

THY KINGDOM COME

by Carter Conlon

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places."

"All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:3-13).

In this scripture the disciples asked Jesus a direct question concerning the end of the world. He described this time as a season of confusion and calamity that would impact the whole earth.

He went on to say that religious deception would greatly increase in the last days. False prophets would appear claiming to be the Christ,

deceiving many people. There would be those who come saying "I am the Messiah", but are obvious frauds. Then there would be others preaching behind pulpits and on television, asserting that when you look at them you are seeing Christ. But on closer examination, their lives and teachings would prove to be the complete opposite.

Jesus assured His disciples that though false prophets would abound, the good news of the kingdom would continue to be preached until the end of time. *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come"* (Matthew 24:14). Let us consider some of the truths He taught concerning the kingdom.

■ MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM

Jesus called the truths of the kingdom "mysteries," which would be hidden from those who do not have a heart to know and understand them. But to His own disciples, *"He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given"* (Matthew 13:11).

The spiritual leaders of Jesus' day could not understand these mysteries, because of their stubborn and obstinate hearts. These leaders clung to their own immovable religious positions. On the outside they appeared to pursue God; but only to the extent of Him into fitting their spiritual opinions and traditions. So despite their

knowledge of Old Testament scriptures, which clearly pointed to Christ; they could not accept Him when He came, because He went against their own religious agendas. Due to their religious obstinacy, Jesus said to those chief priests and elders, *"The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"* (Matthew 21:43).

God forbid this should ever be said of your life and mine. After having set out to seek truth, you fail to let it find a resting place in your heart, and the ultimate consequence is you are not transformed into the image of Christ. This is exactly what happened to Israel in the time of Jesus. When He came to earth in the form of a man, they did not accept Him, but chose to reject and crucify Him. They missed their day of visitation; they were not changed, and their rejection of Christ resulted in the gospel being taken and preached to other nations.

■ AN INTERNAL KINGDOM

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20-21). This kingdom is not about an outward show; rather it is about a work God is doing in you. When you receive Jesus as Savior, He forgives your sins, and begins to change your life as you have fellowship and communion with Him. Therefore, the kingdom of God is not external, but an internal kingdom; a place where Christ reigns and governs your life by the power of the Spirit.

■ THE PARABLE OF THE SEED

Many times in the gospels, Jesus described the kingdom of God in parables. For instance in Matthew 13:18–23, He spoke about the kingdom of God as a seed the farmer was sowing. The seed represented the word of God sown into the heart of man.

In this parable, Jesus explained the different responses to the seed that was sown. There would be those who would not comprehend this word of the kingdom. Therefore, the enemy would come and immediately steal it out of their heart. There would be no change in their lives and they would not bear fruit. Second, there are those who would receive the word with great joy, but would eventually fall away because of persecution. These are the people who take offense when others reject them because of their testimony; they too end up becoming dry and unfruitful. Jesus continued to explain that there would be a third category of people. They would receive the word, but the life of God would be choked out of them, because of the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches. These people would return to their security, in the things of this world, and would not bear any lasting fruit of the kingdom.

How many people in our generation are sitting in churches that preach a false gospel; yet, feel safe and secure? When darkness comes, as we are experiencing in today's world, what will they do?

Jesus goes on to explain a fourth group, who would completely embrace the word of the kingdom

and it would produce fruit in increasing measure in their life. I want to be in this group, I want the word of God to have a resting place in my heart, and my life be changed for His glory. Hallelujah!

■ TEN VIRGINS

In another parable Jesus said, *“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish”* (Matthew 25:1–2).

The foolish virgins thought their lamps had sufficient oil, but when darkness came they were in fact empty. How many people in our generation are sitting in churches that preach a false gospel; yet, feel safe and secure? When darkness comes, as we are experiencing in today's world, what will they do? What will happen to the “prosperity crowd” when the economy collapses? What will happen to people, who sit under a gospel, where they are taught that they have a great destiny to fulfill? What will happen when they cannot find work because much of the country is unemployed and the nation is in recession? What will happen to people who have not truly embraced the real gospel of the kingdom of God? When hard and difficult times come, they will not have enough light for the present darkness. In fact, they will find out that their lamps have gone out. What a tragedy beloved, may this never happen to you or me.

■ A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED

Jesus explained, *“The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof”* (Matthew 13:

31–32). In this parable, the kingdom of God is described as a mustard seed; which is likened to a small seed of faith planted in the heart, the moment you say, “Lord Jesus, I believe you died on a cross for my sins and you will give me power to live this new life that brings honor and glory to your name.”

This small seed of faith starts to grow in your heart with the life of Christ. At first, you may be just like a sapling in a field, but soon you will begin to sprout and grow in every direction. Through your life, others will be able to find sustenance, shelter and a place of rest. Jesus is the one who causes this good seed to grow until it becomes a large tree. He will begin to place words in your mouth, which will give hope and courage to those who are cast down. He will give you spiritual authority, enabling you to withstand all the powers of evil. You will have authority to open prison doors and to see the release of the captives. He will also give you an incredible heart of compassion, in the place of selfishness. You will find yourself forgiving those who have wronged you, instead of holding grudges. Praise God!

■ TREASURE HID IN A FIELD

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field” (Matthew 13:44).

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure, that a man discovered in a field and will do all he can to bring into his possession. It is the man or woman, who sees Christ for who He really is; the king of all the earth. When they see this, they say, “God Almighty, help me to sell all that I am holding on to, so I may possess this life and be a true disciple of

Jesus Christ. So I can move in a love that does not come from the natural heart; and have pure thoughts that do not come from the natural mind. So I might be led to speak by His Spirit and not from my own understanding. I want to care about a perishing society, and not live my life just caring about myself.”

Unfortunately, there are those who will never let go of what they once thought would make them secure. Therefore, they cannot hear or receive the gospel of the kingdom. They desire the benefits of heaven, but do not want to walk the path that this kingdom will lead them on. They end up having no power or passion to take this treasure to the poor, the addicted, the afflicted, and the oppressed.

The religious will harden their hearts and point their fingers at those who failed, but the ones who are walking in the kingdom will understand the heart of God, which is restoration.

■ A MAN TRAVELING INTO A FAR COUNTRY

“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods” (Matthew 25:14). When Christ rose from the dead He sat at the right hand of the Father, and He entrusted His “goods”—the heart of God, to His Son. Now Jesus entrusts us with the “heart of God.” This is a heart of deep compassion for the poor, the disadvantaged, the weak, and the sick. We are His body, who continue to do His work upon the earth. His church is not a kingdom of darkness, but a kingdom of incredible light. He gives us

this incredible gift of His victory over sin and darkness; and it is His church that takes this gospel of the kingdom to the rest of the world.

■ REACHING THE “ONE”

In Luke chapter 15, the Scripture talks about a man who leaves his ninety-nine sheep to find the one that was lost. The heart of God’s kingdom is to be moved to leave our own security, to pursue the one lost sheep until it is found and brought home.

There are people walking the streets with a deep cry in their heart, and God is the only one who hears them. These people get up in the morning and put on their public face, hiding their pain and despair, and only the Holy Spirit knows. Now God will reveal it to those who are under His rule and kingdom; He will give you a word in season, to minister in the supernatural, to those who are hurting.

The last part of Luke 15 talks about a wayward son coming home and his father meeting him. Like this father, those who know the heart of God will be on the road meeting the ones who have failed and disgraced the name of Jesus. They will be there to restore them; and to see them empowered and commissioned in the work of God. They will be agents of healing and restoration. The religious will harden their hearts and point their fingers at those who failed, but the ones who are walking in the kingdom will understand the heart of God, which is restoration. They understand, as the scripture says, mercy triumphs over judgment.

They are not “using Him” for their own gain, but are allowing God to use their life for the gain of others.

■ THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

In Matthew 16:15–19, Jesus asks His disciples, “But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Now this is an incredible statement, and a question that you and I must answer. Peter could have said, “Well, you are a good man, but you are not exactly what I have been looking for in the Messiah.” Instead he said, “You are the Christ, the son of the living God. You are the one that the prophets have prophesied about. You are the one in whom we find our life and reason for existence as a people and a nation. You are the Christ who forgives, strengthens and carries us.” This is why Jesus replied, “Peter, you are blessed, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven. You are Peter and on this rock—the revelation of who I am—I will build my church.”

This is the church that will be preaching the gospel of the kingdom until Christ returns, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Satan will come against you from every side, but he will not triumph over you. You will not be overthrown. The gospel of the kingdom is the one message that will endure to the end. Other fads about Christ come and go, but this message will carry on.

Jesus said to Peter, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”

In other words, “I’m going to give you access to the provision and power of heaven, and whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Those who have received Christ will have authority over evil powers, and will set the captives free. They are not “using Him” for their own gain, but are allowing God to use their life for the gain of others. True authority comes when others find hope and healing that only God can give, through your life.

■ MY CHILDREN FIRST

This was made real to me just recently when I returned from spending time with my family, particularly my grandson. While I was with them, I started thinking, “I am 54 years old now. I would really like to just enjoy my family and watch this little boy grow. It would be wonderful to have more time to just enjoy my children.” As I began to pray, the Holy Spirit spoke to me, and I started weeping. The Lord said, “Carter, I would like to enjoy my children, too, but you see, you have to go and get them, because they are not home yet. And it is my children first!” He took me to the parable of the servant that comes in from serving all day in the field, and the master says, “No, you serve me first, then you eat.” His message was clear to me: “my children first!”

■ THY KINGDOM COME!

God is calling you to lay down the things that hinder your fellowship with Christ. So you are not found among those who are offended because of persecution; or who are choked by the cares and

riches of this world. Allow His word to find a lodging place in your heart and you will bear fruit for His glory. Any preacher that tells you there is no cross in the Christian life is a liar and does not know God. There is a cross, it is simply doing what Jesus did, dying to your own desires and living for the will of God. In the end God will give you a hundred-fold more than anything you could have attained in your own strength.

Carter Conlon
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TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of “The Cross and the Switchblade.” It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday	10:00AM	3:00PM	6:00PM
Tuesday	7:00PM	Church Service	
Thursday	7:00PM	Prayer Meeting	
Friday	7:00PM	Church Service	

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