

Rediscovering the Kingdom of God

Presented by
**Derek
Brown**

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(1) The Kingdom of God is the central message of the New Testament.

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(2) The first thing Jesus spoke about
was the Kingdom
(Mk 1:14-15; Matt 4:17)

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(3) The last thing Jesus spoke about to His disciples was the Kingdom
(Acts 1:1-3)

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(4) Jesus said the purpose He was sent to earth was to preach the Kingdom
(Luke 4:42-44)

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(5) All of the parables Jesus taught
were about the Kingdom

(Matt 13:19, 24,31,33)

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(6) Jesus said the gospel of the Kingdom must be preached to all the ends of the earth before He can return
(Matt 24:14)

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(7) Acts – the book of the disciples responding to Jesus' command begins and ends with the Kingdom of God
(Acts 1:3, 28:30-31)

Why is the Kingdom of God important?

(8) “If Jesus made the kingdom of God the centre of his message and the centre of his endeavour, the greatest need of man, as I see it, is to rediscover the kingdom of God.”

(E.Stanley Jones)

*8 statements
about
the Kingdom*

***1. Kingdom is the
sovereign rule of God –
Col 1:15-17***

Kingdom is the sovereign rule of God

(1a) “Our father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Kingdom is God's will being done.

Kingdom is the sovereign rule of God

(1b) In other words Christianity is about heaven invading earth not about us escaping to go to heaven.

Kingdom is the sovereign rule of God

(1c) All the major events that followed Jesus' inauguration of the Kingdom – the resurrection and ascension of Jesus and the gift of the Spirit are “not designed to take us away from this earth, but to make us agents of the transformation of this earth”

(Wright)

Kingdom is the sovereign rule of God

(1d) “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me” (Matt 28:18).

This means every part of creation is subject to Christ.

Kingdom is the sovereign rule of God

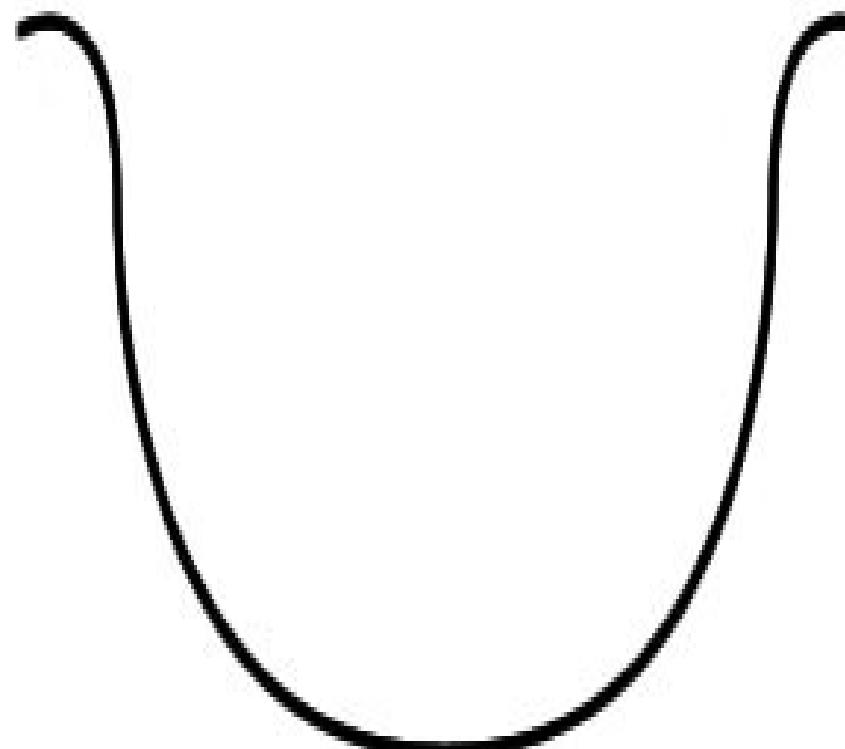
(1e) Abraham Kuyper put it well when he said “There is not one square inch of the entire creation about which Jesus Christ does not cry out, ‘This is mine! This belongs to me!’”

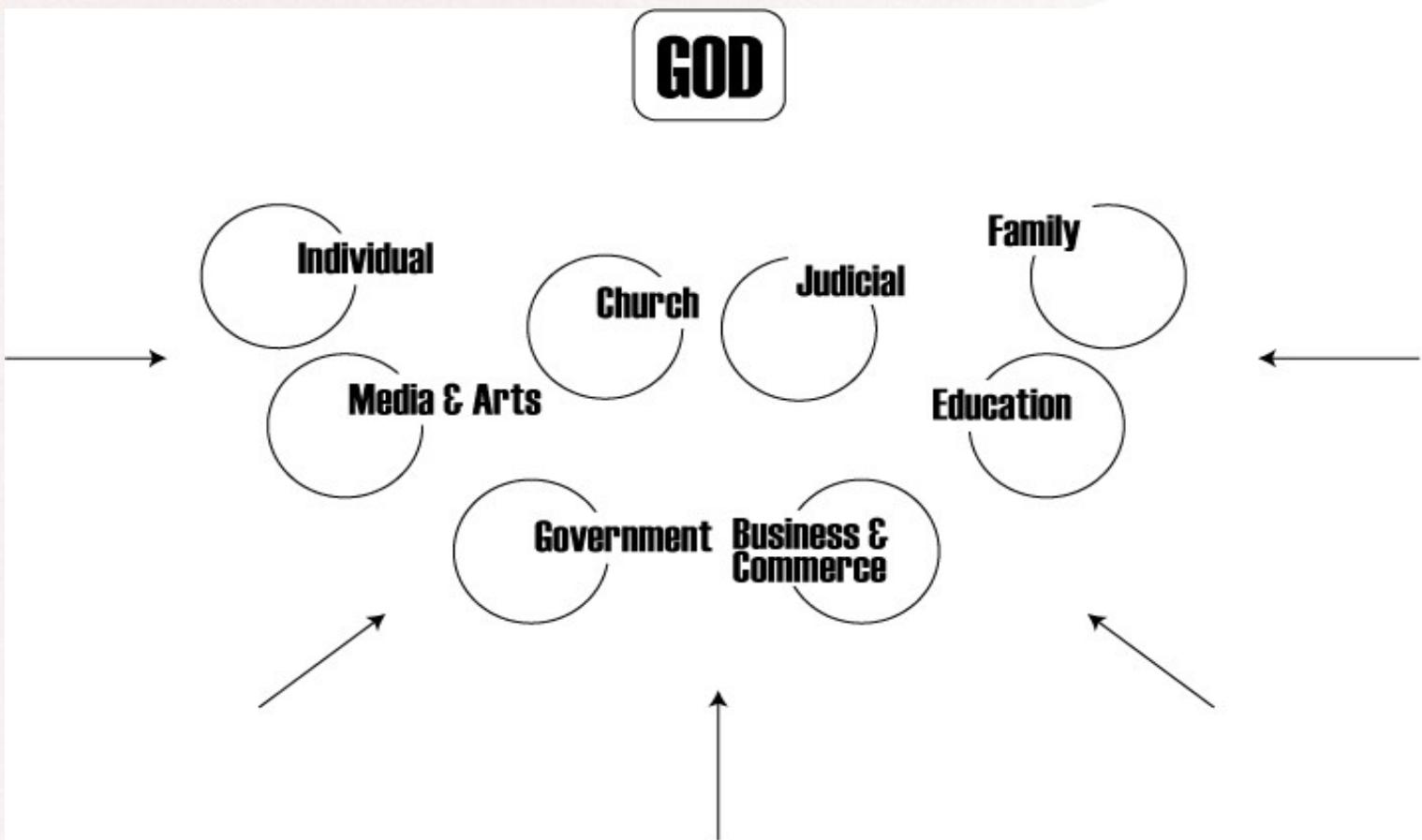
Kingdom is the sovereign rule of God

(1f) This means all of life is sacred. To divide the world into sacred and secular domains is to deny the sovereignty of God.

**God
Church
Christians**

**Devil
The World
Non-Christians**





***2. Kingdom is a
present reality***

Kingdom is a present reality

(2a) When Jesus began his ministry he said “The Kingdom of God is at hand”. Later on he talked about things that were to happen in the future concerning the Kingdom.

Kingdom is a present reality

(2b) So we see here an important principle about the Kingdom.

Kingdom is a present reality

(2c) It is both ‘now’ and ‘not yet’. There is a tension here that needs to be recognized.

Kingdom is a present reality

(2d) If we focus solely on the ‘now’ of the Kingdom we can reduce the Kingdom to social action focused on changing the world.

Kingdom is a present reality

(2e) Alternatively if we focus on the ‘not yet’ emphasis we fail to address the current pains and needs of the world.

*3. The Kingdom is
more
than the church*

The Kingdom is more than the church

(3a) If the Kingdom is the central message of the gospels and summarizes the essential heart of Christianity – why do we hear so little about the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom is more than the church

(3b) The answer is quite simple. We have substituted the church for the Kingdom.

The Kingdom is more than the church

(3c) Many Christians believe building the church is the primary, if not only, way to express the Kingdom.

The Kingdom is more than the church

(3d) “You can often get hold of 'church' and miss the Kingdom, but when you get hold of 'Kingdom' what follows is a clear sense of church.”

(Christopherson)

The Kingdom is more than the church

(3e) Sunday church gathered – Monday church scattered.

The Kingdom is more than the church

(3f) Sunday should be about equipping people for Monday.

*4. Awareness of the
Kingdom is within
every person*

Awareness of the Kingdom is within every person

(4a) When Jesus was talking to the Pharisees in Luke 17:21 he made another important observation about the Kingdom. He said to them “the Kingdom is in your midst” – referring to himself but this can also be translated the Kingdom of God is within you.

Awareness of the Kingdom is within every person

(4b) Romans 1:17- “Two things inspire me to awe: the starry heavens above and moral universe within.” (Kant)

Awareness of the Kingdom is within every person

(4c) Because we are made in the image of God each of us has within us what Wright calls ‘the echoes of the Spirit’. He identifies four characteristics:

Awareness of the Kingdom is within every person

- (4d) • Longing for justice
- Quest for spirituality
- Hunger for relationships
- Delight in beauty

*5. Kingdom happens
inside and outside
church meetings*

Kingdom happens inside and outside church meetings

(5a) Most Kingdom activity will take place outside of church meetings.

Kingdom happens inside and outside church meetings

(5b) Holy Spirit is already at work in His world.

Kingdom happens inside and outside church meetings

(5c) The Holy Spirit can and does speak and work within the lives of those who have not yet met the King of the Kingdom.

Kingdom happens inside and outside church meetings

(5d) Holy Spirit can take us into uncharted waters - Cornelius and Ethiopian eunuch

Kingdom happens inside and outside church meetings

(5e) “Don't ask God to bless what you are doing, rather find out what He is doing for that is already blessed.”

(Bono)

*6. Kingdom is
expressed in a
variety of passions*

Kingdom is expressed in a variety of passions

(6a) As we have established the Kingdom is all about the will of God being done on the earth.

Kingdom is expressed in a variety of passions

(6b) For this to happen “God’s passion must become our passion” (Wright)

Kingdom is expressed in a variety of passions

(6c) When we consider the nature and character of God we recognize that His passions are broad and diverse.

Kingdom is expressed in a variety of passions

(6d) This means the Kingdom will be expressed in a wide variety of passions.

Kingdom is expressed in a variety of passions

(6e) We are called to pursue the passion God has placed in us and to validate and appreciate the different passions He puts in others

The Kingdom is an outworking of the Trinity

| Father | Son | Holy Spirit |
|--|---|--|
| Creation | Salvation | Completion |
| Above | Among | In us |
| Science | Scripture | Experience |
| Social Justice, art & politics, responsible dominion | Evangelism, discipleship, personal ethics | Emotional health and spiritual power, signs and wonders, worship |
| Reflective | Proactive | Affective |
| Rationalism | Activism | Emotionalism |
| Providence | Justification | Sanctification |
| Creation commission | Evangelism commission | Relational commission |

*7. Kingdom fruit
is more than
evangelism
(Matthew 21:43)*

Kingdom fruit is more than evangelism

(7a) Producing Kingdom fruit is essential to maintaining the Kingdom

Kingdom fruit is more than evangelism

(7b) What is Kingdom fruit – doing the will of God

Kingdom fruit is more than evangelism

(7c) Evangelism and social action

Kingdom fruit is more than evangelism

(7d) Long term

Kingdom fruit is more than evangelism

(7e) Deals with all of life

Kingdom fruit is more than evangelism

- (7f) Wealth without work
- Pleasure without conscience
- Commerce without morality
- Politics without principles
- Knowledge without character
- Science without humanity
- Worship without sacrifice

Kingdom Focus

- Make poverty/slavery/disease history
- Corporate social responsibility
- Media that serves the common good
- Individual transformation
- Environmental stewardship
- Community that cares for all its members
- Family strength
- Restorative justice
- Effective churches
- Recovery of the beauty of the arts
- Science that serves the common good
- Governments that serve the common good

8. Every Christian is an agent for the Kingdom

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(8a) To illustrate how this happens Jesus used a parable of the wheat and the tares.
(Matt 13:36-43)

Every Christian is an agent for the Kingdom

(8b) The field is the world and it belongs to Jesus.

Every Christian is an agent for the Kingdom

(8c) He sows people of the Kingdom into the field to produce the Kingdom.

Every Christian is an agent for the Kingdom

(8d) Kingdom is produced by seed going into the ground – dying – producing life

Every Christian is an agent for the Kingdom

(8e) While there is opposition it is in this context that the will of God is done on the earth.

*What does all this
mean
for me?*

What does all this mean for me?

(i) What is the passion and dream
God has given you?

What does all this mean for me?

(ii) How has He equipped you in terms of personality, gifting, experience?

What does all this mean for me?

(iii) Where has He planted you or where does He want to plant you?

What does all this mean for me?

(iv) What does it mean to produce the Kingdom in that sphere?

What does all this mean for me?

(v) What is the vision God is giving you for producing the Kingdom?

