

Active Engagement in the Kingdom, Shared Purpose

The Kingdom and the Covenant, Session 2.4

Introduction

- We have status, authority & responsibility to participate in God's kingdom, to conduct his business as his representatives
 - Because we're his children & members of his kingdom, what we do must be compatible with what he would do; i.e., our purpose must align with his
 - Otherwise, what we do will be incompatible with what he's doing, a hindrance or even counterproductive
 - Doing something "in God's name" or "in Jesus' name" means doing something as his official representative, as if he were doing it himself
 - In covenant, we have spiritual authority to conduct God's business in his behalf
- We're to use our authority to serve others, honor God, enforce his will and destroy the devil's works

Passivity is inappropriate in God's kingdom

- Passivity is evidence we're not using our authority, because authority expresses itself through what we say or do
- God expects us to actively engage in his kingdom
 - 2 Co 9:8, "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."
 - "abound" (Gk, v, *perisseuo*): to cause someone or something to be abundant or plentiful
 - Eph 2:10, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
 - "works" (Gk, n, *ergon*): works, deeds, tasks
 - "good" (Gk, adj, *agathos*): quality, excellent, noble
 - Col 3:23-24,²³ "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."
 - Does this even apply to your working for an unfair or abusive boss?

Kingdom business

- "authority" (Gk, n *exousia*): authority, freedom, ability, power
- Mt 6:33, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."
- Mt 16:19, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

- Mt 28:19-20(a), ¹⁹ “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
 - What kingdom business does Jesus identify in this verse?
- Mk 16:15-18, ¹⁵ “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”
 - What kingdom business does Jesus identify in this passage?
 - Are these only the responsibility of pastoral staff or our responsibility, too?
- Lk 10:19-20, ¹⁹ “I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰ However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”
 - What kingdom business does this identify?
 - Ro 16:20: God will crush Satan under our feet
- 2 Co 5:18-20(a), ¹⁸ “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.”
 - What kingdom business does Paul describe in this passage?
 - What does that mean?
- Mt 5:13, “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.”
 - What functions does literal salt perform? What kingdom business does that imply?
- Mt 5:14-16, ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”
 - “good” (Gk, adj, *kalos*): of moral excellence; desirable, fitting, advantageous, praiseworthy
 - Will people know God’s nature if we don’t demonstrate it to them by how we act & what we do?

Key: Active, authoritative engagement in Father's kingdom

- Our domain is the realm in which we have authority
- God is acting on earth to deliver people from bondage to Satan
- 1 Jn 3:8(c), "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."
- Jn 14:12, "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."
- 1 Co 6:19(c)-20(a), "You are not your own; you were bought at a price."
- 2 Co 5:15, "And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."
- Everything we do – every thought, word & action – we do as ambassadors of God in this foreign territory we call the world
- God has authorized us to represent him & conduct his kingdom business
- He also enables & empowers us to do that
 - Mk 11:24, "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."
 - 1 Co 15:10(c), "I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me."
 - Php 2:13, "...for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."
 - Php 4:13, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength."
 - One way he enables & empowers us is by helping us develop godly character, to become more like Jesus
 - Result: our works/deeds become more effective & produce greater honor for God
- Normal (self-centered) human thinking: Show me how the kingdom works & I'll do what I need to do
 - God knows we're incapable of living & serving effectively in his kingdom, so he provides what we need, including Holy Spirit

Conclusion

- Passivity is not a valued trait in the kingdom, so please don't be passive
 - Be actively engaged, fully committed to serving God with everything he gives you
 - That is the privilege we have as children of the King of kings & Lord of lords