

You recall how Jesus repeatedly told people not to tell others about what they had seen (Mathew 17:9 **"As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."** (Mark 7:36) **"Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more He ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it."** That's because there would be such a widespread misunderstanding about the nature of His Kingship that a political revolt might happen as people try to sweep Him on to the throne like in John 6. No, He came to be crucified. That's why He came. He came to die, not to be put on a throne yet. He would only be King through crucifixion and resurrection. The disciples could scarcely comprehend that.

"My Kingdom Is Not Of This World"

(John 18:36) Jesus answered, **"My kingdom is not from this world. If My Kingdom were from this world, My followers would be fighting to keep Me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, My Kingdom is not from here."** So, although we must live here until God calls us home, we are not to live for ourselves or according to this world's value system. Those who have been bought by the blood of Jesus have been given the right to live according to God's value system. Citizens of the Kingdom of God live here on assignment from our Father the King. Living with a Kingdom mindset empowers us to make wiser decisions as we invest our lives in furthering the Gospel Of The Kingdom.

"The Millennium"

Over time, historians began referring to this Kingdom to come as the Millennium. This is because in Revelation 20 the Apostle John wrote that the saints would reign with Christ for 1,000 years: **"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them ... And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years"** (Revelation 20:4) **"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark on their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."** The word millennium is a derivation of the Latin words mille for "thousand" and annum for "year." Most reference works address the Kingdom of God teaching under the category of "Millennium." Be aware, however, that the Millennium and the Kingdom of God aren't synonymous, although they overlap. According to the Bible, the millennial reign of Christ will initiate God's rule on earth, but His Kingdom will extend past the Millennium into eternity. (Daniel 7:13-14 13)

"Kingdom Of God"



About one billion people profess Christianity. Christianity traces its origin and its beliefs to the teachings of Jesus Christ, Who lived almost 2,000 years ago. Yet it is a paradox that many of the adherents to Christianity are not aware of Jesus' central teaching. As a result, it is rarely proclaimed. The heart and core of Jesus Christ's message was that the Kingdom of God would be established on

earth. This theme is to be found throughout the four Gospels. As historian Michael Grant puts it, **"Every thought and saying of Jesus was directed and subordinated to one single thing ..., the realization of the Kingdom of God upon the earth,"** and **"this one phrase [Kingdom of God] sums up His whole ministry.** The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible says this about the Kingdom of God: **"The word 'Kingdom' is found fifty-five times in Matthew; twenty times in Mark, forty-six times in Luke and five times in John.** When allowance is made for the use of the word to refer to secular kingdoms and for parallel verses of the same sayings of Jesus, the phrase **'The Kingdom Of God'** and equivalent expressions (**'Kingdom Of Heaven,' 'His Kingdom'**) occurs about eighty times . . . These statistics show the great importance of the concept in the teachings of Jesus . . . There can, therefore, be little doubt that the phrase **'The Kingdom Of God'** expresses the main theme of His teaching.

"The Disciples Proclaimed the Kingdom"



The disciples recognized with crystal clarity that, when Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God, He spoke in terms of a real government—a structured, organized entity with the very authority of God behind it. Certain rulers who heard Christ's message recognized the political implications and viewed His words as a threat to their own power. This became a factor in Christ's eventual crucifixion (Luke 23:2) **"They began to accuse Him,**

saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that He Himself is the Messiah, a king." (John 19:12) **"From then on Pilate tried to release Him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."** To Jesus and His disciples, the term Kingdom of God meant a government that would be established on earth. They anticipated that its arrival would amount to nothing less than a sweeping, overwhelming change in the world order.

In teaching the message of this Kingdom, Jesus was simply extending the central theme of the Old Testament. The Hebrew prophets had earlier stressed the reality of this Kingdom. Referring to the Bible, John Bright wrote: "Had we to give that book a title, we might with justice call it 'The Book of the Coming Kingdom of God.' That is, indeed, its central theme everywhere. Old Testament and New Testament thus stand together as the two acts of a single drama."

"The Gospel Of The Kingdom Is The Good-News"



The Gospel of the Kingdom is the Good-News message of repentance, redemption, and restoration offered by God to all who will receive Christ. Those who accept this offer become part of His eternal kingdom (John 1:12) "But to all who received him, who believed in His Name, He gave power to become children of God..." Those who

choose to remain in their sin cannot be a part of this kingdom (1 Corinthians 6:9–10) "Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God." Although grace makes this offer available to anyone who will receive it, Jesus warned that it would be very difficult to enter His kingdom and few would do so (Matthew 7:14) "For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it." The Gospel of the Kingdom is the news that there is freedom from our slavery to sin if we will repent and turn to God. Our Redeemer has come, but it is difficult to enter God's kingdom, not because God requires impossible standards for us, but because we do not want to repent and change. We tend to love the darkness more than the Light (John 3:19) "And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil..." Many would rather cling to their old sinful identities than allow Jesus to create them anew (2 Corinthians 5:17) "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" Those who receive the Gospel of the Kingdom become citizens of heaven and are freed from bondage to this world (Galatians 4:3–9). Second Corinthians 5:20 refers to God's children as "Ambassadors" for our heavenly Father. Just as an earthly foreign ambassador retains his national identity when representing his country in another, the spiritual ambassadors of God's Kingdom owe their allegiance to God even as they reside in this world. We must follow our heavenly Father's code of conduct while sojourners on earth. We need not conform to this world's habits, values, and lifestyle, because this is not our home.

"Apostle Paul's Appeal To Us "

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:1-2)

"Already, But Not Yet "



Thy
Kingdom Come

The picture you get in the Gospels as Jesus unfolds the teachings of the Kingdom is that it is both present and it is still future. In fact, this is what he means when He says that the mystery of the Kingdom is here — presence without completion. In fact, He is more explicit than that in Luke 11:20: "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you." Even more explicitly, Luke 17:21 says,

"Behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you." How can the kingdom of God be both not yet present and already present? He says, "Pray for it. It's coming. It's not yet here. It's not going to be immediate, and yet already, it's present in your midst, upon you, at hand." How can He say all that? The answer is, the Kingdom of God is God's reign — HIS sovereign action in the world to redeem and deliver a people and then at a future time finish it and renew his people and the universe completely. "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God..." (Revelation 21:1-3)

"Trading The Throne For A Cross"



During the lifetime of Jesus, He was walking a very fine line between making Himself known as the Son of God and the actual presence of the King Himself, on the one hand, and concealing Himself from being

taken and made to be an earthly king on the other hand (like they wanted to do in John 6). They were ready to come and make Him King.