

Introduction

a) The Gospel of the Kingdom Preached in All Nations

- Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14).
- The gospel of the kingdom is the announcement that Jesus is King, His reign has already been inaugurated, His kingdom is advancing through the Spirit-empowered church, and one day He will return to reign over all the earth.

b) A Clear Sign of the End of the Age

- The return of Christ is connected not only to:
 - World events
 - Prophetic timelines
 - Increasing darkness
 - End-time signs
- It is also connected to the recovery and proclamation of the kingdom message.
- This means we have a role to play in preparing the nations for the return of the King.

c) What Is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

- Is it the same as the gospel of salvation—that Jesus died for our sins, rose from the dead, and offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who repent and believe?
- Or is the gospel of the kingdom bigger than the gospel of salvation?
- Can we truly say the gospel of the kingdom is being preached in all nations today?
- To answer these questions, we first need to understand what the gospel of the kingdom is from Scripture.
- That's why we will examine Jesus's message and ministry in the Gospels.
- We will look especially at how He *embodied, proclaimed, and demonstrated* the kingdom.
- We will also look at how the apostles continued Jesus's kingdom ministry after His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.
- Then we will summarize what the gospel of the kingdom is and why the church must recover it today.

Jesus *Embodied, Proclaimed, and Demonstrated* the Kingdom

a) Jesus's Ministry

- Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom throughout Judea.

- He announced that God's reign had broken into history through Him.
- He confronted religious systems, exposed darkness, set captives free, healed the sick, cast out demons, and revealed the authority of the King.
- Jesus *embodied, proclaimed, and demonstrated* the Kingdom of God.
- As we look at Jesus's ministry, keep in mind that every believer is called to be like Jesus—to minister like Jesus by also embodying, proclaiming, and demonstrating the kingdom of God.
- Jesus is the pattern for us in every area of life: character, lifestyle, and ministry.
- We are not only called to be Christlike in character and lifestyle but also in how we minister.
- Every believer is called to minister like Jesus.

b) Jesus *Embodied* the Kingdom of God

- Jesus told the Pharisees, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst" (Luke 17:20–21).
- When Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is in your midst," He was saying, "I am the kingdom because I am the King."
- Jesus essentially said, "As the King of kings, I embody the kingdom of God. All that the prophets spoke about the kingdom is contained within Me. The kingdom of God has drawn near to you, has come upon you, and is at hand in Me."
- The kingdom is not merely a concept, system, or doctrine.
- The kingdom is embodied in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Where the King is welcomed, His kingdom is present.
- Where His lordship is embraced, His reign begins to be expressed.

c) Jesus *Proclaimed* the Kingdom of God.

- Matthew writes, "Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people" (Matt. 4:23).
- Several chapters later, Matthew writes basically the same thing: "Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness" (Matt. 9:35).
- From Matthew 4:23 to 9:35 we have an *inclusio*.
 - An *inclusio* is a literary device where an author frames a section of writing by repeating similar words, themes, phrases, or ideas at the beginning and end of that section.
 - Think of it like bookends. The repeated material signals to the reader: "Everything between these two markers belongs together and should be interpreted as one unit."

- Matthew uses an inclusio to frame the section from Matthew 4:23–9:35.
- Matthew wants us to see that Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom and demonstrated it with power.
 - Matthew 5–7: the Sermon on the Mount (the kingdom message)
 - Matthew 8–9: Jesus’s power ministry of healing, deliverance, and miracles
- That means the Sermon on the Mount (the kingdom message) and Jesus’s healings, deliverances, and miracles (kingdom power) belong together.
- Matthew is showing that Jesus brought the kingdom through teaching, preaching, healing, and deliverance.
- The gospel of the kingdom fuses together the kingdom message and kingdom power.
- If we preach the kingdom message without demonstrating kingdom power, we have not fully proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom.
- If we minister in kingdom power without preaching the kingdom message, we have not fully proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom.
- The kingdom message and kingdom power can’t be separated if we want to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom. The two are fused together.

d) Jesus *Demonstrated* the Kingdom of God

- Notice the connection between proclaiming the kingdom and demonstrating it in Matthew 4:23.
 - “Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.”
 - And He was “healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.”
- Because Matthew 8–9 is part of the inclusio, these chapters show that Jesus did not merely preach the kingdom—He demonstrated the power of the kingdom.
- As we look at how Jesus demonstrated the power of the kingdom in Matthew 8–9, we should not view this merely as a history lesson.
- We should see it as a blueprint for how we are called to demonstrate the kingdom of God today with power.

e) Jesus’s Power Ministry in Matthew 8–9

- Jesus healed a leper, showing His authority to cleanse the unclean (Matt. 8:1–4).
- He healed the centurion’s servant from a distance, revealing that His authority was not limited by proximity (Matt. 8:5–13).
- He healed Peter’s mother-in-law, then healed many who were sick and cast out demons, fulfilling Isaiah’s promise that the Messiah would carry our sicknesses (Matt. 8:14–17).

- He delivered the Gadarene demoniacs, showing His authority over the demonic realm (Matt. 8:28–34).
- He healed the paralytic (Matt. 9:1–8) and the woman with the issue of blood (Matt. 9:20–22).
- He raised Jairus's daughter from the dead (Matt. 9:18–19, 23–26).
- He opened the eyes of two blind men (Matt. 9:27–31).
- He delivered a mute man oppressed by a demon (Matt. 9:32–34).

f) The Gospel of the Kingdom Is Demonstrated with Power

- Matthew 8–9 presents Jesus as the King whose kingdom brings:
 - Cleansing
 - Healing
 - Deliverance
 - Resurrection life
 - And authority over sickness, demons, and death.
- Matthew's inclusio shows that the gospel of the kingdom we are called to proclaim must be demonstrated with power.

The Apostles Preached and Demonstrated the Kingdom

a) Jesus Commissions the Twelve to Minister Like Him

- After the inclusio ends in Matthew 9:35, Jesus has great compassion for the sheep. They were sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36).
- He then gives the twelve "authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness" (Matt. 10:1).
- The gospel of the kingdom Jesus preached and demonstrated with power was to be replicated in His followers—including us.

b) The Apostles Preached the Gospel of the Kingdom

- The apostles did not preach a different message from Jesus (see Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23; 28:31).
- They also proclaimed the kingdom message and demonstrated it by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Acts opens with these words: "all that Jesus began to do and teach" (Acts 1:8).
 - The idea is the apostles and the church were always meant to carry on Jesus's message and ministry.
- Acts ends with these words: "preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered" (Acts 28:31).
 - The idea is the ministry of Jesus did not end with the apostles.

- The church throughout history is called to continue His message and ministry without hindrance until the gospel of the kingdom is preached in all nations.
- When Paul preached in Ephesus, the kingdom confronted the worship of Diana, exposed idolatry, broke the power of witchcraft, and launched a revival so powerful that all Asia heard the word of the Lord.
- In the first century, the gospel of the kingdom:
 - Shook cities
 - Confronted idols
 - Dethroned darkness
 - Transformed lives
- This was not a weak message of religious improvement.
- It was the announcement that another King had come.

What Is the Gospel of the Kingdom?

a) The Proclamation That Jesus Is King

- The gospel of the kingdom declares that Jesus is King.
- Not Caesar. Not any president. Not any dictator, czar, ruler, empire, or earthly power.
- Every throne, government, nation, and kingdom will ultimately bow before Him.
- The first-century church proclaimed that Jesus is Lord, Christ, King, Savior, and Son of God—titles that challenged Caesar's claim to ultimate authority.
- Rome could tolerate many religions, but the confession "Jesus is Lord" meant Caesar was not lord, making Christians appear disloyal or politically dangerous.
- Acts 17:7 shows the threat clearly: Christians were accused of "saying that there is another king, Jesus."
- Because Christians refused to worship Caesar or give him ultimate allegiance, their faith put them at risk of persecution, imprisonment, and death.
- The gospel of the kingdom was not merely a message of personal forgiveness; it announced a rival kingdom, a higher allegiance, and the reign of the true King—Jesus Christ.

b) The Gospel of Salvation at the Heart of the Kingdom

- The gospel of salvation is glorious, essential, and true.
- Jesus died for our sins, rose from the dead, and offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who repent and believe in Him.
- But the gospel of salvation is not the whole kingdom message.

- It lies at the heart of the gospel of the kingdom, but the kingdom message is bigger.

c) The Kingdom Calls for a Response

- The kingdom message demands immediate and wholehearted surrender (Luke 9:57–62).
- Jesus requires complete allegiance to Him. He will not tolerate divided loyalty.
- He calls us to follow Him without delay, without excuses, and without looking back.
- Those who cling to the past or place anything above obedience to the King are not fit for the kingdom.
- Jesus made it clear that following Him must take priority over comfort, family obligations, and every competing attachment.
- Those who put their hand to the plow but keep looking back reveal a divided heart and are not fit for the kingdom of God.
- The gospel of the kingdom calls everyone with ears to hear:
 - Repent
 - Believe
 - Surrender to the King
- This is not a neutral message.
- It demands allegiance to Jesus Christ.

d) The Kingdom Brings Salvation and Transformation

- The gospel of the kingdom is a message of salvation, but also of transformation.
- It brings righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17).
- The kingdom message:
 - Confronts sin
 - Destroys bondage
 - Renews the heart
 - Brings every area of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ

e) The Kingdom Is Embodied Through the Indwelling Spirit

- The kingdom is the reign of Christ, and it is established within God's people in the present age by the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- Jesus the King now lives in us by His Spirit, bringing His life, nature, authority, and purpose into our hearts.
- This means the kingdom begins *internally* before it is expressed *externally*.

- The Holy Spirit brings every part of our being under the rule of Jesus—our thoughts, desires, motives, emotions, words, choices, and actions.
- As we yield to the indwelling Spirit, the life of the King is embodied through us.
- This is how the invisible reign of Christ becomes visible in the earth.
- The kingdom is expressed through Spirit-filled believers who live under the lordship of Jesus and reveal His nature, power, and authority wherever they go.
- The kingdom is not only coming one day in fullness; it is already being embodied now through the church by the indwelling Spirit.

f) The Sermon on the Mount Reveals Kingdom Living

- Jesus made it clear that His kingdom makes demands on how we live (see Matt. 5–7).
- The kingdom is not forgiveness without lordship.
- It is not salvation without transformation.
- It is the reign of Jesus shaping the thoughts, desires, choices, relationships, and actions of His people.
- Matthew 5–7 shows the kingdom message Jesus preached.
- The Sermon on the Mount is the lifestyle to be lived now by kingdom citizens.
- It's the way of the kingdom. The lifestyle of the kingdom. The constitution of the kingdom.
- It's what life looks like under the reign of Jesus the King.

g) The Kingdom Is Demonstrated with Power

- The kingdom is not merely preached; it is demonstrated.
- It is revealed through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus demonstrated the kingdom by:
 - Healing the sick
 - Casting out demons
 - Cleansing the lepers
 - Raising the dead
 - Setting captives free
- Jesus gave the apostles—and us—the same commission for ministry that defined His in Matthew 10:7–8: “And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.”
- The gospel of the kingdom can't be proclaimed rightly with words only; it must also be demonstrated with power.

- Paul said, “The kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power” (1 Cor. 4:20).
- The ESV puts it like this: “For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power” (1 Cor. 4:20).
- The power that demonstrates the kingdom breaking into the present is the power of the Holy Spirit to heal the sick, cast out demons, cleanse lepers, and raise the dead (Matt. 10:8).
- Jesus said, “If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matt. 12:28).
- He also said, “Whatever city you enter . . . heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you’” (Luke 10:8–9).
- When the kingdom breaks into the present through the Holy Spirit, healing and deliverance follow.
- Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father” (John 14:12).
- The works Jesus did that demonstrated the kingdom were not just for the twelve.
- Jesus said that it’s for “he who believes in Me.”
- That means every believer is called to minister like Jesus—proclaiming and demonstrating the kingdom.

h) Proclaiming the Coming Kingdom

- As George Eldon Ladd said, the kingdom is “already but not yet.”
- The kingdom is already present, but it has not yet come in fullness.
- One day, “the kingdom of the world” will become “the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15).
- When Jesus returns, He will crush every empire, ruler, and kingdom that refuses to bow before Him.
- He will reign from Mount Zion in Jerusalem.
- His glory will fill the earth.
- Zechariah 14:9: “The LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.”
- The kingdom message is not neutral.
- Jesus is returning as the Lion from the tribe of Judah to judge the nations and reign over the earth.

The Gospel of the Kingdom



Proclaiming the Kingdom Hastens the Lord's Return

a) Accelerating Jesus's Second Coming

- Peter said, "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat" (2 Pet. 3:11–12).
- The Greek word for "hastening" is *speudō*. It can mean:
 - To hurry
 - To make haste
 - To urge on
 - To cause something to happen sooner

- Peter is telling us that we can cause the Lord's return to happen sooner.
- This means that we are called to participate in God's prophetic agenda.
- This doesn't mean that we can override God's sovereignty. But that God has invited us into His prophetic plans for the end of the age.

b) Four Ways the Lord's Return Can Be Hastened

1. The bride makes herself ready (Rev. 19:7; 1 Pet. 3:11).
2. The Jewish people in Israel repent and receive Jesus as Messiah (Matt. 23:39; Acts 3:19–21).
3. The church prays for God's kingdom to come (Matt. 6:10; Rev. 8:1–6; 11:15).
4. The gospel of the kingdom is proclaimed in all nations (Matt. 24:14).

c) The Truth in Tension

- God is sovereign over the day when Jesus returns.
- He has fixed by His own authority when Christ will come again (Acts 1:7).
- Yet we are also called to participate in accelerating that day.
- We "hasten" the second coming not by forcing God's timeline, but by responding to His invitation to actively participate in the very things He has ordained to bring that day about. Namely, gospel proclamation, repentance, holy living, and prayerful alignment with God's purposes.

The Church Must Recover the Full Gospel of the Kingdom

a) We Must Recover More Than a Partial Gospel

- The church must recover and proclaim the gospel Jesus and the apostles preached.
- Not merely the gospel of going to heaven when we die.
- Not merely the gospel of forgiveness without lordship.
- Not merely the gospel of personal salvation without kingdom transformation.
- We must recover the full gospel of the kingdom—the kingdom message *and* kingdom power together.

b) The Full Gospel of the Kingdom Proclaims the Reign of Jesus

- The full gospel of the kingdom declares:
 - Jesus is King
 - His reign has been inaugurated
 - His kingdom has broken into history through the Spirit-empowered church
 - All people must repent, believe, and surrender to His lordship
 - One day His kingdom will come in fullness

- His reign will take over every nation and fill the entire earth
- c) Recovering the Kingdom Message Prepares the Nations for the King
 - If we long for the return of the King, we must recover the gospel of the kingdom.
 - We must preach what Jesus preached.
 - We must demonstrate what Jesus demonstrated.
 - We must prepare the nations for the reign of the coming King.