

# 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 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.