

SAYING YES TO THE KINGDOM

MATTHEW 13:51-52

34 years ago I was celebrating my birthday in Southern California. I was spending the summer working as an Intern in Inglewood California helping a Missionary from Mexico to establish a Hispanic congregation. It was during that summer that my then girlfriend came to visit from Indiana. I was confident that she was the one but we had been having 'intense' conversations over the phone during this time of separation. After arriving back home for the summer and with me gone to work with this crazy passionate missionary whom I traveled to Mexico with as well. She was having to face a hard decision. I knew the Lord was calling me to ministry - where I was not sure but I was really drawn to missions work. Denise was confronting her own heart - now initially it felt like a form of rejection. I have since come to realize that it was important for her and a gift to me. Her self confrontation was simple - do I really want to be married to a man in Ministry?

She had watched from a distance as her Uncle choose ministry later in his career and how deeply it affected his family. How his children her cousins were hurt. She had had several heart to heart talks with mentors and friends before every meeting me and had pretty well come to a conclusion that having a husband in ministry would likely mean living with a 24-7 on call mate that had many implications. Emotionally she had reached the conclusion - Nope that is not for me!

So this was the dilemma. We attended the same school and as we began to spend time together....and quickly fall for one another from Feb - May of that year there was no question that we had fallen in love. But now in my absence she had to deal with another issue.....I like him....but I am not sure I like where he is headed.

I had taken the week off of my internship when she came to visit LA I took her to all the fun spots of that I had come to know - Now she was not alone she had come with a lady who at the time was like a foster Mother to me. The night before my birthday we had gone to visit the Queen Mary in Long Beach.....and as we walked the deck of the ship Denise in her very subtle way asked me.....are you going to propose to me? I was not about to answer that question....because I knew the answer...YES! She began to plead with me.....you haven't asked my dad.....can you just wait?

Now I dug my heels in and decided it was a do or die moment of my life.....I was not changing my plans I was going to propose on my birthday and it would be up to her at that point. So the next evening we had a nice meal (in Beverly Hills.....:) and we got up to dance and she felt my coat to see if I had a ring box in my coat....and she said....you weren't going to ask anyway!

- But then we took a drive read some scripture.....and she pulled the bookmark to find a ring....

And I asked.....and she said.....NOTHING.....but then she said a tearful somber confident Yes! Ah I had conquered! It was a good moment! What I have since so valued was that she had wrestled with the reality that saying yes would mean have a lot of implications in her life many that she had no way of knowing what saying Yes would mean but - One thing was certain our lives would never be the same!

I want to talk to you about today about Saying Yes to the Kingdom -

Jesus as the close of the Sermon by the Sea as recorded by Matthew.....7 parables each one containing an invitation to understand and embrace the Nature and reality of the Kingdom of Heaven. **This Kingdom operates and functions unlike anything you have ever seen or known.**

And the secret is simply this Christ in you!
Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come.
Col 1:27b JB Phillips

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- It begins within a listening heart and grows....
- It changes everything that it touches....
- Its like a treasure because you are a treasure.
- It is Eternal in nature and purpose so in your experience on earth it is always moving you towards that reality of Eternity.

Now all of this is on the backdrop of Jesus saying these are mysteries that are being revealed for you....mysteries of the Kingdom. Then we come to Matthew 13:51-52

“Have you understood all these things?” They (verse 13, 36 - His disciples) said to Him, “Yes.” And [a]Jesus said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure things new and old.”

Have you understood all these things.....YES

Now this is critical to understand - in the Jewish rabbinic system every disciple or Talmud in the Talmud-en (group of disciples) of a rabbi was on a journey. Goal was in the end the student would be like the master. So these Rabbi's would question their disciples.....in the intricacies of the Law.....and a disciple would not be come a Rabbi until they had become a Master of the Law.

So a Rabbi would ask questions looking for the person who had could give a correct answer and prove that they had become a Master of the Law (information).

- So Jesus asks a question that a Rabbi would ask.....do you get this? YES.
- Now to be clear did they really comprehend it - No. No more that my wife and I could 34 years ago....but what we did know is that life would never be the same and that that Yes would shape the rest of our lives.
- **Normal Rabbis were attempting to determine.....had a disciple Mastered the information**

Jesus Model was massively different -

- He used in these parables visible laws of the world around His disciples.....to point not
- The Eternal Laws of God and His Kingdom.....

His goal was that the Yes of His disciples was not

- that they had mastered a certain amount of information.....
- 1. But that the Simple Truths' contained in these life parables.....would Master Them!

Their Yes was to the Yes to His Kingdom and had massive implications!

- Beloved Saying Yes to the Kingdom is not about information we have mastered but a Message that has Mastered Us - then we become Disciples of the Kingdom!
- **To Say Yes to the Kingdom is to Say Yes to His School - Yes to His Treasure and Yes to His Scrapbook**
- Beloved Jesus used these everyday word pictures to invite us into the journey....

Everyday we are saying yes to something....that are giving our attention, our resource and our affection.

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The Kingdom is not just an idea that we ascend to but a Lifestyle and rhythm Relationship and Representation.

1. To Say Yes to the Kingdom is to Yes to His School

- Every Scribe of the Kingdom - **Beloved we are all students of something** -

Jesus says the scribe in my translation is say has 'become' like a head of a household....

- The word 'become' is not actually used here.....
- Word used here is word '**Into**'
- Now this is important because again the only model that Jesus friends had seen were those who had 'become' a master of a few things....gained 'admission'.
 - But Jesus said a real Scribe or Student of the Kingdom is one who has gone "into" life has been immersed into another reality.
 - This the word used for Baptism in Acts 2 which is why we hold to the idea of immersion that are baptized into.....the death burial and resurrection of Jesus....col 2 Romans 6

Here is my point here -

We have all been disciples of ideas and methods....transactions.....**even in how we have understood what it means to be a Jesus follower....**

- Confess your Sins - Ask Jesus Leadership over your life
- Commit to spending time with Him in prayer and the study of the scriptures.....
- Tithing - giving
- Leadership
- Theology
- Outreach

All as principles to be understood to make your life work....well....

- All of these are vital but the reality that Jesus is communicating is simple....

To say Yes to the Kingdom is to have your LIFE and Lifestyle immersed into a totally different agenda and reality.....that is a Person!

- Becoming a Student of the Kingdom is to have the Value system of your life immersed into a totally different value system.....that is not about just avoiding bad stuff and living for self...but about living in and from a place of intimacy with a Man.

I grew up around a system of religion that was primarily about ensuring that we were not bad people and having a guarantee of eternal life. So I had a lot of family and friends who were involved in Church and Church activities....but when I hung around with them their lifestyle the things that they were living for were NO different than those who who did not attend church.

They were primarily living for themselves...and Church connection was a part of something they saw primarily as a personal help to them.

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Then I have been with and among those who have had little to no Church exposure but live with a burning passion for Jesus and love for what Jesus loves.

- When you are alone with them and you begin to unpack what motivates their life.....**it is not them....but their love for Jesus!**

Beloved to say Yes to the Kingdom of Heaven is far more than Weekly Church – but to Yes to an eternal Value system that is altogether different than the world around us.

- **It is to be immersed into a reality that my life is not my own.....it belongs to Him.....**

Here is the deal here - we are all students...of a Kingdom.....What Kingdom are you a student of? Look at what primarily captures your hearts attention - your time - your talent and your resource....

- **Saying Yes to this Kingdom is to Say Yes to a Lifestyle**

2. That disciple of the Kingdom is like a Head of a House who brings out His treasure....

- The word for Treasure....is Storehouse.....
 - Treasures are those things that are valued and kept....

Jesus to the Pharisee's in Matthew 12:32-35

34 You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. 35 The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil.

Lets not over-complicate this.....**we all live from the heart....and what we have Treasured in the heart.....why Paul says in Col 2:2-3**

2 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth [a]that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Beloved to say Yes to the Kingdom is to recognize and live from the Treasure that is Christ in you!
Means this - wherever you are you lack NOTHING!

- **The Greatest Treasure of all is IN you beloved!**
- Saying Yes to the Kingdom is to lay aside any other treasure that is greater than the Treasure of discovering the beauty of Christ in you!
- Saying Yes to the Kingdom is to say Yes a Lifestyle that **sets the agenda of your life and live from the Treasure of Christ in you**

3. Means to read your Faith Scrapbook...beloved!

- This head of the house who brings our things old and new....
- All kinds of theological ideas.....Old and New testament. NT had not yet been written..is it about teachers...etc

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Lev 26:10-11 (blessings for obedience)

10 You will eat the old supply and clear out the old because of the new. 11 Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you.

1 John 2:7-8 (commandment of Love)

7 Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard. 8 [a]On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.

Reality beloved....

If this Kingdom operates as Jesus describes that it is a Kingdom founded on the Love of the Father and is an invitation to partner with His heart....

The old and new are all about that journey....

- Denise is a Scrapbook Queen!
- Grainy photos.....wedding.....time in California....
- But we also have new photos that we share in social media....

Here is what I want to say - to say Yes to the Kingdom is to hold on to my Scrapbook.....

- OT - all those Feasts and Festivals - purpose - REMEMBER!
- Rehearse the Goodness of the Lord!
- Psalm 136 other Psalms of Ascent....remember this is what who God has been and because this is **who He has been - He will remain!**

Old - Remember and Rehearse!

New - Invitation to Live Large NOW!

- To live with an Expectation.....not in Metrics....that what I am doing or a part of is going to get bigger and larger.....NO
- But live with solid expectation that this God will partner with me today as He did in the past....

The Treasures of Old bring us to the New.....what are you inviting me to believe you for?

Kingdom is Here and Now in and Among you!

What kind of Disciple are you?

- **Disciple of what Kingdom?**
- **Living from what treasure?**
- **What is your life saying Yes to?**

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