

Kingdom Focused

Luke 4:38-44

"I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose" (v. 43).

Jesus used the phrase "kingdom of God" over 100 times in His ministry. He taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come... Your will be done." What is the kingdom of God? Let's let Jesus answer that question: *"Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, 'The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you'"* (Luke 17:20-21). The kingdom of God is Christ's dominion in your life. It is the **King** and **Dominion**. The purpose for which Jesus was sent was to be King of your life.

I. Christ's dominion is more than *recognition* that He is King, it is the *reception* of His Kingship.

Jesus is in Capernaum healing the sick (including Peter's mother-in-law) and casting out demons. It's interesting to note that Jesus 'rebuked' the fever. The word 'rebuke' means "to reprimand" (v. 39). It's not the sick person who is reprimanded; it is the sickness. Sickness is an enemy of God's people. The last enemy conquered is death (at the resurrection). When He casts out demons listen to them: *"You are the Messiah, the Son of God!"* Then Jesus 'rebuked' them and told them to be quiet for they knew Him to be the Christ" (v. 41). It would seem that Jesus would want them to shout "He's King!" (A). It's never the will of Christ for people to shout what they don't live.

In fact, the tell-tale sign that a church is genuine is that there is less posturing and more doing.

(B). There's problems for Christ's kingdom when shouts don't match lives.

The Sadducees and Pharisees accused Christ of being 'Beelzebub' (Lord of Demons) since they knew Him and obeyed Him. For this reason, they sought to 'kill Him;' it was not yet His time.

II. Christ's dominion is received and you follow Him wherever He leads.

This is why Christianity is called "The Way" (John 14:6 and Acts 9:2). Salvation is by faith, but the Kingdom of God is the recognition that the very best kind of life lived is that life that seeks His will. *"Seek first His kingdom... (God's reign in your heart) and everything comes your way..."* (Matt. 6:33).

III. Christ's dominion is always the very best thing for individuals and societies.

"For to love Christ is to keep his commandments for they are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3 NEB).

The soul is naturally Christian (Tertullian) for the life of God is in the soul of man. We are made in the image of God, and because of that, any life lived without Christ as King is a lesser life.

Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life, and that the life you have will be full (abundant)."

We are told that there are three basic human needs in life, for every man, woman, boy and girl:

(1). There's the need to connect; *to have meaningful relationships with others.*

(2). There is the need for respect; *to know that my life really matters.*

(3). There is the need to protect; *to live life free from fear that others can do me harm.*

Every social, religious and political organization promises to meet these basic needs, but there is only one thing that can bring you ultimate security and significance: The reign of Christ within you.

IV. Christ's dominion is the result of a rebirth within that originates from above.

"I say to you, unless one is born again, from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

This rebirth is also called regeneration. It is the rebirth of a soul to see Christ's beauty. *"For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ"* (II Corinthians 4:6). Do you bow to Him?