

Kingdom Come Series ©

A study in the sovereignty of God and what it means for missions

Week 5: our mission to expand the kingdom

G Strauss Sept. 2008

I. Review:

- A. God rules eternally- His Kingdom is eternal
- B. God will make His rule fully known to us in the age to come
- C. The history of missions and modern thought have exposed weaknesses and opened new opportunities for the people of God
- D. God has ideally positioned His Kingdom in this present age to express both His glory and His love so that His Kingdom will expand
- E. The gospel **message** is the story of how the barriers to the Kingdom (Satan, sin, death, and the blindness of man) have been broken down so that we may be rescued (“saved”) from this present evil age simply by making a choice to receive and follow Jesus (Matt 19:13-14 faith of a child).

It is not just about heaven and hell or about producing a reaction to a sad and heroic story: the gospel and our mission is about a life choice to be rescued from this evil age to be able to live in the kingdom now and forever as a gift from God.

II. Our mission is to press this gospel of the Kingdom into every nation

- A. **Matt 28:19-20- make disciples of “all nations”**. (compare with Mark 16:15 “preach to all people”, Luke 24:46-48 “preach repentance and remission of sins to every nation”)

1. What is meant by “all nations” ?

- See John Piper “Let the Nations be Glad” for *panta ta ethne* study (pgs 181-192)
- “People groups”: over 12,000 ethnolinguistic groups in the world.
- Estimated that 4,800 of them have not heard the gospel of the kingdom.
- Rev. 5:9-10 suggests correlation with God’s plan for His Kingdom to include representatives from every tribe and nation.

2. What is meant by “make disciples”?

- Proclamation is not enough.
- We must work to bring in the harvest (Matt 9:37-38) not just cast the seed. (Matt 13:3-9)

3. How did the disciples understand this?- Acts 1:6-8, Acts 28:28-31

- The disciples understood the nations coming TO Israel, attracted by the light of God’s righteousness.
Isaiah 60:1-3, Micah 4:1-2,
- Jesus taught it was no longer about Jerusalem (John 4:20-21 the woman at the well)

- **This was a radical shift in strategy:** rather than the testimony of a nation (Israel) attracting the world, now it was to be the testimony of individuals spreading across the world
- It was no longer passive. Now it is an active mission.
- All authority is the Lord's but he is withholding the full display of His authority for us to do our task.

B. Our methods must be consistent with how God has positioned His Kingdom. (review week 3). The Kingdom in this age is:

1. A gift to individuals not coercion or oppression
2. Collaborative not patronizing
3. Inclusive not exclusive
3. Organic and relational not mechanistic
4. Responsive to the whole person (not dualistic).
5. Merciful but conditional
6. A Kingdom of love in word and deed Matt 10:7-8, Luke 7:22
7. Powerful and unpredictable like the wind but not mystical
8. The gospel may be validated by demonstrations of kingdom power: Lu 10:9, Lu 4:17-21. But only Jesus has this authority. It may be that this demonstration is intended only where the gospel is first being heard. Mark 16:15-18

C. Our motivation must be the revelation of the glory of God today and in His Kingdom come.

1. Completing our task hastens the coming of the Kingdom in its final form and the final revelation of God's glory.
Matt 24:14, II Pet 3:11-14
2. Our mission must be done in the context of God's mission to glorify Himself. (review Is. 42:5-8)
3. This "light" is the glory of God. Rev 22:5 Ultimately our motivation must be the furthering of God's glory.

III. Some applications to missions today

- A. How do we deliver the message in the context of the problems of this age?
 1. Our mission is not to transform this present evil age but its people
John 16:33, Acts 14:22, Rom 12:1-2
 2. Our goal is to rescue people from this present evil age not believe we can fix it. Kingdom blessings overflow from the saved as God's gift to this world. (see the beatitudes)
- B. **We must all be part of the expansion of the Kingdom to all nations: goers senders, equippers, encouragers, etc.**
- C. Why did God make us a body? The purpose of the body is not simply to be healthy but to GO. But the whole body goes together! If the feet are moving the whole body moves.

Study guide for international participants:

1. As you read Matthew 28:19-20 what do you think Jesus meant by the phrase "all nations"? Some theologians have suggested this is a reference to people groups rather than to all individuals. Cross reference this with Revelations 5:9-10 and consider what this means for God's ultimate goal for His kingdom.
2. What does Jesus mean in Matthew 28:19-20 when He says "make disciples"? How does this relate to our goal for evangelism?
3. How does Jesus command to "GO" compare with the expectations of the disciples who had always been taught that the nations of the earth would COME to Israel? See Isaiah 60:1-3 and Micah 4:1-2
4. What does the story of the woman at the well in John 4:20-21 teach us about Jesus view of mission?
5. What should be our motivation for completing our mission according to Matthew 24:14 and II Peter 3:11-14?
6. How is the glory of God central to the ultimate mission in Isaiah 42:5-8 and Revelation 22:5?