

"Sir, we wish to see Jesus" — John 12:21

Kingdom Principles

by Dee Bowman

The kingdom of God is comprised of His people, those who have given Him a special place in their hearts. "Kingdom" is sometimes used in Scripture to describe the church (Matt. 16:18-f), and sometimes to describe the reign of Christ in the hearts of those who comprise that church (Luke 17:20-21).

The Kingdom of God is a paradox (a seemingly contradictory statement that is nonetheless true). This paradoxical nature of the kingdom is seen in several different ways.

The kingdom of God is intended for the whole world, but it is small enough to fit into one's heart. God wants all men everywhere to be saved (2 Pet. 2:9), but in order for that to happen each person must enshrine Christ as the Lord of their hearts and as the Master of their lives. Each person must decide for himself if he wants to be a part of that kingdom, if he wants to put himself totally at the disposal of Christ, the King.

The kingdom of God is wide enough to admit all men everywhere, but narrow enough to reject all unrighteousness and ungodliness. The kingdom is for a special people. It is intended for all who will come into it, but there must be a rejection of self and a commitment to Christ before that can happen (Matt. 16:24). Thus, those who are selfish and worldly minded, those who can't bring themselves to reject a life of sin and accept His dominion, cannot be a part of the kingdom. The reason is simple: they won't have Him as their King.

The kingdom of God is powerful enough to convict all men everywhere of sin, but gentle enough to forgive any person who will come to the King for pardon. The gospel of the kingdom is the good news that salvation is possible. But that gospel brings bad news before it brings the good. When one hears it and becomes aware of his sin, when he realizes he is lost and can do nothing about it, that news is bad; but when he listens carefully to the remedy for sin (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 1:16), he rejoices at the good news that salvation is possible in Christ Jesus. The King of this kingdom is a Great King.

The kingdom of God rejects all unrighteousness and ungodliness but is comprised of those who have been both unrighteous and ungodly. Every citizen of the kingdom is a forgiven sinner. The whole kingdom is comprised of those who were before rebellious and impious before God. But the "blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sins" (2 Jn. 9), and makes it possible for us to enjoy fellowship with His Father. The King of this kingdom forgives sin.

Kingdom language starts with the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount. These revolutionary and paradoxical statements are at once staggering in their truthfulness and astounding in their application. Listen to them.

The humble will find the kingdom.

Those who mourn will find a place to go for comfort.

Those who control their strengths will gain in the end.

Those who have an appetite for right things will be satisfied.

Those who forebear will find forbearance.

Those of pure heart will more clearly view God.

Those who seek for peace among their brethren will be brothers to the Prince of Peace.

Those who suffer abuse for the kingdom will find the kingdom.

Please note that the Beatitudes begin and end with those who will find the kingdom—the humble will find it; and the dedicated ones will find it.

The kingdom of God, as we are wont to say, is "a prepared place for a prepared

Wear Masks

Today's

Schedule

The Lord's Day

8:30 - Assembly

Parking lot - Canopy

9:30 - Assembly

Parking lot - Canopy

10:30 - Assembly

Parking lot - Canopy

people.” Let us keep it uppermost in our minds. Let us reverence our King and respect His ways. Let us love our fellow citizens and seek their good. Let us seek those who would be so inclined also. Let us regard the kingdom as our primary concern and the will of the King as our one great hope.

His Eyes Are In Everyplace

by Jason Moore

“The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Watching the evil and the good” (Prov. 15:3).

It’s a simple proverb, but a profound one. It states emphatically that we must all reckon with God eventually. It says that for every action, every word, every thought men will give an account. Think for a moment about how this proverb applies to the current culture, the days of our lives.

Sometime this week, before dawn, somebody steals from someone else and relishes the thought that they got away with it. But “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching their evil and the good.” They get away with nothing.

On another day somebody says something unkind and uncalled for to another somebody smaller than themselves and crushes their spirit. Nobody cares about them anyway, they think to excuse their actions. But “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good.” Somebody cares.

During lunch this week a man and a woman secretly forsake their own spouses and meet each other surreptitiously in the park. Arriving back at their respective places of work they call their spouses, chat about their day, tell them they love them before hanging up. And “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good.” They forsake more than their spouses. They forsake a jealous God who remembers the vows they forget.

In a few weeks when school starts, several young men skip school and drive down to Galveston to play at the beach and drink a few beers. They eat certs and chew gum on the way home, lie to their folks about the day, and tomorrow morning forge a note from their parents to explain the absence. And “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good.” The Lord made the beach. He knows what men make of it too.

One evening another person gets on the telephone and spreads a little juicy morsel of gossip to a ready listener

and brings ruin to someone else’s reputation. No one would know where it all started except that “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good.” He knows who started it, and who kept it going.

One night a man will come home and strike his wife and no one will be the wiser for it. But “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching his evil and the good.” The Lord has never shown mercy to bullies. Woe to the man, when the Lord strikes back.

Some young lady will not want to go to school because she’d been made fun of the day before for being too much of a nice girl. She’ll go to school anyway and feel all alone, but “the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good.” She’s not alone. The Lord stands with those who stand for what’s right.

Someone tries to explain their faith to some coworkers. They wrestle to find the right terms and word their sentences carefully but awkwardly. They are shot-down by a barrage of criticisms and sharp retorts and made to feel like a fool. But “the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good.” No one ever loses when they make a stand for righteousness.

Another someone spends part of their lunch writing to another someone who has been discouraged a little note to build them up. And “the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good.” Those kind of notes mean as much to the Lord as they do to the recipient.

One afternoon someone finds out that they have been the subject of someone else’s unkind, untrue, unsubstantiated rumor. They worry whether their reputation can overcome the malicious anecdote. But “the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good.” It’s a man’s reputation with God that matters most. He’ll take care of the gossip.

One evening a man comes home from his work and eats supper with his wife and children around him and leads them all in thanks before eating the meal. And “the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good.” Happy is the home where the Lord is an invited guest.

Late one night some weathered, weary saint closes their eyes to sleep and their heart will stop beating, their lungs will cease to fill with air, and they’ll awake in Paradise. Because “the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good.” The Lord watches His people in the hour of death just as He did when they lived—maybe even a little more closely.

The wages of wrong and the rewards of righteousness may come slowly on time’s side of eternity. And it may never come in this life. But it will come. And when it comes it will remain. Because, “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good.”