

## The Gospel of the Kingdom

I want to talk to you men this morning and it may seem a little strange to our former way of understanding of the gospel but if you will chew on this for a while I believe it will change the way you see yourself in the kingdom of God.

### **Matt 3:2**

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near

### **Matt 6:10**

10 Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.

### **Matt 16:19**

19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

### **Matt 24:14**

14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

God is doing a unique work on the earth today.

In the book of Revelation, chapters 2 & 3 He said 7 times, "*he who has an ear to hear let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches*".

There are seasons in which the Holy Spirit speaks things to the Church.

- During one decade it might be a focus on evangelism.
- During another, it might be a greater awareness of the Holy Spirit.
- During yet another, it might be a focus on social problems in cities.

Today, God is speaking very clearly to the Church about community transformation.

Fifteen years ago, the idea of a community being totally transformed through the Gospel of Jesus Christ was a foreign concept.

However, according to George Otis Jr. director of the Sentinel Group, there are over 500 communities that are in some form of quantifiable transformation process today.

The defining characteristic of a community that is being transformed is that the socio-economic traits are being positively affected.

The crime rate goes down, the economy is improved, and the number of Christians in the city increases, prayer increases, and the city leaders become Christians.

It is the manifestation of Deuteronomy 28:13, *"The LORD will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom."*

In order to go beyond the Gospel of Salvation to the Gospel of the Kingdom we must exercise a different level of faith for our communities.

Jesus talked about the kingdom of God more than 70 times in the New Testament - much more often than he mentioned salvation.

While salvation is part of bringing the kingdom of God on earth, it includes much more.

When the Gospel of the Kingdom comes into a life and a community, everything in its wake is transformed.

Your families are transformed, your church, your work place, your local government. This seems a daunting task. But not for God!

## ***The Gospel of the Kingdom***

### *Roundtable Discussion*

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Question to consider. *(15-20 minutes. Please stay on point)*

1. What is the difference between a 'kingdom' and a 'democracy'?
2. Is the Kingdom of God talking about this life or only the life here after? Why?
3. What do you feel would have to happen in order for our city to be transformed?
4. How might God want you to be the catalyst to bring the Gospel of the Kingdom into the lives and community you are called to influence?

*Ending with - Open discussion with the whole group.*

## Practicing the Presence of God

### **Genesis 5:24**

*Enoch walked with God.*

The true test of a person's spiritual life and character is not what he does in the extraordinary moments of life, but what he does during the daily grind of everyday life when there is nothing tremendous or exciting happening. In the 1600's, there was a monk named Brother Lawrence who was a dishwasher in his monastery.

He made a profound discovery that is true for every believer in the workplace today. "For me the time of activity does not differ from the time of prayer, and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are calling together calling for as many different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as when upon my knees at the blessed Sacrament."

You see, he found no urgency for retreats, because in the common task he met the same God to love and worship as he did in the stillness of the desert. It is this kind of life that Jesus desires for each of his children. Enoch was also a man that practiced the presence of God. The Bible does not give a detailed account of his life. All we know about him is that "He walked with God." In fact, it says in Genesis 5:22 that Enoch walked with God 300 years! Wow! That is faithfulness!

What does it mean to practice the presence of God daily?

- It means we are constantly talking to our Heavenly Father about the issues in our day.
- It means praying about things as they come up.
- It means stopping at a red light and praying for the person God brings to mind.
- It means singing a song in your car while you are sitting in traffic. That is practicing the presence of God.

This coming week, when God gives you times alone or there are needs that arise, stop and consult your Heavenly Father about the situation. Then you will be practicing the presence of God.

## **Practicing the Presence of God**

### *Roundtable Discussion Questions*

#### **Genesis 5:24**

*Enoch walked with God.*

1. Do you separate your spiritual life from your “everyday” or natural life?
2. When you make decisions at home do you consult God about every little thing?
3. When is the most important time to have the “mind of God” in a situation of your life? Is it realistic to think God would tell you what to do?

