

SEEING IN THE KINGDOM

MATTHEW 16:13-26

Don't forget Thumb drive

I would like to invite you to look at some pictures that I brought along with me this morning....and **tell me what you see? A Horse? A young Woman? A Duck?** But wait a minute if you change perspective suddenly you begin to see something completely different.....

We have been looking at what Jesus has to say about the Kingdom to his friends. He begins and ends His ministry with teaching on the topic of the Kingdom. We spent a good deal of time looking at several of his teachings in the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon by the Sea in Matthew 13. What Jesus seems to make clear with one parable after another....is this repeated appeal to His friends.

This Kingdom is NOT like what you have seen or known!

Interesting because as I unpack the lives of these young followers of Jesus - well they they thought somewhat like what I hear today - these are young Jewish lads who have grown up with only hearing about the good old days - the days when our life and lifestyle aligned with the promise of being Gods chosen people!

When God's chosen King David ruled the land and the Authority of the Israel was known and understood - there was peace and economic prosperity.

Yet for as long as they had lived and the generations before them they lived under

- Harsh Roman Domination
- Rome carried ultimate authority over their everyday life
- And their economic future was very limited at best.

As long as they had lived they heard of the promise of Messiah who would indeed reverse all of these things.....

- He would be a King
- He would reign with Authority
- And He would bring blessing to His people again....**He would make Israel Great Again.....**we would be dominate and prosperous! Successful.

I want to talk to you about the Kingdom and what I would conclude Jesus was moving his friends toward - **Seeing in the Kingdom.**

I was reading a couple weeks back out of Psalm 33: the psalmist emphatic declaration....."The earth is full of the Loving-kindness of the Lord."

Interesting.....as I look at the world....I don't most often 'see' the Loving-kindness of the Lord! Especially if I listen to the news pundits and commentators of the day. I more often than not see fear - dismay and destruction just to name a few. **Yet the Psalmist emphatically states the earth is Full....of the Loving-kindness of the Lord.....as I meditated on this verse it jumped at me that this was an invitation - to see and to behold a reality that can indeed be missed in the midst of the living on focused on an earthly realm.**

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Col 1:27b JB Phillips

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Here is my point I cannot tell you the number of times I have witnessed evangelical believers praying with passion a very similar basic agenda.

- God we need to grant success again to your people. After all that has almost been the narrative in the West - if you are a follower of Jesus and you make good choices - it will go well for you.
- You will be blessed and favored.....we have had many times a **Vision of what it means to be a Christian that equates to Dominance and Prosperity.**

As I listen to Jesus parables and now in Matthew 16 as He begins to prepare His friends for His departure - **we hear something very different. His invitation is to live with eyes that are open towards the Kingdom.**

Matthew 16:13-26 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, [b]Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth [g]shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." 20 Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.

Jesus Foretells His Death

21 From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. 22 Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." 23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." 24 Discipleship Is Costly

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Jesus Vision of the Kingdom includes -

1 - The King of the Kingdom!

He asks His disciples - **'who do people say I am?'**

Now their response is fascinating.....

- Some say John the Baptist and others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.....
- What is the common thread of all of these names? **They are all Dead!**

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- **The Problem?** Now am I the only one who finds this interesting? Who do people say I am? MMM well the truth be told they don't have a grid but some think you are a transmigrated soul? My goodness!
 - These are the same folks who are praying and longing for the revelation of Messiah but when they see Him face to face they have no grid - **'I recognize something very out of the ordinary with this man.....no man teach's like Him...**
 - No man does the things He does....."
 - He must be important - now the reason I want to point this out is simply this....

Their suggestions communicated how much their world view - God that dominated their heart!

- Messiah could not come as a weak infant....
- Messiah could not walk planet earth as penniless wanderer
- Messiah could not tolerate the dominance of Rome.....

Yet the every prophetic Promise about Messiah was being lived out in front of them...

- Their inability to correctly interpret those promises was themselves....they had formed the promise of Messiah into their own conclusions.....
- **Their view of Messiah was an Idol beloved.....making God into our image....Idolatry!**

And what seems wild to me is how they dealt with the tension....

- Well He must be a transmigrated soul.....**dude that isn't scriptural.....**nowhere in Law and Prophets.....

BUT it was in the Culture of the Day!

- **Their interpretation of Jesus was dominated by what they actually believed.....oh my goodness!**
 - **Beloved that is a Dangerous place to be.....**
 - Now we have never had that happen in the New Testament Church.....right....
1. When we look at the scriptural testimony and conclude.....begin to form opinions and conclusions about Who God is and What He is about based upon the Christian or Non Christian culture of the day.....really?
 2. I could give a list.....both Christian and Non Christian conclusions about God that are not about the witness of the Scripture but the witness of the culture....
 - God is gonna get you.....
 - Lets press in to get closer to God.....
 - You are nothing but a wretched ugly sinner....
 - I could go on and on.....these powerful conclusions that have formed or informed our understanding of who God is....

Little wonder that we see the appeal of the Hebrew writer who in my paraphrase says over and over - the Son is the Exact representation of the Father.....**Jesus the meekest and most loving man to ever walk planet earth!**

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If I can be candid - one of the greatest challenges we have in our culture - especially when it comes to spiritual discussions....

- To many who attempt to make God into their own image.....who attempt to figure out who is this man....in their own wisdom.
- Their conclusions are not a whole lot different than that which the disciples found.....He was something beyond the ordinary.... a prophet a teacher.....

Yet here is the reality beloved **Jesus is Messiah - the Christ - that exclusive claim means He is a King! Not an elected official or representative....but a King...**

- A King who is not asking our opinion on how to rule....
- **A King who makes exclusive claims over your life....**His love is beyond measure His forgiveness without limit His provision overflowing - with this exclusive claim -
- Repent and Believe.....change your mind - your life and follow me!

Jesus who has been inviting His friends to see differently now asks....vs 15 the question that He asks of every human heart....

Who do you say I am?

- My friend - yes, My forgiveness....yes
- Peter speaks out boldly.....**You are the ONE - The Anointed - The Christ - The Messiah! You are the King! The Son of the Living God!**

Now Jesus points out that this is something that comes by revelation....of the Father...

- **Beloved the greatest question of our life that informs every-other decision and direction of our life is this profound question - Who do you say I am?**

This is not a theological test for Seminary exam - this is a question for the heart.

- You are the One - The Anointed my King!
- If He is your King - guess who is not? You!
- If He is your King - **then you have chosen to submit to His leadership and rulership over your life!**

The King of the Kingdom - is One Man who is alive seated in Heaven today! Jesus!

Jesus Vision of the Kingdom in Matthew 16 - The King of the Kingdom

2 - The Key's of the Kingdom - Partnership.

Verse 19 *I will give you the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven...my goodness!*

- Been a lot implied and taught about the Keys of the Kingdom.....but lets just look at the plain

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In Jesus day the Stewards of a Royal Household where often given **Keys of the Household** they steward ed....

- as a symbol to physically declare they have been given both the **Authority and Access** of the a Royal Household.
- So when folks walked up and saw this key hanging around their neck or on their person.....it let them know - they had **Keys of a Royal house**.

Those keys again declared that that person had - **Access and the Authority of that Household**.

Now many times I have heard this passage quoted and prayed - **to communicate the idea that we are ‘making’ it happen!** After all we are now deputized authorities....so we can bind things on earth and it has to be bound.....

- Now allow me to point something out - What Keys are we talking about....?
- **Keys of the Kingdom of where? Heaven!**
- The Keys beloved are about the Kingdom of Heaven!
- To many times I have watched and heard inferred that we operating with Keys of the Kingdom - that begin on earth.

Beloved these are Keys of the Kingdom - so that we can bind and loose.

- Prohibit or Permit upon the Earth....what is Permitted and Prohibited in Heaven!

I like the way the Passion Translation translated this passage -

“I will give you the keys of heaven’s kingdom realm to forbid on earth that which is forbidden in heaven, and to release on earth that which is released in heaven.”

The word I like to use to sum up this reality is - **Partnership!**

- The God of Heaven has given us Authority and Access to Partner to see the Kingdom of Heaven come to earth! As it is in Heaven let it be done upon the earth!

Beloved one of the most profound realities of the Christian life is expressed in this Partnership!

- The one who was given the Isaiah 22:22 Key of David
- Who holds the Rev. 1:18 keys of death and Hades
- Rev 3:7 Key of David - who opens what no one can shut and who shuts what no opens...

Has give you **Authority and Access to agree with our lips** - as it is in Heaven let it be on Earth!

- No I don’t know who is going to hold political office or sit in the Supreme court but I do know who has given us the Keys of the Kingdom and invited us to partnership!

**Jesus Matthew 16 wanted His friends to see
The King of the Kingdom - The Keys of the Kingdom**

3- The Success of the Kingdom!

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2 powerful things Jesus says to His friends in Matthew 16 and they are both worth a sermon...

- Consider this - Jesus walking with His small group of Friends.....a literal small overlooked group of men walking throughout the land of Palestine.....a land ruled by the Political and Economic power of Rome.....that had proven time and again nothing could stand against her for hundreds of years!
- **So Jesus when does this pick up steam?**
- When do we become the dominate force of the day?
- Judging by what we see in the gospels....this looks like a small group of believers that is about to sputter out...

1 - Verse 18 - *I will build my Church and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.*

- Beloved Jesus declaration is simple profound and echos into eternity....
- He is the builder of His Church beyond any man driven methods in the face of the Rage of Hell.....nothing will overpower it.....nothing!
- **Jesus is building His Church!**

Awesome!

2. His method of building embrace weakness suffering and death....

Oh my goodness....

- As He begins to describe How Heaven would conquer Hell.....**Peter says what any of us would say.....NO way.....this is not victory.....death? God forbid!**

I always find a reading of Matthew 16 interesting....

- Peter gets the brownie point of the day in verse 17.....*blessed are you....*
- And then 5 verses later Jesus calls him *Satan.....Dude!*
- By the way notice what Jesus says to Peter - **your mind....is not on God's interests....but yours....**
- This is about Kingdom Vision Peter!
- **King - Keys - Success in this Kingdom? Cross!**

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Beloved this is a message I find the need to remind myself of regularly.....

- **Jesus success looks like the Cross....oh yea....**
- But its not what it looks like in the Church culture - the culture around me....
- **Jesus firm word....Success beloved is the Cross.....**

So What does all this mean?

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Question for all of us.....as you look over your life - culture - family.....

- What do you see - still looking for something or someone to save the day...?
- Vision in the Kingdom?
 - The King of the Kingdom is here.....who do you say I am?
 - The Keys of the Kingdom....He has given you everything.....access and Authority...of the Kingdom!
 - Allow Him to define Success.....bigger - better - more.....Cross!

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