

KINGDOM BREAKTHROUGH

SERMON FIVE

BRINGING IN THE KINGDOM

Over the last four sermons in this series we have been establishing from the Scriptures both Old and New Testament how the Kingdom of God has broken through into the experience and reality of mankind. Beginning with the exodus of God's people from Egypt, the reign of David and Solomon in the Promised Land and then the coming of the promised Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ which ushered in an experience of the Kingdom not yet seen by the people of God, we recognise that the Kingdom has come but will still come in its fullness at the end of the age when Christ returns. We have seen that even though the Kingdom has not fully come, it does break through into our lives and signs and wonders are performed. With all of this mind the question that we need to ask ourselves is

simply this. How can we facilitate the bringing in of the Kingdom in our lives on a daily basis? We do acknowledge that this is a gift from God that we cannot control or manipulate but are there things that we can be doing which will enable the Kingdom to break through in our lives on a regular basis?

I want to get very practical this morning and invite you to consider with me four things that we can and are instructed to do which will facilitate bringing in the Kingdom into our lives and the life of our community on a daily basis.

1. KINGDOM WORSHIP

When we talk about the Kingdom of God and the signs and wonders and miracles that we witness as a consequence of the Kingdom having come, it is very easy to fall into the trap of looking at the miracles and taking

our eyes off the King of the Kingdom. We need to remember that without Christ the King there is no Kingdom. Today the Kingdom has come is to say Jesus has come. We cannot separate the King from the Kingdom. It is as we discover more of the King that we discover more of the Kingdom. God's Word tells us that He inhabits the praises of His people and so as we worship the King so the King draws near and the Kingdom draws near. More and more people are experiencing the power that is released as a consequence of praising God. Many people are healed and set free in the midst of worship and not necessarily as a result of the preaching of the Word or even counselling. In the Old Testament God's people understood this that when they went into battle, the priests would be in the front line praising God and in so doing unleashing the power of the Kingdom of God. In the Kingdom there is power in praising and worshipping the

King. As Jesus drew near to mankind so the Kingdom drew near to mankind. As we draw near to Christ in worshipping Him so His Kingdom and power draws near to us. Worship of Christ the King is therefore critical in facilitating the Kingdom breaking through. Jesus said that if I be lifted up I will draw all men to myself. As we are drawn to Him so we are more and more drawn into the blessing of His Kingdom. In Mark 1 we are given a wonderful picture of this. In verse 15 Jesus says the following in Galilee, "The time has come, he said, The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news". In the next few verses 16-20 he calls the disciple to follow Him and they obediently follow him. In the next few verses, 21-34, Jesus drives out demons and teaches with authority. As the disciples drew near to Jesus and followed Him they drew near to the Kingdom. We need to seek the King of the Kingdom in worship and we will see

the Kingdom of God breaking through. Worship is therefore not just something we do before we hear the sermon, but worship is a powerful tool for ushering in the Kingdom.

2. KINGDOM ANNOUNCEMENT

The second way in which we usher in the Kingdom is through Kingdom announcement, proclaiming to all the truth that the Kingdom of God is very near. In Matt 10 Jesus sends out the twelve and in verses 7-8 he gives to them the following very specific instruction. “As you go preach this message; The Kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons...”. Notice the order of events. They were to proclaim or announce the truth that the Kingdom was near and as a result of this announcement the Kingdom breaks through with healings and deliverances.

The Bible tells us that it is the truth that sets us free and it is the truth of the Kingdom that releases the power of the Kingdom and sets us free. Word leads to deed, announcement to demonstration. In Luke 9:1-6 we are given another account of this. “When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick”. There is clearly a very direct relationship between announcing the kingdom and the kingdom breaking through in miraculous ways.

3. KINGDOM PRAYER

Just as important as kingdom worship and kingdom announcement is the element of Kingdom prayer. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray at the heart of that prayer are the words, “thy kingdom come”. Central to our daily

prayers to the Lord is to ask for the breaking through of the Kingdom into our lives on a daily basis. There is no doubt that prayer unleashes the power of God and opens up heaven the outpouring of his blessing upon us. The New Testament church understood this and in Acts 4:30-31, “Now Lord...stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus. (They were praying for the Kingdom to break through). After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God boldly”.

It is as we by faith accept that the Kingdom has come, that we respond by prayers of faith for the kingdom to break through.

4. KINGDOM EXPECTATION

Following Kingdom worship, announcement and prayer we need to have a kingdom expectation that the kingdom will break through. We need to develop this expectation in two ways. Firstly we need to saturate our minds with the biblical teaching of how the Kingdom God has broken through in the past as well as with the promises of the Kingdom breaking through in the present and future. Secondly we need to reflect on the testimonies of the kingdom breaking through into the lives of others.

CONCLUSION

How then do we bring the Kingdom in?

Through Kingdom worship, announcement, prayer and expectation.