accepts God's rule (1 Thess. 1:9). It is a realm in which one must enter now (Col. 1:13-14), yet it is a realm in which one

will enter in the future (Mt. 25:31,34). In this age there is death; in the kingdom of God, eternal life (Mk. 10:29-30). In this age the righteous and wicked are mixed together (Mt. 13:47-51). In the future all wickedness and sin will be destroyed (Mt. 13:41). At present, Satan is viewed as the “god of this age,” in the future kingdom, God’s rule will have destroyed Satan and righteousness will displace evil (2 Cor. 4:4-5; Rev. 11:15; Mt. 13:36-43).

Have you accepted the offer of God’s kingdom? Have you turned from darkness to light? Have you turned from the authority of Satan unto the authority of God? Have you received the gift of forgiveness and the inheritance of eternal life? If not, repent for the kingdom of God (rule of God) has arrived.

God calls upon all men everywhere to submit voluntarily to His rule. Thus the kingdom now is said to be in a mystery form (Mk. 4:11), and is not seen by natural observation. When God however, asserts His rule universally, the kingdom will appear in glory and will manifest to all (Daniel 2:44).

When Jesus went about preaching the message, “Repent, for the kingdom of God or the rule of God was at hand,” the Jews seemed to understand it. When Paul taught the same message to Gentiles he used the word “Lord” instead of the word “King.” “King” was a foreign term in Gentile usage, but they understood completely “Caesar is Lord.” He is deity, he is maximum authority, he is the boss. Christian gentiles said, “No, Caesar is not Lord, Jesus is Lord!” He is Deity, He is our authority, He is our boss, He is God (Acts 26:18; Romans 1:1,3; John 20:28).

The Apostle Paul said, “That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9 NASV).

On the day of Pentecost the Apostle Peter said the same thing. This Jesus that you have crucified, God has raised, and has made Him both Lord and Messiah (Acts 2:36). The call for response was the same as when Jesus and John preached the kingdom message. Repent, have a change of heart and mind, turn from darkness to light, for Satan’s authority unto God’s and be baptized – identifying with the Messiah Jesus. You also shall receive God’s promised Holy Spirit.

Christ’s death, burial and resurrection was the foundation that secured God’s right to have absolute authority over those who had turned to God. Romans 14:9 says, “This is why Christ died and came to life again, to establish his lordship over dead and living...” (New English Bible). The Apostle Paul stated that as believers we “are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:20).

The gospel message contains the good news that God has redeemed man, [freed and released them from the clutches of Satan] to serve the living and true God (1 Thessalonians 1:9). Which master do you serve, whose authority are you under? Have

you turned from darkness to light, from Satan's authority unto God's that you may receive the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 26:18) ?

The preaching of the gospel of the kingdom is the only message that brings the righteousness of God [being made right with God, as a gift, through Jesus blood], and the truth of being under God's authority and rule [holiness], into the lives of men and women who have decided to become Jesus disciples

Questions

1. **Read Mark 1:14-15 & Acts 1:3.** One of the first words of Jesus and the last message He spoke before returning to heaven was: a. things concerning tithing. b. things concerning the order of worship. c. things pertaining to the kingdom of God.
2. **Read Matthew 3:1-2.** When John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness he said: a. Ask Jesus into your heart. b. God has a wonderful plan for your life. c. Repent [have a change of heart & mind] for the rule of God has come. [I have interpreted the kingdom of God as the rule of God for the following reasons: The word "kingdom" is made up of two words, "king" meaning "absolute ruler; one who rules or presides over." "Dom" meaning "domain, the territory He rules, that is, His subjects"].
3. **Read Acts 26:18.** Vine's Greek dictionary under the subject of the "kingdom" states the following: "Since this earth is the scene of universal rebellion against God, the kingdom of God is the sphere in which at any given time, His rule is acknowledged." The "kingdom of God" has the idea of a group of people that would accept His rule. Look at Acts 26:18, In preaching the "kingdom of God," whose authority are we rejecting and whose authority are we accepting?
4. **Read Luke 4:43.** Jesus told the crowds that the reason that He had been sent was to proclaim: a. the four spiritual laws. b. the prosperity message. c. the kingdom of God.
5. **Read Matthew 10:1, 7-8.** The twelve Apostles traveled with Jesus and were commissioned by Him to preach a. the law of Moses. b. the 10 commandments. c. the same message as He did.
6. **Read Mark 6:7,12.** A person shows that they accept the rule of God [kingdom], by: a. repentance. b. joining a local church. c. reading the Bible.
7. **Read Acts 8:5,12; Matthew 28:19-20.** Philip the evangelist preached the kingdom of God and Jesus as the Messiah king. People responded to his preaching by identifying with Christ through the act of: a. asking Jesus into their heart. b. joining the local church. c. baptism. [Early New Testament believers expressed their faith in Christ by an act of water baptism. This was an act of faith that identified them as becoming Christ's disciple (Matthew 28:18-20).

8. **Read 1 John 3:8, Colossians 2:15.** Satan's authority was overthrown legally and permanently by: a. the work of the cross. b. by an animal sacrifice. c. praying without ceasing.

9. **Read Luke 9:59-60; Luke 10:1,9.** Those that follow Jesus are commissioned to preach: a. inspirational messages. b. the philosophies of man. c. the kingdom message.

10. **Read Matthew 24:14.** The gospel of the _____ shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

11. **Read 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Acts 26:18.** The gospel of the kingdom is not an invitation to "invite Jesus into your heart," neither is it centered on heaven awaiting believers at death. It's focus is on accepting the rule of God by rejecting: a. Satan's rule. b. your wife's authority. c. your local church's teachings.

12. **Read Mark 6:12.** The Apostles preached that people must: a. ask Jesus into their heart. b. repent, that is accept God's rule by turning to God and His rule. c. attend a local church.

13. **Read 2 Peter 3:13.** According to God's promise, we look for: a. a new car. b. an abundance of money. c. new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

14. **Read Luke 6:46.** The word "Lord" means: a. master. b. ruler. c. boss. d. king. e. the one who has the right to control your life. f. deity. g. all of the above.

15. **Read Acts 2:36.** God has made Jesus, the one who was crucified to be both: a. a good man & a good teacher. b. to be Lord & the promised Messiah (Christ). c. a Pharisee & a scribe.

16. **Read Acts 2:37.** When people heard that Jesus was the Lord (Master) and Messiah, they were: a. glad. b. sad. c. pricked in their heart, that is, convicted deeply.

17. **Read Acts 2:38.** What did the Apostle Peter tell the people to do: a. repent. b. be baptized. c. receive forgiveness through Jesus. d. receive the Holy Spirit. e. all of the above (that is, a.,b.,c., & d.). f. ask Jesus into their heart.

18. **Read Acts 26:18-20.** Repentance means: a. Having a change of heart toward God. b. turning from spiritual darkness to the light. c. turning from Satan's authority to God's authority. d. turning to God & proving you have turned by the good works that you do. e. all of the above.

19. **Read Romans 14:9 & 1 Cor.6:19-20.** Christ death, burial, and resurrection was the foundation that secured God's right to have absolute authority over those who have turned to God. True or False.

20. **Read 1 John 3:8; Acts 10:38 & Colossians 1:13-14.** The gospel message contains the good news that God has redeemed man, that is, freed and released them from the clutches of Satan. True or False.

21. **Read Romans 6:17-18,22.** The preaching of the gospel of the kingdom is the only message that brings: a. health & wealth together. b. justification [being made right with God as a gift through Jesus blood] and sanctification [holiness – being set apart unto God] together. c. religions together.

22. **Read Acts 28:28-31.** What message did the Apostle Paul preach?

Answer Key

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22. **Read Acts 28:28-31.** What message did the Apostle Paul preach? The kingdom of God, the truths concerning the Lord Jesus Christ & His redeeming work, that is, the salvation of God that is sent to even the Gentiles.