

Flourishing in the Kingdom

The Kingdom and the Covenant, Session 2.5

Intro

- Flourishing in the Kingdom: Principles for Becoming Increasingly Effective in the System God Created
- Truth is progressive and multidimensional
- Father asks us to replace our rational, worldly thinking with supra-rational, kingdom thinking
 - supra-rational = above-rational or higher-level-rational
- The problem: Father cannot give us greater insight, authority or responsibilities as long as we embrace only worldly principles & understanding
- The solution: Father asks us to embrace the principles of his kingdom & the supra-rational thinking that allows us to flourish in the kingdom

Basic Principles of the World

- Basic principles of the world/cosmos include natural laws & principles
- We can't flourish or thrive in God's kingdom while thinking like the world
- *stoicheion* (Gk, n): (1) natural substances, basic materials of the universe; (2) basic principles, elementary truths
- 2 Pet 3:10(c), 12(c), ¹⁰ "The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.... ¹² That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat."
- *stoicheion tou kosmou*: basic principles of the world system or basic principles of the natural universe
- Col 2:8, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ."
- Col 2:20-22, ²⁰ "Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!""? ²² These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings."

Law of Moses – Terms of the Old Covenant

- The purposes of the law
 - Identify sin & define a standard of righteousness
 - Ro 3:20, "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in [God's] sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin."
 - Ro 7:7, "Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law."

- Show that judgment is an appropriate response to unrighteousness as defined by the law
 - Ro 2:12, “... all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.”
 - “judge” (Gk, v, *krino*): to be brought to account for one’s actions & sentenced accordingly
 - Ro 4:14-15(a), “¹⁴ For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because law brings wrath.”
- Demonstrate we can’t become righteous by our own efforts
 - Jas 2:10, “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”
 - Gal 3:21(c), “For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.”
 - Heb 7:19(a), “... the law made nothing perfect”
 - Ro 8:1-3(a), ¹ “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.”
 - 2 Co 3:7-9, ⁷ “Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory... ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? ⁹ If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!”
- Demonstrate we need a savior
 - Gal 3:19, 24, ¹⁹ “What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come.... ²⁴ So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.”
- Gal 3:23, 25, ²³ “Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed.... ²⁵ Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision [guardianship or leadership] of the law.”
 - Gal 4:24-26, the covenant from Mt Sinai produces slavery
 - Acts 15:10, Peter referred to the law’s requirements as a yoke they weren’t able to bear
- The law of Moses, the terms of the old covenant, was an important & necessary step away from the basic principles of the world
- However, both were inferior to laws & principles of God’s kingdom
- New covenant doesn’t violate old covenant, but clearly supercedes it in every respect
- The old covenant hinted at what was to come; i.e., the new covenant

Kingdom principles

- Our relationship with God is based on the new covenant
- To flourish or thrive in the kingdom, we must conform to the way it operates
- Kingdom principles for personal development
 - Learning the basic laws & principles of how the spiritual realm functions will increase our effectiveness in other areas of life
 - Focusing on spiritual disciplines will strengthen our spirits and realign our psyches
 - Obedience is much more important than performance & has a much greater effect on our growth & experiences
 - A feeling of spiritual incompetence is healthy, but should motivate us to grow
 - Guard against sin of every kind, because it hardens & blinds us spiritually
 - Choose to live by faith, not what we see, think or feel
 - If we continue focusing on Father, doing what he tells us, there'll be no end to our growth
 - Developing personal spiritual disciplines & godly nature are keys to preparing for one's mission
 - Scriptural confession is very important
 - Growth is inherently slow
 - Stay focused on God
 - Bringing our flesh under control allows Father to work through us freely
 - Increase & growth are characteristic of the kingdom
 - Operating within Father's legal-judicial system will supercede our personal limitations
 - Focus on personal transformation rather than achievement, because what we become affects what Father can do through us
 - Spiritual disciplines prepare us for spiritual breakthroughs

Conclusion

- Father cannot give us greater insight, authority or responsibilities as long as we embrace only worldly principles & understanding
- So he asks us to embrace the principles of his kingdom & the supra-rational thinking that allows us to flourish in the kingdom