

## **Introduction: Is there anyone besides me who is sick of people getting bad news?**

**-I think we long for a better day when this broken mess gets fixed, and we don't have to hear bad news all the time.** I think believers often think, and even voice, "Why, Lord?" "Why don't you change it?" "How long, O Lord?" All the pain and suffering in our lives and the world can challenge our faith sometimes. I think we are looking for the Kingdom of God without even realizing it sometimes. Mark Sayers hits the nail on the head when he says that "people are looking for the Kingdom without the King." Sayers also says, "Secularism is trying to make progress apart from the presence of God." He adds, "The story of secularism is a story which says that as the world moves away from faith and belief in God that the world will inevitably become a better place."

### **1. The Already**

**A. Jesus, the King, personified, demonstrated, and proclaimed the Kingdom of God.** The Revell Compact Bible Dictionary defines kingdom as "a ruler's sphere of authority." Charles Colson has written, "The kingdom of God is a rule, not a realm. It is the declaration of God's absolute sovereignty of his total order of life in this world and the next." Psalm 115:3 says, "But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases." Some of the first recorded words of Jesus' public ministry were, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17, see also Luke 17:21). Therefore, the past aspect is that the Kingdom was present when Jesus, the King, came the first time.

**B. Jesus came with the authority of a king and the heart of a servant.** He manifested His authority in teaching God's Word, over the spiritual realm, and in the physical realm. However, He used His authority for the good of others instead of benefitting Himself (Mark 10:45). He died for our sins to forgive us and bring us into the Kingdom of God. -If Jesus came and brought the Kingdom, why are things still so bad? What is our hope?

### **2. The Not Yet**

-Jesus came the first time to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10), but He is coming back some day to fully establish the Kingdom on earth. He came as the Suffering Servant in mercy the first time, but He is coming back as Conquering Ruler to enact vengeance on the enemies of God, to rule and reign on earth, and restore the earth to the paradise it was created to be.

-We see a future aspect of the Kingdom of God even in the gospel of Luke (22:16-18, 22:29-30).

-There is also a future aspect though because the Bible teaches us that someday Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, is literally, bodily, visibly going to descend from heaven (Revelation 19:11-16) and set up His Kingdom on earth. Revelation 20:6 says, "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Daniel 2:44 says of this kingdom, "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

-What do we do in the meantime as we deal with the difficulties of life in this world?

**3. The Right Now** However, there is also a present aspect to the Kingdom of God. Colossians 1:13-14 says, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins."

Jesus is our King, and He will work powerfully through us. He did that with the early Christians as they turned the world upside down for Him. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and have been given spiritual gifts.

**First, the church is doing battle against the kingdom of darkness.** Ephesians 6:12 says, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,

against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” There is an intense, ongoing spiritual battle taking place. We hear a lot of talk about a culture war, but the Bible teaches us that we are in a cosmic war. C.S. Lewis says, “There is no neutral ground in the universe. Every square inch, every split second is claimed by God, and counterclaimed by Satan.”

**Second, the church participates in God’s rescue mission of the world through the gospel.** Jesus said, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14). The Great Commission of making disciples of all nations has been entrusted to the church (Matthew 28:18-20) because God’s Kingdom will eternally be populated by people from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue (Revelation 7:9).

**Third, the church is to be a picture of the coming kingdom.** Sproul wrote, “It is the task of the church to bear witness to that invisible kingdom, or as Calvin put it, it is the task of the church to make the invisible kingdom of Christ visible.” We do that by living in such a way that we bear witness to the reality of the kingship of Christ in our jobs, our families, our schools, our finances, and how we treat others because Jesus is king over each of these areas of life. We are to serve and do as much good as we can like Jesus did.

### **Conclusion-3 Applications:**

**1. Trust and submit to Jesus as Lord and King.** Mark 1:14-15 says, “Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.’”

**2. Live daily under the Kingship of Christ.** What does this look like? It means that we put Him first in our lives. Jesus said, “Seek first the Kingdom of God His righteousness, and all these other things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33). It means that we obey Jesus because He is Lord. He said, “But why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). It means that we are to invest our lives in serving God and making a difference in the world. Hebrews 12:28 says, “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” Since the kingdom of God is all that is ultimately going to last, why would we invest our lives in anything else? Bob Roberts Jr. said, “The kingdom of God is a radical message meant to be lived out in radical lives, which historically and culturally have radical results.”

**3. Our hope is ultimately in the Kingdom of God.** Charles Colson wrote, “Where then is hope? It is in the fact that the Kingdom of God has come to earth—the Kingdom announced by Jesus Christ in that obscure Nazareth synagogue two thousand years ago. It is a Kingdom that comes not in a temporary takeover of political structures, but in the lasting takeover of the human heart by the rule of a holy God...Thus in the midst of the dark and habitual chaos of earth, a light penetrates the darkness. It cannot be extinguished; it is the light of the Kingdom of God. His Kingdom has come, in His people today, and it is yet to come as well, in the great consummation of human history. While the battle rages on planet earth, we can take heart not in the fleeting fortunes of men or nations, but rather in the promise...[that] ‘The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.’ Listen. For in that glorious refrain is man’s one hope.”