

Don't Miss The Kingdom

By John Eckhardt



Luke 17:20-22

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come, he answered them, the Kingdom of God cometh not by observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. And he said unto the disciples, the days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. (Daniel 7:9-14, 27)

Underline in your Bible Luke 17:22, "*the Son of man*". That is a messianic term. Daniel's prophecy refers to an individual called "the Son of man" coming to receive a kingdom. In Daniel 7:13 we have been laying the foundation concerning the Kingdom of God. Remember Jesus preached the Gospel (the good news) of the Kingdom of God. Everywhere He went He preached the same message, "Repent for the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of heaven is at hand". All throughout the Gospels, we find that Jesus' emphasis was on the Kingdom.

Jesus chose twelve men, ordained them as Apostles and sent them out with that very same message. Preach the Kingdom of God!, Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out devils. He commanded not only to preach it, but to demonstrate the Kingdom of God. In Luke 10, Jesus appointed 70 others and sent them out two by two and told them the same thing. He told them to go, preach and proclaim that the Kingdom of God is at hand and He healed the sick. The primary reason Jesus came to Earth was to inaugurate the Kingdom of God. Often, we hear that the reason Jesus came to the Earth was to die on the Cross. Jesus did come to die on the Cross, but that death on the cross was for the purpose of establishing the Kingdom of God.

In the previous verses, the Pharisees missed the Kingdom. I want to share with you that if you are not careful, you too can miss the Kingdom of God, when it is right at hand. There were multitudes of people when Jesus preached the message of the Kingdom. Some missed it, others did not. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God suffers violence, and the violent take it by force". That word "violent" does not refer to a natural violence, but rather, refers to a person who has a revelation of the Kingdom and seizes it! They take it by force. The word to take by force means to "seize it". When the police come, they seize someone, they take them by force. When the Kingdom comes to you, you need to seize it! You need to take it by force, don't let it go by. If you do, you can miss it. Don't take all the time you want to ponder and decide if you want it. When the Kingdom comes, you have to grab it.

The message of the Kingdom comes to some people and they think about it, they think about it, they examine it and it passes them by. Others who had the Kingdom come to them grasped it. They grasped it because they were desperate. The Gospel was preached primarily to the poor, because they were desperate. Jesus said the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor". The reason the poor enter the Kingdom of God faster than the rich is because they are desperate. The rich man has to come to the end of himself. The poor are dependent they are broken and need help.

When the Good News of the Kingdom of God comes to the poor, they are ready for Good News. The poor and sick the blind, the withered, the lame and demonized rush into the Kingdom of God. Those are the ones that followed the ministry of Christ. The Bible says that in the days of John the Baptist until now, the law and the prophets were unto John. But since the time of John, the Kingdom of heaven is preached and every man presses into it. The word "press" represented a crowd pressing to seize the Kingdom.

Jesus went about all the towns and villages preaching the gospel, the good news, there were crowds of poor, sick and demonized people. They were considered to be the lowest of society. Yet they were pressing in, crowding to seize the best news they have ever heard. Even in their state of being sick, and poor and demonized, they knew, they had a revelation that this Man Jesus did not come to condemn them. He didn't come to judge them. But he came to bring hope, to bring a kingdom that is not like the kingdom of the world. It's the Kingdom of God.

In the book of Daniel, you will discover that Daniels describes the kingdom of men as that to that of a beast. The nature of man is likened to that of a beast. The number 666 is the number of man; it is the number of the beast. Often, man can behave like beasts.

They have the capacity to be cruel, domineering and abusive. Often in lower classes of society, the kingdom of man consists of those who have been rejected, looked down upon and talked about. They are mistreated as if they had not rights, they are despised and taken advantage of.

In the kingdom of man, value is placed by position, power, fame and how much money someone has. The Kingdom of God is the opposite. In God's Kingdom, a person's status, power and name means nothing. How much money you have does not impress God.

Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Matt 19:24) Jesus was not saying that it is impossible for the rich to enter His kingdom. But often when they have power, money, prestige and influence, they also tend to have pride and are not humble. They don't need or depend on anyone, so when the Kingdom comes to them, they reason, they ponder and examine and say within themselves, I don't need that, I have everything. I have money and houses, I have a nice car, position, fame and power. I'm number one in my own kingdom, in my society. They don't have the revelation or understanding of their need for the Kingdom of God.

The poor who have been oppressed, who are in need of deliverance, those who have been run down are the ones that Jesus came to preach to. These are the ones who pressed into the Kingdom and seized it because they had understanding of their own need. They understood there is a Kingdom that is higher than the kingdoms that have held them down. A kingdom that is higher than any political kingdom, religious kingdom, higher than the kingdoms of witchcraft, or the kingdoms of sickness. Every one of those people that came to Jesus, they pressed, they believed and SEIZED the Kingdom of God and were healed, delivered and set free.

You have to seize this thing, grab it, if you don't, it will go pass right by you! It's amazing how a miracle can be right at your door, and if you don't grab it, it will go right by you. Healing can be right at your door, if you don't grab it, it will go right by you. Don't sit and look religious, when God shows up, grab Him! Bring Him into your situation. That is not the time to be cool or worry about what your friends and family will say. Recognize your need for healing and deliverance and your need for the Kingdom of God. Thank God for His Kingdom!

Like the Pharisees, it's the religious that are prone to miss the Kingdom of God. Religious people are self righteous and think they know everything. They do not think they need God. They believe they have everything under control. They despise those that are struggling and look down on people who don't have what they have. They look down on people who are not in the church and despise those who have outward sin in their lives. Don't ever forget where you came from!

When Jesus came and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God it was not a foreign concept to the people of God, the Jews. They were expecting the Messiah to come with the Kingdom of heaven. They had the prophecies Daniel which "One coming". The Pharisees were looking for the Son of man to come in the clouds of Glory to deliver them out of the hands of the Romans. They were looking for the King of Israel. The Gentiles did not understand the Kingdom of God like the Jews did.

The Pharisees did not believe that Jesus was the One, but yet they asked Him when the Kingdom would come!. Jesus had been preaching that the Kingdom of God had come, that is was here, He preached it then, we preach it now, the Kingdom of God is now, it is here! Like the Pharisees of old, religious people can't see because they are blind and full of pride. Know this, if you are full of pride, you will not see the kingdom of God. The religious like position, but the Kingdom is not about position. It's not about how anointed you are, how great you are or what your name is or whether you are on television or radio.

We have in the church people who have missed the Kingdom of God. They come in with the wrong concept of what the kingdom of God and bring worldly beliefs into the church. The world's way doesn't fit into the Kingdom. They are saved, born again, their in church and still don't understand the Kingdom of God. They have missed it. They pondered, they examined, weighed and measured the kingdom and missed it. They did not seize it. Now they want a title, they want power and recognition. They don't like humility or being obscure, it's too hard on the flesh. Begin to get knowledge of the Kingdom of God. God says to humble yourself and He will exalt you. If you make yourself of no reputation He will promote you. When God promotes you, there is nothing man can do about it. He is the Judge. He puts one down and raises another one up. He is the King in His Kingdom!

Thank God for the Kingdom! Renew your mind; Jesus came to bring a different order. He came to bring a different kingdom, unlike anything you have ever known. Remove from you mind those things that you are familiar with. Remove from your mind what you see on television, what's on "Entertainment Tonight" or "Hollywood minute". It doesn't matter who leads or who follows. Take all that out of your mind. That is not the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom is about being humble; it's about serving and loving. It's about being merciful. This needs to be preached in the church, in the house of God.

We have been so busy in ministry that we miss the Kingdom. Jesus did not come to bring ministry, He came to bring the Kingdom. We are in church, we sing, dance, preach and prophecy, we cast out devils, we travel and have big ministries, we have big churches and still don't know about the Kingdom of God! We know about faith, we know about healing, we know about miracles, about the apostolic and prophetic. We know all about intercession and demons and casting them out. But we don't know about the Kingdom. Jesus did not come preaching faith or healing. He didn't preach miracles. He preached about the Kingdom of God! Healing,

deliverance and faith came to those who seized the Kingdom of God. The foremost thing on God's mind is His Kingdom.

This is not a rebuke for some, but for everyone. We are going to get there. Before Jesus Christ returns we're going to get this right. He's not coming back for a messed up church. He's coming back for a church without spot or blemish or wrinkle. He is coming back for Kingdom people. Even if we have not completely understood, thank God for the Holy Ghost. He is going to show us what the Kingdom is. Say this out loud with me, "Heavenly Father, show us, show me your Kingdom". Do not miss the Kingdom of God.

The Jewish people missed the Kingdom of God. They were looking for a future event. They did not understand that Jesus, the Messiah had two comings. His first coming was that of a suffering Messiah, He suffered once and for all of us. When you have suffered all your life, you don't want a suffering King. Who has heard that a King would suffer and die for His people? Most kings would not die for anyone. As a matter of fact, they would more than likely put you out in front and have you to die before them. The people surround the earthly king so nothing happens to him, to protect him. But our King is different. His Kingdom is different. He came to die. His Kingdom is not established through military power. Jesus did not come to raise an army. He raised Apostles and told them "the cup that I drink from, you will drink from the same cup". We will suffer, we will be persecuted, and some will be killed.

See this about the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God does not triumph because of its military might like other kingdoms. The victory of the Kingdom of God is here for us because we have a King who obtained victory for us through His suffering.

We have One who went to the Cross and suffered and died for our sins. Israel could not understand that kind of King because their mentality was in Earthly kingdoms. When Jesus came and preached the Kingdom and predicted His own death, the Jews could not believe

He was the One. They believed the One Daniel spoke of would be coming in the clouds in Glory. And He will, when He returns.

The Prophet Isaiah said referring to the Messiah, that He was rejected and despised of men; He was like the root out of dry ground. He was bruised for our iniquities, wounded for our transgressions, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth,

He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, as the sheep before the shearer is dumb, he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, who shall declare His generation? He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgressions of my people he was stricken, He made His grave with the wicked and the rich in His death: because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth, Yet, it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, he put Him to grief.

Who could understand this kind of Kingdom? It doesn't make sense, in the natural. The leader of this kingdom, the King, He dies. The followers of this Man Jesus, His Disciples love the very people that hate them. They bless those who curse them. They give and it is given unto them, they don't store up treasures, they give it away. They are not after power or fame. They are not after reputation. They serve people, they love people, and they bless and heal people. They are found among the poor, the rejected, with those that society has turned down and against.

What kind of Kingdom is this? It's the Kingdom of God! And still we don't understand it, even today.

We are still thinking in terms of "my" kingdom, We have preachers building their own kingdoms. They are not preaching the Kingdom of God. They are building their own ministry. They are building a tape ministry, book and television ministry. Their name is on everything. They float in and out. They take the biggest offering and are not concerned about the poor. They are not concerned about the demonized or the sick and still don't understand the kingdom of God.

Thank God there is a generation that God is raising up who will begin to understand the Kingdom of God. They will not go the way of the world, but will go the way of God.

Read Luke 17, people of God. Renew your minds. If you want to operate in this Kingdom you will have to humble yourselves. If you want to operate in this Kingdom you will have to lay some things aside. Lay aside ambition, desire to be seen, position, lust for power. That is not the kingdom. Jesus told the Pharisees, remember the religious people, the problem is you're looking for some grand event, for the heavens to open up, the kingdom does not come like that. The Kingdom of God is here and now, because I AM THE KING and you don't see it. In verse 22 Jesus says that they would look to the heavens to what Daniel spoke of and they will say "when are you coming back?" Your eyes have been focused up in the heavens, but right here in front of you is the kingdom of God.

It's the same today, people look up to heaven looking for something to happen when God is saying My Kingdom is right here, right now. When you hear the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, Seize it! Grab hold of it and press toward it. Don't miss it!