

## **Week 3**

Review

Brief review of weeks 1 & 2 - Not moving on from the Gospel but going deeper

The Bible is a HIM book. We only understand it correctly when we first see how it speaks of Christ and the work He has accomplished *on our behalf*.

The Christian life is NOT WWJD, but WHJD and how do I live in light of what Jesus has done for *me*?

- discuss (Ephesians 1:3; "in Christ" → Ephesians 2:10)

The obedience that flows out of trusting Christ's work and is empowered by the Spirit (Gal. 3:2) is very different from "religious" formalism that focuses on the outward behaviour and neglects the heart.

The Gospel is "of first importance" and the exclusive means God has given to save us (Rom 1:16-17; 1 Cor 15:1-2). By faith alone, in Christ alone.

Gospel-driven obedience (the obedience that comes through our faith in Jesus Christ) vs. a form of godliness that knows nothing of the gospel's power. Obedience to God without love for God is hypocrisy (Matt 22:37; Luke 15:11-30).

- religious formalism focuses on us and our effort; the obedience of faith focuses on Christ  
- religious formalism focuses on what we do; the obedience of faith focuses on what Christ has done

"if you have not the blood of Christ at the root of your religion, it will wither, and prove but painted pageantry to go to hell in." Thomas Wilcox, "Honey Out of the Rock"

Transition - last week talked about Jesus as the focus of key themes throughout the Bible, This week concentrate on one of the central themes of God's Story - Kingdom

### **3. The Gospel of the Kingdom**

**Mark 1:15** *Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe in the gospel.'*

#### **3.1 Definition of the Kingdom**

"The reign of divine love exercised by God in His grace over human hearts believing in His love, and constrained thereby to yield Him grateful affection and devoted service." - A. B. Bruce

"God's people in God's place under God's rule." - Graeme Goldsworthy

"The reign of God dynamically active in human history through Jesus Christ, the purpose of which is the redemption of his people from sin and from demonic powers, and the final establishment of the new heavens and the new earth." - Anthony Hoekema

"This, then, is the good news which the New Testament with unanimous voice proclaims: that Jesus is indeed the Messiah, fulfillment of all the hope of Israel, who has come to set up the Kingdom of God among men." - John Bright.

"God the Father has reconciled His created but fallen world through the death of His Son, and renews it into a Kingdom of God by His Spirit." - Herman Bavinck

"...the kingly power of God, attacking the dominion of satan, and delivering men from the power of evil....the eschatological act of God when God acts in kingly power to destroy His enemies and save His people. It can also designate the future realm of salvation into which God's people will be gathered to enjoy the blessings of His reign....a new realm of redemptive blessing into which men enter by receiving Jesus' message about the Kingdom of God....it is also used to designate the gift of life and salvation....The Kingdom of God stands as a comprehensive term for all that the messianic salvation included....deliverance from mortality and perfected fellowship with God" - George Ladd

"When Jesus speaks about the kingdom of God coming near (Mk. 1:15), he is referring to something truly revolutionary. He means that with his own coming to earth, God's saving rule and reign has come near in a way that's never happened before in all of human history. He means that God's promises to establish his kingdom are beginning to be fulfilled, and that God will one day usher in a new creation, which has even now been inaugurated through Jesus' resurrection (Col. 1:18; 2 Cor. 5:17). This new creation will be a place of perfect righteousness and peace, a place in which all wrongs will be made right (Rev. 21:1-5)." - Mark Dever

"The kingdom of God announced and embodied by Jesus was the power of God to heal and restore his fallen world. Thus God's healing and renewing power extends to the full range of God's creation. Salvation is restorative in nature and comprehensive in scope. Salvation is comprehensive because the breadth of sin's power also extends to the ends of creation. However, since God did not bring his final judgment upon sin and the powers of darkness, there remains at this time a titanic struggle between the power of God's reign in Jesus Christ and by the Spirit to renew the creation and the parasitic power of darkness to twist and distort the creation in all of human life. In other words, there are two spiritual regimes and powers struggling for control of every aspect of the one creational domain. The Church's mission is to be engaged in this struggle as bearers and instruments of God's rule in Christ." - Mike Goheen, "Mission and the Public Life of Western Culture: The Kuyperian Tradition" article

The Kingdom of God is finally defined only in relation to the presence, character and will of

the King

### **3.2 The Kingdom of God and the Story of God**

Creation - Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15; 2:1-3

Fall - Genesis 3:6, 8; 11:4

Redemption

    anticipated - Genesis 3:15; 12:1-3; 2 Samuel 7; Daniel 7

    accomplished - Hebrews 1:3; Philippians 2:9-11;

    applied - Colossians 1:13; 2 Peter 1:3-11)

Restoration - Revelation 11:15; 21:1-8

### **3.3 The Nature of the Kingdom - Already/Not Yet**

eschatology - already & not-yet

Already - Matthew 12:28 *But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

Not yet - Matthew 16:28; 25:34; Luke 13:28-29

Diagram

#### **3.3a - Already AND Not Yet**

already/not yet - tension, still struggling

Explain how we can be a living contradiction

    embodying new life in Christ and old life in sin within the same person –

we are saved from sin's punishment and power but, not yet, from its presence

    2 opposite errors

        1. expect end of the fight/sinless perfection in this life  
        we never arrive, can never coast, always fighting

        2. give up the fight

            can never throw in the towel and give up the fight

            can never coast, can never be complacent about sin

    Connect with God's process idea from HPC p. 5-6, 15-16

Role of eternity

- eternal perspective and how it helps for the present (2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Peter 1:3-9; 1 Corinthians 15:19)

### **3.3b - Justification AND Sanctification**

justification-sanctification

*simil justus et peccator*

OK to not be OK, not OK to stay that way

In Justification faith is *passive* and *receptive* (Gal. 2:16), whereas in Sanctification faith is *active*.

“When we are united to Christ a mysterious exchange takes place: he took our curse, so that we may receive his blessing; he became sin with our sin, so that we may become righteous with his righteousness. . . . On the one hand, God declined to ‘impute’ our sins to us, or ‘count’ them against us, with the implication that he imputed them to Christ instead. On the other, God has imputed Christ’s righteousness to us. . . . We ourselves have done nothing of what is imputed to us, nor Christ anything of what is imputed to him. . . . He voluntarily accepted liability for our sins.” - John R. W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, 1986), pages 148-149.

<b>What Can Change</b>	<b>What Cannot Change</b>
our fellowship	our sonship
our experience of God’s blessing	God’s desire for our welfare
our assurance of God’s love	God’s actual affection for us
God’s delight in our actions	God’s love for us
God’s discipline	our destiny
our sense of guilt	our security

from Justin Taylor

positional and progressive sanctification - John 17:17  
fight & perseverance  
spiritual warfare

### **3.4 Conflicting Kingdoms - His and ours**

Colossians 1:13

We must decrease and He must increase.

“Each of our lives is shaped by the war between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of self.” Paul David Tripp, A Quest for More, 49

“Little kingdom living turns life into an endless search for earthly treasure and an unending focus on personal need. I sadly constrict the transcendent life that I was put on earth to enjoy to the size of my desires and needs. It is a kingdom so confined that there is no room for God or others in it. And because I was created to be part of something huge, a kingdom way bigger than the size of my life, this constricted little kingdom will crush my humanity.” - Paul David Tripp, A Quest for More, 55

Challenging question of “Who is king of my life? me or Jesus? same question of Gen. 3 and every temptation.

contra comfort/security/happiness as defined by culture, suffering

### **3.5 The Responding to the Kingdom - Repentance and Faith**

Mark 1:15

The gospel message demands a response

#### **3.5a Repentance (intro, more later)**

Luther’s first theses of the 95 Theses

godly vs worldly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10)

Repentance is flip side of coin - turning toward Christ in faith involves turning away from those things that are contrary/substitute for Christ - no faith without repentance

The glory and goodness of the gospel needs to thaw the deep permafrost of our heart so that deep repentance and faith can lay hold of the transforming power of the gospel.

Confession and repentance is often an expression of worldly sorrow because it focuses on the symptoms (getting angry, speaking harshly, etc) and/or the trouble these symptoms bring into our lives (damaged relationship with a friend, etc.). When we continue to focus on the symptoms, repentance and faith don't get deep enough to bring about true transformation. This is why we keep falling back into the sin pattern over and over again. We need to identify the heart sin under the symptom sin. We need

to see the real unbelief or idolatry that brings the speech or behaviour to the surface of our life (symptoms). If we don't get to the heart, it is like take Tylenol to treat the pain that cancer is causing.

### **3.5b Faith (intro, more later)**

“A reasoning trust upon the trustworthiness of God.” - John Stott

“Ironically, it is only when we understand that His love is not conditioned on our spiritual fruitfulness that we gain the power to become truly fruitful. . . . In other words, those people who get better are those who understand that God’s approval of them is not dependent on their getting better.” - J.D. Greer, Gospel, 14

### **3.6 The Kingdom Community**

“As the citizens of the kingdom that is coming, we become the presence of the future world. We don’t build the kingdom or bring the kingdom, but we do seek to faithfully witness to the kingdom. And through His people, God continues to implement the victory Christ achieved on the cross. So we long with eager expectation the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.” - Trevin Wax, Counterfeit Gospels, 39