

THE KINGDOM OF GOD, Part 3  
December 15, 2019  
Advent 3

INTRODUCTION

1. Last week, stage = set for God's true kingdom to come to earth in Jesus, His Son
    - No prophet for 400 years -- no Davidic king for 600 years = foreign control except 100
    - Davidic line = continued for 600 years -- people = ready -- other events happened in world
  
  2. Greeks = ruled Mediterranean world for several hundred years = common language
    - OT = translated into Greek = Septuagint (LXX) -- NT = written in Greek -- all = God's Word
    - Romans took over from, improved upon Greeks -- Latin = not yet universal language
  
  3. Roman contribution = **Pax Romana (Roman Peace)** -- they = "peace through strength"
    - They established universal currency, commerce, communication, transportation
    - **Everyone knew, understood, and spoke Greek -- Romans enabled them to trade and travel**
  
  4. Dispersion of Israelites = Diaspora = by Assyrians, Babylonians = sad, painful
    - **It established pockets of Israelites throughout the Mediterranean world to hear the gospel**
    - Pilgrims from all over = in Jerusalem for Easter, Pentecost -- Paul went "to Jew first"
- A. 1. World = set for God's kingdom to enter -- God's people = ready, though unaware
  - Matthew 1 = demonstrates this beautifully = **Pew Bible, Page 1007** -- GO OVER
- A. 2. Before Jesus began ministry -- John the Baptizer, the last OT prophet = prepared way
  - Matthew 3:1-5, page 1009 = last week = GO OVER -- *Em, don't insert text*
- A. 3. Today: "All the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, who is Elijah who is to come"
  - Time of Prophets, Law = until John = ended with John -- something, someone greater = here
  - Jesus = God-man of Genesis 3 = son of Abraham = son of David = God's Davidic King = here
- A. 4. Jesus = out of public view until John's work = finished = put in prison -- then He = out
  - Matthew 4:12-17, page 1010 = GO OVER -- *Em, don't insert text*
- B. 1. For the next 3 years, Jesus taught people about the kingdom, reign, and rule of God
  - People = not know, understand = forgotten, confused = wanted OT Israel restored
  - Jesus = not kick out Romans = established God's kingdom by dying, rising, sending Spirit
- B. 2. **What is this "kingdom of God" that Jesus established by His death and resurrection?**
  - At first, it was the "Church" -- People "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship (ie: worship), breaking of bread (ie: Communion), and prayer" (Acts 2:42)
  - They "had everything in common" (2:44) and "preached the Word wherever they went" (8:4)

- B. 3. **Over time, people added baggage to the kingdom of God and still called it Church**
- Now we have: buildings -- altars -- paraments -- flowers -- fundraisers -- 501(c)3
  - We have: **budgets** -- **councils** -- **voters** -- **organs** -- **hymnals** -- **computers** -- **projectors**

- B. 4. We have many traditions and opinions that go with these things -- **All connected to "Church"** -- **None connected to the "kingdom of God"** -- not that these = bad, BUT:
- We have buried God's kingdom under the baggage of Church = made it hard to find

#### CONCLUSION

1. Why is that important to realize and understand? -- **We are surrounded by unbelievers**
  - We exist to make believers out of unbelievers -- We make this process very difficult
  - **In order for you to become a Christian, you must also become a Churchian** = no difference
2. When Jesus established His kingdom, did He intend it to look as the Church looks today?
  - **What kind of kingdom did Jesus establish by His dying, rising, and sending of the Spirit?**
  - What = kingdom of God? -- "Joining Jesus on His Mission: How to be Everyday Missionary"
3. "The kingdom of God is the redemptive presence and activity of God in human lives"
  - **It's not the baggage of Church** -- **It's God interacting with people to save, redeem, restore**
  - It's God creating circumstances to make people aware of their need for Him
4. **It's God bringing you into peoples' lives to bring them a word or deed of hope or peace**
  - **It's you interacting with people you know as God's mouthpiece** = explaining, comforting
  - That = what it means "to make Jesus known" = "to bring compassion of Christ to people"
  - When you do that, you = doing kingdom, mission work -- everything else = "church work"