

The Gospel of the Kingdom The Gospel of the Kingdom - A Summary

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God chose men, humans, to be His heirs. The evil one did not like it. In fact, he so despised the choice of God that he rose up in rebellion against God and vowed to prove that God's choice was wrong and because he judged God as being capable of making a mistake, he deemed that he was better capable of being God, then even God Himself. A creature, imagining himself to be greater than his Creator. When God chose humans as His heirs, God knew that He would have to raise them up so they could be His heirs. These creatures would test the love of God, for He would give them intelligence, He would give them the right to choose. And they would choose and God knew ahead of time that their choice would separate them from God. And in order to redeem them and bring them back to this eternal purpose, known in the mind of God before the foundations of the world, God would have to sacrifice Himself to save them. So the Lamb was slain from the foundations of the world. Jesus according to the first book of Peter, Jesus was the Lamb who was slain from the foundations of the world.

But the plan of God was more than just the redemption of man, and the plan of God to redeem him in the fashion of coming to him and including him, or saving him; the manner of saving him would be to include him in the person of God. For God would come as a man, He would live as a man, and then die. He would be resurrected from the dead and at that point He would no longer be a man. He would be what He always was, He would be a Spirit, this Spirit would be known as the Christ, the Anointed One. So when God set out to make man, He made him to be a spirit, a spiritual being. And the origin of the human spirit came out of God Himself. But it vested in the body of a man, Adam was the first of this type.

The body was designed for destruction, death, and loss. But in the process of living in this body, this spirit being would be required to make choices and these choices would have consequences to the body. So for example if this being chose to prefer the well being of another human over himself, the result would be pain, injury, and potential loss; all of these as potentials to this body in which this spirit was housed. Knowing this, this being would have the choice, this human being would have the choice of either preserving himself and letting whatever befalls the other befall the other; or he could

choose to preserve and help the other at a direct cost to his physical person.

Think about what we just said; God, a spiritual being, could have chosen to simply let man figure out how he was going to save himself or God could come in human form and by putting Himself up as a sacrifice for man, He would suffer, in His body, a total loss and would demonstrate the nature of God, namely that God loves. God loves another, us, more than He loved Himself, Christ, while we hated God; this would become a standard for the sons of God. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." "Love one another as I have loved you." Found as we are, in human flesh, yet being spirit beings, we are constantly given the choice of acting like God or preserving ourselves.

The enemy's great window of opportunity to prove that God made the wrong choice, that is, creatures whom He would call His sons, really are very undeserving because they are not at all like Him. The enemy's opportunity to prove that is to draw upon the humans desire to preserve himself and to protect himself. When the human chooses to preserve himself and protect himself, the enemy has found a way to offer him the security of his person, the security of his body. This is not actual secure but he offers it to him as an illusion. If he accepts it then that person comes to be under the control of the evil one and insofar as the purpose of God is concerned to raise us up as His children, that person is in a state of being lost. In that state he's not fulfilling at all any eternal purpose, and if he dies in that state he has no future with God, he goes to hell. To save him out of that state, and by the way Adam was the first to get us into this, you recognize the story. Adam preserved himself over his relationship to God. When he believed the lie that said, "God doesn't want you to know all that you should know," and the lie was spoken by his enemy offering friendship, when actually what he was offering was deception. The appearance of friendship but with an altogether deadly intent, which was to separate man from God and he succeeded in doing that.

This act of rebellion on the part of man against the specific instructions of God separated man from his Creator and created in the world a condition known as sin. Sin separates between man and God. Whenever the creature is severed from his source of life, who is his Creator, he dies. And he may not die in that day, he may not cease to exist in an instant but he is separated from God and death is the inevitable outcome. It's like if you bark a tree, the leaves will still show green that day but the bark has been removed, eventually the tree will die. God said to Adam, "In the day that you eat thereof you will surely die." Adam did not fall down dead that day but in the day he ate of the tree, in his rebellion he cut himself off from God.

God had a choice: He could have abandoned the whole project of creating sons out of these creature that He had made, rescuing them by His love for them and by His own death on the cross subsequently, He could have done that. Or He could have just simply annihilated them and be done with the whole thing. But in order to ensure that this would

never happen whole and to ensure it to those who would put their trust in God, God entered into a covenant with Himself; God swore on oath to Himself. Meaning God was the one swearing and God swore to God. Such a covenant cannot be broken because its God's covenant with Himself. Man is the intended beneficiary but is neither party number one nor party number two of this covenant.

This covenant required God to rescue man and the plan that God deployed with which to rescue man could only be described as brilliant, Godly. For God would come as a man, Spirit in flesh, would die as a man; paying the price for mans sins, would be resurrected, and would be again seated at the right hand of God but now would be God as Spirit. And as Spirit these spirit beings that He created could be assembled Spirit to spirit. And the One who would do the assembling would be called the Holy Spirit. All this talk about spirit means only one thing, and that is the result of all of this is from heaven, not from the earth. That which is born of the earth is flesh, that which comes from heaven is spirit; for there is no flesh in heaven, flesh is the condition of the earth. Everything that has a fleshly encasement has demonstrated that its origin is from the earth, the origin of that flesh is from the earth.

So God would bring into the earth and cloth it in human flesh, things from heaven. The thing from heaven that rescues man from the control of the enemy, addresses the full range of deceptions deployed by the enemy to entrap man in a state of ignorance, unbelief, and death. So God knew what the enemy would do, He knew how his deceptions would work; his deceptions would appeal to the human soul. And the things that the enemy would offer to entrap the human soul would be assurances based in things the human could do. God responded by sending to the human things from heaven, with an authority from heaven to lift him out of this condition and place him back in the original plan of God for him.

The schemes of the enemy, to entrap the soul of man, are called the Kosmos; the Greek word for 'world'. We're told in the scriptures, "Do not love the world nor the things of the world. Whoever loves the world the love of the Father is not him." Love for the world means to put your trust in what the soul can see as a solution to the problems of supplying yourself and protecting yourself. By contrast, God offers man provision and protection apart from anything that the man could do. But heres the problem: If it's not something that the man could do, how is it to be gotten, how does he get it, who gives it to him? The answer is: God does.

So God speaks of His offerings to man as things coming from heaven, but now there's a power on the earth that's already entrapped man that will continue to convince man that he will get nothing from heaven. So to wage war against this deception, which produces an entrapment in the soul of the man, God releases from heaven the sufficiency of His power, His wisdom, His counsel, His knowledge, and His understanding to counteract

this that has arisen from the earth. The enemy from the earth has poisoned the soul of man with his lies and deceptions but if man imbibes that poison he dies, he stays in this state of death. God sends help to the person, that help comes not primarily to the soul of man, it comes primarily to the spirit of man and that help is the Spirit of God who brings him the sufficiency of authority and power from heaven. That compendium of authority and power from heaven forms a 'basilica'. A basilica is a foundation or basis of power and authority and the word 'basilica' is actually the word 'kingdom' in the English.

So as you have the kingdom of darkness, entrapping the souls of men by appealing to their desire for provision and protection and capturing them by their lust for this; the kingdom of heaven appeals to the spirit of man and offers salvation and the hope of sonship in the kingdom of God. The two references; kingdom of heaven, kingdom of God, are specific descriptions of the different aspects of this salvation that God has offered to man, salvation from the control of the evil one. It's not just salvation about going to heaven, that's a result, it's one of many results. But it's a whole salvation, a full salvation, a salvation from everything that entraps him. It's called the kingdom of heaven because the solution comes from heaven and it's a perfect solution for the spirit of man, the origins of which came out of the person of God and is avowedly from heaven.

So God intends to save man to the utmost, for in this way he may be saved to the utmost, in that who he is, the totality of his essence; is saved by God. So it's the kingdom of heaven, the solution from heaven for a creature not of this world. The second reference to the kingdom, is the reference to the kingdom of God; that is a reference to power. The power to accomplish this comes from the very throne of God, from the Person of God Himself. So whoever puts his confidence in God is assured by an oath that God swore to Himself, the oath that He guarantees by the integrity of His own person, that you who have fled to take refuge in Him and in His kingdom are assured that you cannot be plucked out of His hands, not by anyone. For there is no force in heaven or on earth who may arrest you from the hand of God, He is mighty to save and He is able to keep.

It was always His intention to visit man in such a fashion as this. So when the Son of God came to the earth, He Himself began to preach the kingdom of heaven, long before He died on the cross; He first began to preach the kingdom of God, the arrival of the kingdom from God. He demonstrated the truth of this kingdom by healing the sick, raising the dead, working various miracles, and forgiving men's sins. It was this that got Him in trouble; it was the fact that He forgave sins. Well how could He forgive sins? It's one thing to heal the sick, it's one thing to raise the dead but it's another to forgive sins. That meant the year of God's favor had come to the earth and that man could no longer be separated from God because he sinned. Sin was no longer an impediment because sins could be forgiven and Jesus went about declaring the forgiveness of sins.

We saw in the passage of John 9:41 that Jesus forgave sins and He retained sins because

the kingdom had come. The same thing is seen in the book of Matthew the 9th chapter where Jesus forgave the sins of the man who had been brought to Him upon this stretcher. The crowd grumbled about Him saying, "Who is this who forgives sins?" Jesus replied, "So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins, 'Rise take up your bed and go home'." Jesus promised Peter and the rest of the disciples, that they would be sent out to forgive sins. "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." This is Matthew 16 at verse 13 and following. And He followed that up, confirming this in John 20:21 as He gave them the great commission, He said to them, "Go and preach repentance and the forgiveness of sin. If you go and preach to people that the kingdom has come, the kingdom of God has come to the earth now, and if you apply for refuge in the kingdom. I am sending you as ambassadors of My kingdom to forgive men their sins."

The imminence of the arrival of the kingdom in a state such as that, which was obvious from Jesus declarations in Mark 9:1 and Luke 9:27, in which He said to a multitude of people, "There are some of you standing right here who will not die until you see the kingdom come with power." All of those people are dead, the kingdom surely came. In fact, Paul says it came when in Colossians 1 and 13 he says to the Colossians, "God has translated you (God has picked you up from) from the powers of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God." You've been picked up out of darkness and set down in the kingdom of God. Clearly the kingdom came because there was something for them to be put into. And then to the Corinthians, Paul reminds them that this prerogative to declare the kingdoms forgiveness, to declare that in the kingdom your sins are forgiven; this prerogative is clearly conferred upon the believer who goes out to present the message of the kingdom, when it is said that, "We are ambassadors of Christ, as though God Himself was making His appeal through us." I Corinthians chapter 5, "Be reconciled to God." So we are commissioned and sent.

How do you know whose sins are to be forgiven and whose sins are to be retained? The answer is rather simple: You've been given the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of discernment and by the Holy Spirit you're well able to discern whom God has called and whom He has not called. An example given earlier of this is the woman at the well. A woman quite obviously laden down with transgressions but the scriptures tell us in I Corinthians 5 that as ambassadors we should see no one any longer according to the flesh but according to the spirit. By the Spirit you will see who people actually are, you will see where they are, you will see what condition they're in. Jesus began a conversation with the woman at the well knowing it was going to end with Him declaring to her that her sins were forgiven. The woman who had five husbands and was with a man to whom she was not presently married, is a woman that Jesus saw as a woman who was looking for love but had not received love in return. He was the lover of her soul, so He declared to her that her sins are forgiven and she went immediately from being someone lost, on

her way to hell, to being able to fulfill her purpose for which God had put her here, and that is to evangelize.

Someone may ask, "And in light of all of this, what are we to do?" You know we've previously been programmed to read the four spiritual laws or talk to somebody, to get them to intellectually commit to accepting the cross and the salvation of Jesus and then to lead them in a sinners prayer. Neither the sinners prayer, nor the four spiritual laws, nor anything like it appears in the scriptures. Instead, you find people who are ambassadors finding the people where they are and telling them what are the next things they should do in pursuing the kingdom. So, what do you do when you go? As you go preach the good news of the kingdom, what do you do? You see people where they are and you tell them what they need to hear based upon what you discern is where they are. That means there is no set pattern, you must therefore rely on the Holy Spirit.

In this process you will see people like the man in the tree, Zacchaeus. When he has climbed into the tree, he has already overcome his fear of ridicule, his fear of rejection and it's no longer necessary to ask him if he believes in Jesus. If he needs to, tell him who Jesus is and tell him about His great salvation and invite him to receive. But like Simon the magician, who is not interested in the truth of the life in Christ, only in power; tell him that the kingdom is not open to him and warn him to repent of being in the bond of iniquity and in the gall of corruption, otherwise he's going to hell. But for the most part, understand that God will draw people to you. And when He does, He's perfectly able to tell you what they need to hear because He'll show you where they are. Someone who needs to know about the kingdom, tell them about the kingdom and if they accept the kingdom, declare to them what is already true. If one accepts the kingdom, his sins are forgiven. You tell them that their sins are forgiven and watch how that knowledge will transform their lives and their existences.

Religion has made it easy but in the process it's has removed your need to trust God, it's removed your need to hear God. You're well able to discern where people are because you have the Spirit of discernment in you, there is no set speech, there is no set spiel. Say and do, in every situation, what the Holy Spirit leads you to say and to do. Because above all you are qualified as an ambassador of Jesus Christ because you are a witness of the grace of God, you are the walking, living testimony of what is true and in an instant you are capable of giving that, if you would only believe that the Spirit is able to lead you.

I'm Sam Soley and this has been the message on the gospel of the kingdom.