

## The Gospel of the Kingdom Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is Near

Studio Session 105

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Jesus told His disciples to go and to preach the kingdom of heaven and to say that the kingdom of heaven was near. He Himself preached the same message; the kingdom of heaven was near. In Mark 9:1 and Luke 9:27, Jesus spoke to audiences and said to them, "There are some of you standing here today who will not die until you see the kingdom come with power," Now all of those people are dead, so what clearly has to have happened was the kingdom must have come within the lifetime of at least the last person who heard these things. Well we know more exactly than that. Jesus was asked by His disciples, "Lord are you going to restore now to Israel the kingdom?" This is in Acts 1, and Jesus said, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father has kept in His own authority but you will receive power from on high when that the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."

Ten days from that event the day of Pentecost was fully come and suddenly from heaven there came a sound like as of a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues like as of fire appeared upon their heads and they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And when this was published abroad the multitude came together and were astonished that every man who heard them speak, heard him speak in his own tongue (or his own language) wherein he was born. And in Jerusalem that day, there were people from 15 different nations, there were Medes, Elamites dwellers from Mesopotamia, people from Cappadocia, Pontius, Phrygia, parts about Cyrene. They all heard this incredible word of God and they were cut to their hearts and they said to Peter and to the rest, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter says to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. And you'll receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Because the promise is to you and to your children and to those who are afar off--even as many as those that the Lord our God shall call." In many other words they testified and exhorted them saying, "Save yourselves from this perverse generation." And those who gladly received his words were baptized, and that day there were added unto them 3000 souls. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, breaking of bread and in prayers. And the Lord

added to their numbers day by day those who were being saved."

I've mostly quoted Acts, Acts 2. "Repent and be baptized every one of you." Where did Peter get the idea of telling them that? Well, here is where he got the idea. Jesus sent out His disciples and in Luke 24:47 one of the records of the great commission in the New Testament is found. This is what Jesus said to them, verse 47, "And repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name among all the nations beginning at Jerusalem." Then He says, "You are witnesses of these things, I'm going to send you what My Father has promised. Stay in the city until you've been clothed with power from on high." So the same thing He told them in Acts, that's recorded here. And then He says, "Go and preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins and do it among all the nations beginning at Jerusalem."

Now I just quoted to you Acts 2 and the event of Acts 2 is taking place in Jerusalem; so they got the right city, they started out in the right place, just like Jesus told them. Jesus also told them to go and to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins and that's what they did. They said repent and be baptized. This is in Acts 2, when they're in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost they're preaching what Jesus said for them to preach, where Jesus told them to go and preach it, exactly to the point. So standing in Jerusalem, they say to the Jews from 15 different nations, they say to them repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins.

Now cleverly men have strung these things together but without understanding. Clearly they were sent to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins. You will note that they dropped into the mix in Acts 2:38, "Repent AND be baptized for the remission of sins." Now hold on, there are those who say "Baptism is FOR the remission of sins." Well that would mean your sins are remitted, sent back, dismissed, forgiven; if you're baptized. And that should offend you. Because that's not nearly what the passage is talking about. Yet there are some religious folk who see for whom the doctrine of baptism is the most important doctrine of all, water baptism is the most important doctrine of all. They immediately say, "It says repent and be baptized FOR the remission of sins." Which makes, in their minds, baptism to be FOR the remission of sins.

That means that even if you believe in Jesus Christ, even if you love the Lord, truly are desirous of His ways but you're not baptized, your sins are not remitted. But I want to show you a more excellent understanding. Of this course this is ridiculous, this is absurd. That's somebody attempting to read the Bible and say "It says right here this." No, it says that to him but let me show you what the Bible says about the remission of sins. Because you see, it all fits. Here is what it says about the remission of sins, here's how people's sins are remitted. Same great commission of Jesus but this one is found in John 20 verse 21 and 22, "Jesus breathes on them and says, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" Verse 23, "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven."

How are a persons sins forgiven? Jesus said, "You forgive, you forgive them their sins." This isn't about water baptism for the remission of sins. He already told us how peoples sins are to be forgiven. You declare to them that their sins are forgiven. Now don't look at me like that because He had already told His disciples that's what He was going to send them to do. In the book of Matthew chapter 16 when Peter had identified Jesus as the Christ the Son of the living God, what did Jesus then say to Peter? He said to him, "And whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

And we've shown you in the progression of this message, in these series of messages on the gospel of the kingdom, we've shown you this fact: That Jesus Himself forgave sins and kept sins in place. In other words, He bound and He loosed people. I'll remind you of the references. In the book of John the 9th chapter, the 9th chapter verse 41, and the book of Matthew 9 verse 2. In Matthew 9:2, Jesus forgives the sins of the man who was brought to Him on the stretcher by his four friends. The crowd said to Jesus, "Who are You to forgive sins?" Jesus said, "So that you might know that the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins, rise take up your bed and go home." It's exactly on the point. And then in John 9:41, when the man who had been blind, whom Jesus healed, and they subsequently put him out of the synagogue, Jesus said I came to give sight to the blind and I came to make those who could see blind. And the Pharisees said to Him, "Well are you saying we're blind? Because we see." Jesus said, "Because you say you see, your sin remains." So He kept sins in place. He said to His disciples here in John 20, "As the Father sent Me so I am sending you." And then He says whosoever sins you forgive will be forgiven and whosoever sins you retain will be retained.

Now my point, in summary, is this: Jesus Himself forgave sins and kept sins in place. He sends His disciples out to forgive sins and to keep sins in place just as the Father had sent Him to do, and we have the examples of Him doing that. But before He even came to John 20, to send out the disciples, He had already told them that's what He was going to send them to do. "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." So the biblical matter of repentance and the forgiveness of sins which should be preached beginning in Jerusalem and we see in Acts 2:38 that it was preached beginning in Jerusalem. And we come down to the heart of the matter in Acts 2 where Peter says, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins."

We're saying that Jesus was not telling His disciples that if they went out and told people to get water baptized, that that would be for the remission of sins because Jesus had already told them about the remission of sins, He told them how sins would be forgiven. How would they be forgiven? "Whosoever sins YOU forgive will be forgiven." So it

couldn't possibly be baptism FOR the remission of sins. That's an assumption based upon reading the passage in a certain religious way and that does violence to the scriptures because He'd already told them YOU go and forgive peoples sins. That's how their sins are remitted.

So what then is the point of baptism and furthermore, what is it that they should repent of? The whole of this message has been about the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of the evil one, warring with each other. Everybody is entrapped in the kingdom of darkness. When you're entrapped in the kingdom of darkness, you can only be freed by a kingdom that is greater than the kingdom of darkness. So when Jesus promised the coming forth of the kingdom, He said this, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Against what? The kingdom concerning which He had just given Peter the keys, He says, "I will give to you the keys to the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." But wait a minute, how could you promise people to be set free if they are already in the kingdom of darkness? Is the kingdom of darkness going to simply say, "Well go ahead and take whomever you want." ? No. The kingdom of God is greater in force and in authority than the kingdom of darkness. So much so that when you come, representing the kingdom of God, to the kingdom of darkness, with the intent of rescuing someone who has been held in bondage in the kingdom of darkness, there's nothing that the kingdom of darkness can do to prevent you from doing the work of the kingdom of God. Why? Because it's the kingdom of God, the authority of the kingdom, Gods own authority, given to you. The authority of the kingdom of God is vastly superior to the kingdom of darkness. The kingdom of darkness holds men in bondage by the power of the soul, the kingdom of God liberates men by the power of the Spirit.

Everyone who is in darkness is also in a state of death. Is it a good thing to rescue them? Yes. How are they to be rescued? They're to be rescued by the message that there is a kingdom whose King is God and the kingdom has enough power to overthrow the kingdom of darkness so that if someone would put their trust in this King; if someone who is in darkness, who is in a state of death, whose dead while he is still alive, if he would put his trust in the kingdom of God and in that King then this King promises that He has the ability to rescue him completely from the kingdom of darkness. So that the kingdom of darkness cannot continue to control him.

Now that's the gospel of the kingdom. The gospel of the kingdom of God is the simplicity that our King is God, that His kingdom is greater than that which traps men in darkness. Now if somebody says 'How do I get in?' The answer is 'repent'. Repent from what? Repent from being under the control of the god of this world. Stop; agree that you are no longer a citizen of the kingdom of darkness. Agree that the King to whom you're applying has the ability to rescue you from this king. And if you hear this and you're in darkness, if this is the light that comes to you when you're in darkness, why would you

not want to walk in the light? If you are lost, if you are in a state of death and life comes to you, why would you not want life? If you're being ruled by a cruel overlord who robs from you, who steals from you, who will kill you, who will destroy you and you're told of a King who has come that you may have life and that more abundantly, who has come to set the captives free and to declare the year of the Lords favor. Why would you not want to appeal to that King for refuge? Why would you not ask that King to free you from the control of this king to whom you have suffered great losses?

That's the message of the kingdom. When Jesus came to preach the message of the kingdom, He had not yet died on the cross but this was still true, that the kingdom had come into the world because He is the light of the world, He is the King, to that end He was born, but not a kingdom of this world. He came to tell men that He is their salvation. It's not that there is salvation, it's that He is their salvation. Why? Because He is the King of all kings and He is the Lord of all lords, and His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. So whoever comes to His kingdom is assured of the truth that they can be and are being set free from the kingdom of darkness.

He is the Prince of peace. When He was born, the angels announced His birth by saying, "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men." This was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah the 9th chapter that says, "His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace." But I may ask you this question, "Why then did He say that He did not come to bring peace on the earth but to bring a sword?" Well it's because He requires you to choose, He didn't come to pace it over, He said, "I came to set a man at variance with his father, a woman against her mother." Why? Because when the kingdom comes it separates between those who are in darkness and those who are in the light. If you choose the kingdom of God you cannot also choose the kingdom of darkness.

His kingdom succeeds because it reconciles you, the one who is lost, it reconciles you to God. And in that, full provision is made for your complete salvation. That's why someone who comes out of the kingdom of darkness and comes into the kingdom of God is never lost again. Why? Because the kingdom into which he has come has the totally sufficiency to maintain him against the kingdom of darkness. When he sins he still has an advocate with the Father and if he will confess his sins God will forgive him and cleanse him. So he remains in the state of the kingdom of God. That's why you don't go back and forth; you're not lost and saved, lost and saved, lost and saved. Because salvation is not just about going to heaven. Salvation is about being translated, being picked up from here and put down here. Picked up from the kingdom of darkness and deposited into the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God is based upon having all authority in heaven and on earth, so not only can He save you from the control of the evil one, He can protect you and preserve

you against the day of His coming. So what are you to repent of? Repentance is not the repentance of sins, its repentance of being under the control of the evil one, that's a complete repentance. If all we see is repentance of sins, what happens when the person sins again? Does the kingdom of darkness take over again? No, not at all, by no means. When he sins he has an Advocate with the Father, but now he's saved and his advocate is the Lord Jesus Christ, this same King who has freed him from the control of the kingdom of darkness. So what does he have to do? Repent then of his sin. The believer repents of his sin that he might remain in the kingdom. The unbeliever repents of being under the control of the god of this world so that he can be in the kingdom, that's the difference.

When all we tell people is Jesus died on the cross to save you from you sins and He was raised from the dead. If you will believe in Him and confess your sins, then He will save you. The question is, then what? What if I sin again? That's the obvious question, what if I sin again, does that mean that I come back under the control of the evil one? Well if it is a matter of confessing sins, when is there an end to the sins that you are to confess? It's not that, it's that you are to repent of the fact that you placed yourself under the control of the evil one and therefore were a captive in his kingdom. When you repent of that and apply for citizenship in the kingdom of God, you are accepted because the provision of God is for you to be accepted. And by the way, your sins are forgiven.

Now that raises a whole host of questions, who are we to go and tell people their sins are forgiven, number 1? Number 2, even if this were true how would you know whose sins you are to declare forgiven and whose sins you are to declare not forgiven? When you consider that we have only thought of ourselves as being sinners saved by grace, this is too big of anything that we're called to do. This is too much, so much easier to tell someone, "Repent of your sins and if you repent God will forgive you, if you'll say this prayer then you're saved and you'll go to heaven." So much easier to do that, but that doesn't protect anybody from the recidivism. And it's not even the gospel of the kingdom, that's to take some things that are true; Jesus died on the cross, that's true; He died for our sins, that's true; He was resurrected from the dead, that is true but these things are not the whole of the gospel.

It is that He has accomplished these things on our behalf so that He can pick us up out of the kingdom of darkness and set us down in the kingdom of the Son of God. That's what the whole gospel is. And we come to tell people that their repentance is to turn away, make a decision, to turn away from being under the control of the god of that world and now place yourself under the control of the God of this kingdom, the kingdom of God. When you will do that a complete transmission has been made in your life. You've been picked up and translated from the one into the other. In this arrangement you're sure that you're saved because this kingdom and its King has the ability to protect you permanently against the evil one. And all you have to do is to repent of being under the control of the god of this world, say that he no longer controls you but you are not free then to say then

that no one controls you. For it is He Himself, the King of kings, to whom you now bow.

This is the gospel of the kingdom. We have been thoroughly imbued with the gospel of salvation. It's time that we hear of a King who can keep us, having saved us. Let's develop the big questions then in the next gathering. God bless you and I'll see you next time. I'm Sam Soleyn, bye bye.