



## Sermon Series Notes

### “The Kingdom of God” (Acts 28)

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v.1 We visited Malta a few years ago on our Footsteps of Paul tour.

v.2 A fire would be really nice after what they had been through. And just to stand on solid ground would have almost felt like heaven!

vv.3-4 The goddess Justice was considered to be the daughter of Zeus, and was believed to watch over human affairs and report any wrongdoings to her dad, then he would make the guilty person pay for their crime.

v.10 I do not understand why the Holy Spirit does not inspire Luke to give us more detail about the ministry on Malta. Did anyone trust Christ as Savior? Did Julius the centurion trust Christ? Did any of the people on board the ship that was shipwrecked trust Christ? I have to assume they did, but we are just not told.

v.11 These were considered the twin sons of Zeus, and were revered as gods who helped sailors in distress. They were supposedly transferred to the heavens at death to form the constellation Gemini.

Why mention the figurehead of these twin gods in the text here? I think it's to remind us of the pagan world these believers were living in. It reminded them that this is not their home.

v.14 Paul had written to the believers in Rome several years earlier, telling them of his desire to visit someday. The extensive list of names in Romans 16:3-16 tells us that Paul already knew many Christians living there.

v.15 The family of God is incredible. We have brothers and sisters around the world! I can go to Russia, Germany, India, Australia, England, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Miami, etc., and I have family there.

vv.23-28

v.29 In some manuscripts there is a verse 29 that says “After he said this, the Jews left, arguing vigorously among themselves.”

vv.30-31 It's a very anticlimactic ending to the book of Acts, and it tells us nothing of Paul's fate before Emperor Nero. We do know that four years after Paul arrived in Rome, ten of the fourteen city districts burned to the ground, and Nero blamed Christians for setting the fire.

We know that Paul wrote several NT letters from Rome: Most likely Philippians, also Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. See Eph.2:1-2; 5:5; Col.4:11; 1:12-13.

The kingdom of God is also called the kingdom of light, and the kingdom of light is the antithesis of the "dominion" (or kingdom of darkness).

God really drew my attention to verses 23b & 31a of our text. There is a clear connection between the proof that Jesus is the Messiah and the kingdom of God. Easter 2009 message includes key OT passages that prove Jesus is the Messiah. Despite the overwhelming evidence from these passages, some still will not believe. There are some people who, no matter how much information you place before them, and no matter how much that information proves the truth, will refuse to believe.

Rather than go back over Scriptures that prove Jesus is the Messiah, I felt strongly led to focus on the fact that Paul explained & proclaimed the kingdom of God. Explaining is two Greek words, the first means to expose, set up, exhibit, and the second means to testify, solemnly affirm. To proclaim means to herald with authority.

Are you aware how much the Bible talks about the kingdom of God? It is also called the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of light (Col. 1). In just the gospel of Matthew alone, the kingdom of God is referred to quite often.

Matthew 5:3, 10, 19-20; 6:9-10, 33; 7:21; 8:11-12; 10:7-8; 11:11; 13:11, 19, 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47; 16: 28; 18:1, 3-4, 23; 19:12, 14, 23-24; 20:21; 22:2; 24:14; 25:1, 34; 26:29.

See Acts 1:3; For forty days after his resurrection Jesus spoke to his disciples about the kingdom of God. I wish those messages were recorded and I could have listened to them before preparing this message!

See Acts 8:12 and note the connection between the kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ. See Acts 19:8; 20:25.

Kingdom = Realm, empire, territory, domain, dominion, rule; the territory subject to the rule of a king.

#### WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

- A place where God reigns supreme, and Christ is King
- Rev.19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
- Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as ***as it is in heaven.***
- The answer to this part of the Lord's Prayer would be for God to reign supreme on earth, and Jesus be king over all the earth.

#### WHERE IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

- The kingdom of God is also called the kingdom of heaven
- John 18:36 My kingdom is not of this world...my kingdom is from another place.
- Acts 1:9-11
- Rev.4:1-3; 5:6a
- Some believe that heaven is just another dimension, and that it is actually not far from us. Based on these verses, and others we will look at in a moment, I strongly disagree.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

- God's throne is there (Rev. 4 & 5)
- Multitudes of angels are there (Rev.5:11-12)
- The capital is Jerusalem; Gal.4:26...the Jerusalem that is above; Rev.21:2-3.
- II Cor.12:2-4 Paul caught up to the third heaven/paradise
- Luke 23:42-43 "...Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."
- Paradise: Ecstasy, bliss, nirvana, utopia, heaven.
- Phil.1:21
- II Cor.5:1-8

#### THE MYSTERIOUS CONFLICT BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT AND THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS.

- Refer to Col.1:12-14; Luke 22:53; Darkness from noon til 3 pm at the cross; Matt.4:16...the people living in darkness have seen a great light...
- John 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.
- Rom.13:12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.
- Eph.5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.
- Rev.16:10 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness.
- Matt.8:12; Luke 1:79; John 3:19; I John 1:6
- Daniel 10:13 Prince of the Persian kingdom
- John 19:11 You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.
- The Lord's Prayer is asking for God to reign Supreme, and Jesus be king on earth. Jesus won the victory at the cross, but the battle still rages.
- D-Day (June 6, 1944). The Allied forces invade Normandy, breaking the back of the enemy and ensuring their total victory. Yet, the war lingered on even though the Nazis were defeated. It wasn't till V-Day (May 7, 1945) that the peace treaty was actually signed. Sadly, more people were killed during that period between d-day and v-day than any other period of the war. Like that period b/t D & V day, we are living in a period between the inauguration of the Kingdom and the Consummation of the Kingdom.

#### THE KINGDOM OF GOD INVADED EARTH THROUGH JESUS

- Matt.3:2 (John the Baptist)...Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.
- Matt.4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

- Matt.4:23-24; Isaiah 61:1-2a
- Matt.9:35; 12:28; Luke 9:1-2
- Luke 13:16...a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years...
- I John 3:8b...the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.
- Jesus' healing ministry, miracles, the casting out of demons, demonstrate and testify to his sovereignty over Satan and the kingdom of darkness. All sickness, disease, demonic possession, etc. are a result of the power of the kingdom of darkness.

## THE COMING KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

- It begins with the thousand year reign of Christ (Rev.20:4-6)
- Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.
  - The thousand year reign will not be a complete answer to the Lord's Prayer, because people will still rebel against King Jesus during this time (Zech.14:16-19).
- Zech.14:9 The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name
- The thousand year reign begins right after the Great Tribulation (Daniel 7:13-14, 18, 21- 22, 26-27).
- Rev.11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices shouting in heaven: "The world has now become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever."
- The Great Tribulation culminates in allied nations coming against Jerusalem (Zech.14:1-4).
- One final rebellion against King Jesus at the end of the thousand year reign (Rev.20:7-10).
- After the thousand year reign is the final judgment (Rev.20:11-15)
- After the final judgment God creates new heavens and a new earth Rev.21:1-5ff).
  - See I Cor.15:24-26
  - Hosea 13:14 I will deliver this people from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.
  - Isa.25:8...he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces...
  - I Cor.15:54...Death has been swallowed up in victory.
  - Isaiah 65:17 See I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.
    - You are not going to remember that you had cancer, that you died as a martyr, that you never got married, that your marriage was awful, that you were divorced (perhaps more than once), that certain family members never accepted Christ, that ....
    - Note: This is not because we have no memory, only because the world we will live in is so glorious that you will not even think about the past.
    - Rom.8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.
- God occasionally gives fresh evidence of the coming kingdom through his servants.
  - Paul suffering no harm from the viper (nobody suffers from a snakebite in God's kingdom)

- Isa.11:8-9 The infant will play near the cobra's den, the young child will put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.
- Isa.65:25
- Moses and Elijah at Mt. of Transfiguration (Some hear will not taste death til they see the kingdom...)
- Shadrach, Meshech, & Abednego
- Daniel in the lion's den
- Elisha and his servant & the Aramean army (II Kings 6:17)

## JESUS IS THE KEY TO THE KINGDOM

- Matt.16:19 Jesus told Peter "I give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven," based on Peter's declaration that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.
- John 3:3, 12-16

## THE PRIVILEGE OF EXPERIENCING A TASTE OF THE KINGDOM HERE & NOW

- Rom.14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, & joy in the Holy Spirit. (Note context, and v.19)
- This tells us the basic characteristics of the kingdom of God; Righteousness is doing what is right; peace is the absence of conflict; joy is something everybody wants, every day! Jesus was the most joyous person who ever walked planet earth! (Heb.1:9; Ps.45:6-7)
- When the kingdom of God rules in your life, family, church, community, you experience a taste of heaven on earth.
- There's an amazing submissiveness in the kingdom of God, everybody considers others more important than themselves. This is the nature of God, the Son not considering equality with God something to be grasped, the Holy Spirit, whose main ministry is not to glorify Himself, but Jesus. The Father, willing to allow His one and only Son to suffer and dies, though he had done no wrong. The Father did that for US!

## CONCLUSION

Luke 22:29-30a And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom...

Heb.12:29; James 2:5; I Thess.2:11-12; Col.3:1-10; I Cor.6:9-10; Gal.5:19-21; Eph.5:5; II Peter 1:10-11.

Rom.8:17...heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ...

I Cor.3:21...All things are yours...

C.S. Lewis said "Aim at heaven and you'll get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you'll get neither."

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

