



SGMINISTRIES
—• we are kingdom •—

SEEKING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

21

days of

**FASTING &
PRAYER**

Jan. 18 - Feb. 7, 2021

MATTHEW 6:33

**BUT SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS;
AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU.**



About SG Ministries

SG Ministries is a kingdom centered international outreach ministry focused on teaching the word of God with simplicity, so people can hear, understand and apply the Word of God to their lives and get results!

Led by Rev. Sherard Graham, an associate minister at Community Baptist Church, where his pastor is Rev. Thaddeus Kirkland. The Lord has blessed Rev. Graham to travel abroad to Senegal and The Gambia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, France, Seoul South Korea, Israel and most recently to Malawi, Africa. Through his travel and missionary service, he has fostered relationships with ICAM – Inner City and Africa Ministries, C-GEMS – Christians Globally Effecting Missions Strategy and Pamoza International.

The goal of SG Ministries is to preach, teach and demonstrate the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to this generation.

Introduction – why seek the kingdom?

The Kingdom of God is a very interesting subject and is often misunderstood. The Kingdom of God was the primary message of Jesus, it was the reason why he came, it was the most frequent topic he preached, most of his parables related to it and he even told us it should be the first priority we should seek, yet most of the church, the body of Christ has substituted religion for the kingdom and they are not the same. The Kingdom of God is not a religion, it's a government. It is the government of God; it is the reign of God; the rule of God; it is the system of God; It is God's way of doing things. Jesus said we have 2 priorities – seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. When we do this, all the things we need will be added unto us. Over the next 21 days, we will be praying, fasting and seeking the Kingdom of God for wisdom, direction and understanding.

Journaling

I am encouraging you to keep a journal and write once per day about how you saw God move, what challenges you encountered, what victories you experience or revelations you receive. You can also write down your response to the thought for the day. This way you are intentional throughout this journey.



Prayer

Prayer is an essential component of a believer's life. It is how we communicate with God. Unanswered prayer is a major obstacle that stands in the way of living a life of walking by faith. We must realize that God answers our prayers as soon as we ask but He reveals those answers in His timing. That is the key, waiting with expectation for the answer to prayer. We will be praying on purpose. Daniel prayed and fasted for 21 days, when the angel arrived with the answer, he said when you first set your heart to understand, your words were heard but there was opposition in the way (**Daniel 10:12**).

We are encouraging you to pray **3 times per day**. For example – 6am, 12noon and 6pm or when you wake up, at lunch time and before you go to bed. **Daniel 6:10** - ¹⁰ Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Keep in mind the following:

- During the fast please drink plenty of water. Try to drink 8 glasses of water per day to stay hydrated and flush your system.
- Make sure you concentrate on the Word of God and prayer.
- When the fast has ended, begin to reintroduce meats and other foods slowly.

*** IMPORTANT NOTICE***

This fast is not mandatory and is on a volunteer basis. Before beginning this or any fast, consult with your doctor, especially if you are on medication to determine if you are healthy enough to participate in an extended fast. Community Baptist Church and SG Ministries are not responsible for any health-related conditions prior to, during, and after this fasting period. Please pray about participating and allow the Holy Spirit to guide your decision.



Fasting:

The recommended fast is the Daniel Fast (Daniel chapter 10). For full details of foods to eat or avoid visit <https://ultimatedanielfast.com/ultimate-daniel-fast-food-guidelines/>

However, there are a variety of fasts to choose from and you can choose any type of fast that is a sacrifice for you. Here are some examples:

Complete Fast

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

Selective Fast

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and 100 % fruit juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables and nuts for food.

Partial Fast

This fast is sometimes involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and/or afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 12 noon, 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, 6:00 am – 6:00 pm or from sunup to sundown.

Soul Fast

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting from food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.



Daniel Fast Food List

On the Daniel Fast, you eat plant-based meals that are nutritious and delicious, while setting aside other foods as an act of worship and sacrifice to the Lord. The following list explains the categories of foods to eat and foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast. However, keep in mind that not every item may be listed here.

FOODS TO EAT

Whole grains

Amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, bulgur, freekeh, millet, oats, purple rice, quinoa, rye, sorghum, spelt, teff, whole grain pasta, whole wheat, and wild rice.

Beans and legumes

Black beans, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, kidney beans, lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, and split peas.

Nuts and seeds

Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, nut butters, peanuts (actually legumes but people think of them as nuts), pecans, pepitas (pumpkin seeds), pine nuts, pistachios, poppy seeds, walnuts, sesame seeds, soy nuts, sunflower seeds.

Vegetables

All vegetables are allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned).

Fruit

All fruit is allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned). However, any dried fruit shouldn't contain added sugar (check ingredients to be sure).

Oils

Oils (such as coconut, olive, and sesame, for example) are allowed but should be used minimally. For example, you can sauté foods in olive oil but avoid deep-frying them.

Other

Unleavened bread (whole grain bread made without yeast, sugars, or preservatives. All herbs, spices, and seasonings are allowed, including salt and pepper.



Beverages

Water should be the main beverage on your Daniel Fast. Distilled, filtered, sparkling, spring, and mineral water are allowed as well. However, you may have 100% fruit juice on occasion (just don't overdo it).

FOODS TO AVOID

Animal products

Meat (bacon, beef, bison, chicken, lamb, pork, and turkey), dairy (butter, cheese, cream, milk, and yogurt), fish/seafood, eggs.

Added sugar

Agave nectar, artificial sweeteners, brown rice syrup, brown sugar, cane juice, corn syrup, honey, malt syrup, molasses, and raw sugar.

Yeast

Yeast (and, therefore, leavened bread) isn't part of the Daniel Fast.

Refined grains

White flour and white rice. Only whole grains are allowed on the Daniel Fast. A whole grain product contains the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm.

Processed food

Foods that contain artificial flavorings, chemicals, food additives, and preservatives.

Deep-fried food

Examples are corn chips, French fries, and potato chips. (Baked chips are acceptable if they don't contain restricted ingredients. Check the label for "baked" to be sure.)

Solid fats

Butter, lard, margarine, and shortening.

Chocolate

Milk chocolate, semi-sweet chocolate, dark chocolate, chocolate syrup, and cacao.

Caffeinated and alcoholic beverages

Alcohol, coffee, caffeinated tea, and energy drinks.



21-Day Devotions

- Day 1: First Things First
- Day 2: Thy Kingdom Come
- Day 3: The Kingdom is at Hand
- Day 4: The Mysteries of the Kingdom
- Day 5: How the Kingdom Works
- Day 6: The Most Important Parable
- Day 7: The Original Kingdom Concept
- Day 8: The Wheat and the Tares
- Day 9: Mustard Seed Faith
- Day 10: Jesus Preaches the Kingdom
- Day 11: Jesus Urges us to Pray for Laborers
- Day 12: Jesus sends out the Disciples
- Day 13: Keys of the Kingdom
- Day 14: Suffer the Little Children
- Day 15: Until All Have Heard
- Day 16: Riches and the Kingdom
- Day 17: I Must Preach the Kingdom
- Day 18: The Father's Good Pleasure
- Day 19: The Kingdom in You
- Day 20: My Kingdom is Not of This World
- Day 21: Entering the Kingdom



Day #1

First Things First

Read: Matthew 6:24-33

Key Verse: Matthew 6:33 - The amplified bible says in verse 33, But seek (aim at or strive after) first of all His Kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given to you.

You cannot serve God and Mammon. Mammon represents (deceitful riches, money, possessions, or whatever is trusted in that is other than God). We all trust in something – either we trust God or we trust something or someone else. You cannot do both, at least not at the same time. Jesus said don't take thought about what you should eat, or drink or wear – that's what unbelievers worry about. He said in v. 32 for your heavenly father knows what you have need of. I don't know about you but that struck me when I read it. If God knows what I have need of, why doesn't he just give me what I need? If he already knows what I need, why am I praying about it?

Yes, God knows what you have need of but He has a modus operandi – method of operation and it's called the Kingdom of God. He says, I know what you have need of, so stop seeking the things you need and the kingdom first. The word first means before all others with respect to time, order, rank or importance. You have to change the order of things. In other words, don't go to God after you've tried everything else but start with God and his word first.

Change the order of business and seek His kingdom – His way of doing things and being right. His way of doing things is described in the Word of God. You have to read and study the word for yourself. When you change your focus and seek first the Kingdom, all the things that He already knows you need, can be added unto you. First things first – make God a priority in your life by putting Him first.

Thought for the day:

How can I seek the Kingdom (God's way of doing and being right) for my life today?



Day #2

Thy Kingdom Come

Read: Matthew 6:5-10

Key Verse: Matthew 6:10 - ...Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray, he said pray in this manner: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. ¹⁰ **Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.** The essence of the kingdom is not me leaving earth to go to heaven but me being a vessel to bring heaven to earth. When we live our lives according to the word of God and we follow His way of doing things (the kingdom way), we can manifest the operations of heaven in the visible earth.

We have substituted religion for the kingdom and they are not the same thing. The kingdom of God is not a religion, it's a government. It is the government of God; it is the reign of God; the rule of God; it is the system of God; It is God's way of doing things. We enter the kingdom of God through the process that Jesus calls being "born-again", "**John 3:3 - Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God**".

Being born-again makes us citizens of heaven and our citizenship begins immediately. We are kingdom citizens right now. Traditional religious teaching postpones the citizenship in the Kingdom of God to the future but you cannot appropriate what you postpone. As long as you see the kingdom in the future (after wile, by and by), you cannot experience or operate in it now. This excerpt below from Dr. Myles Munroe book "Understanding Your Place in God's Kingdom" illustrates the focus of the religion vs. kingdom:

*Religion is reaching up to God; the Kingdom is God coming down to earth.
Religion want to escape earth; the Kingdom impacts, influences and changes the earth.
Religion seeks to take earth to Heaven; the Kingdom seeks to bring Heaven to earth.*

Thought for the day:

How can I be a willing vessel to allow God to manifest His will in the earth through me?



Day #3

The Kingdom is at Hand

Read: Mark 1:15-16; Matthew 4:17

Key Verse: Matthew 4:17 - From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Jesus came preaching a message of repentance. The word repent does not mean to say I'm sorry – it means to completely change your mind and go in the opposite direction. **Matthew 3:1,2** states **“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, ² And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”**. When Jesus Christ began his public ministry, in **Matthew 4:17** his first words after being baptized were - **From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

This is the message he constantly preached. Jesus brought back to earth the kingdom we lost in the Garden of Eden and gives us access to it again. Jesus started his public ministry after being baptized with the very same word people heard John the Baptist say: “Repent.” The message is the same today as when John and Jesus proclaimed it. Repentance is doing an about face – 180 degree turn – from self-centered living to Christ-centered living. In order to live the kingdom life and become a follower of Jesus Christ, one must turn away from self-centeredness and self-control and turn our lives over to Christ's direction and control.

A person who repents is ready to stop rebelling and begin following God's way of living prescribed in His Word. The kingdom of heaven is at hand because Jesus brought it but in order to embrace and operate according to the kingdom way of living, we must repent – change our minds; change our perspective. It's not about our will, but God's will being done in the earth, through us.

Thought for the day:

The Kingdom of God is at hand. How can I recognize the kingdom in my midst today and reflect it in my life, so that others may see it also?



Day #4

The Mysteries of the Kingdom

Read: Mark 4:10-13; Matthew 13:10-17

Key Verse: Matthew 10:11 - ¹¹ He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

A mystery is something that is difficult or impossible to understand or explain. However, something is only a mystery to those who don't know it. Once the answer is revealed it is no longer a mystery to you. Jesus often preached to the multitudes in parables but the explanation was given to the disciples. Jesus had just preached the parable of the sower to the crowd and afterwards, the disciples wanted to know why Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. His response was because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom.

The word parable comes from the idea of "to set along-side." As Jesus used parables, it means to set a spiritual truth along-side a daily truth of living. He preached to the crowd about seeds and soil because it was an agricultural society and they could relate to the message. However, there are deeper spiritual truths hidden behind the parables. The explanations of the parable, the answers to the mysteries are only given to the disciples and to those who hung around with them seeking understanding. Mysteries are explained to the disciples and those who want to know more.

God will only feed you up to your level of hunger and thirst. **Matthew 5:6 – blessed are those that hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled.** Your level of hunger and thirst determines the degree that you are filled. The multitudes just wanted to get a free meal or to see a miracle, they were not interested in following Jesus and developing a relationship with Him. The message of the Kingdom of God is all throughout scripture from Genesis to Revelation but it is only revealed to those who want to know more and are willing to follow Jesus, even after the crowd is gone.

Thought for the day:

The Kingdom of God has a supply for whatever I need. How can I seek to understand the mysteries of the kingdom that Jesus taught?



Day #5

How the Kingdom Works

Read: Mark 4:26-33

Key Verse: Mark 4:26 – And he said, so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground.

In order to effectively live the kingdom life, one must know how it works. The kingdom operates on the principle of sowing seeds and the law of seed-time-harvest. Once you get the principle, you can apply it to the rest of your life. When a farmer scatters seed on the ground, it grows by night, and he sees the seed sprouted in the morning, he has just worked as a partner with God. Man has done what he could do - plant the seed; and God has done what only He can do: grow the seed. The secret of growth is in the seed. Every seed reproduces after its kind – it just needs the right environment.

Exactly how the seed grows is a mystery to the farmer. Though it grows by a process he cannot see nor fully account for, he has faith in the growing process. So, it is with the Kingdom of God: we work in partnership with God, yet the real work is left up to Him - we trust in a process we cannot see nor fully account for.

The kingdom of God follows a process – it's progressive – first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. Because Jesus said that the Parable of the Sower was a key for understanding other parables (**Mark 4:13**), we can say that the seed He speaks of here represents the word of God, as it did in the Parable of the Sower. Therefore, with this parable, Jesus shows how the word of God works with hidden and mysterious power, just like a seed. At the end of the process, the harvest comes.

Whatever we want to receive from the kingdom, we must plant/sow. Just as a farmer cannot expect a harvest, if he has not planted seed, we cannot expect to receive from the kingdom, if we have not sown first. It all starts with the seed. No seed = no harvest.

Thought for the day:

What seeds can I sow today to reap the harvest I desire tomorrow?



Day #6

The Most Important Parable

Read: Mark 4:13-20; Matthew 13:18-23

Key Verse: Mark 4:13 - And he said unto them, know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

Jesus often preached to the multitudes using parables. The gospel of Mark and Matthew but record Jesus saying that the parable of the sower is the most important parable of all. In fact, he indicates that it is the key to understanding all parables. The principle can be applied to many areas but Jesus says, **the sower sows the word**. The Word of God is the seed that the sower sows.

1 Peter 1:23 says that the word of God is like a seed. It says that ***we have been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and abides forever.***

Seed = the Word of God

Ground = the heart

The seed of the word must be planted in the ground of your heart

The enemy always comes not for you but for the word.

No word = no manifestation

Little word = little manifestation

Lot of word = lots of manifestation

Your degree of manifestation is related to how well you hear and receive the Word of God and let it take root in your heart. The ground is your heart. When you understand the principle of the seed, you will be able to activate the kingdom in your life by planting the seed of the word in the direction of the harvest you desire.

Thought of the day:

How can I make sure I am planting the right seeds so I can reap the right harvest?



Day #7

The Original Kingdom Concept

Read: Genesis 1:26-29

Key Verse: Genesis 1:26 - And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Organized Christianity as a religion is well-known, well-established, well-studied, well research, well-recorded and well-distributed; but little is known about the Kingdom of God. Religion is probably the biggest obstacle to the kingdom because religion has created a culture of leaving earth for Heaven, while the Kingdom has a Heavenly mandate to impact the earth. Genesis 1 and 2 is a prototype of the Kingdom of God, a perfect reality where God is supreme, man is made in his image and likeness, in right relationship with God and ruling the earth on God's behalf.

God said, let us make man in our image and likeness but **let them have dominion**. It is the dominion mandate that is at the core of the gospel of the kingdom. God created and rules the heavens but he wanted to extend his heavenly authority to the visible earth. In order to do so, he created man and gave mankind dominion over the rest of creation. Adam and Eve did not lose a religion (they never had one), what they lost was a kingdom. Man did not fall from heaven, man fell from his position of authority and dominion in the earth. What Adam lost through rebellion, Jesus came to restore through his obedience. **Romans 5:19 - For as by one man's disobedience (Adam) many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Jesus) shall many be made righteous.**

Jesus brought back to earth the kingdom we lost in the Garden of Eden and gives us access to it again. As we invade every territory, every institution, every system, we bring the influence of the Kingdom of God into that area.

Thought for the day:

How can I exercise dominion and authority in my life on behalf of God?



Day #8

The Wheat and the Tares

Read: Matthew 13:24-30

Key Verse: Matthew 13:30 - Let both grow together until the harvest...

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares is mainly concerned with the fact that the kingdom of God is in the world where there is much evil, and will remain so until the end of the world when the good and the evil will be forever separated. The sower sowed good seed but his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. The enemy's purpose in sowing tares was to destroy the wheat. But the wise farmer will not allow the enemy to succeed. Instead, He will sort it out at harvest time.

Jesus uses the analogy of wheat and tares to symbolize believer and unbelievers. On the surface they look the same. They seem to have it all together and it's sometimes difficult to determine which is good and which is bad. The servants wanted to know if they should go and gather up the tares but Jesus says no, let them grow together. At harvest time, I will send the reapers to gather the tares bind them and throw them in the fire.

The young tares and the young blades of wheat look the same and can't be distinguished until they are grown and ready to harvest. The tares (the unbelievers) and the wheat (the believers) must live side by side in this world. God allows the unbelievers to remain for a while just as a farmer allows the tares to remain in his field, so the wheat is not uprooted with them. During harvest time, the weeds will be uprooted and thrown away into the fire. God's end time harvest is coming, when the true believers will be separated from the false believers. We have to make sure, our lives are producing wheat and not weeds. Make sure your faith is sincere, your commitment sure and your life is in Jesus Christ.

Thought for the day:

How can I make sure my life is like the wheat and not the tares?



Day #9

Mustard Seed Faith

Read: Matthew 13:31-32; Matthew 17:19-20

Key Verse: Matthew 17:20 - He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

The mustard seed is a tiny, tiny seed but it has great power. The seed itself is the least of all seeds but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs. The mustard plant can grow very large, so that even birds might nest in it and find refuge. It is rather strange that such a small seed can produce such a big plant. Jesus, in addressing his disciples lack of faith told them if they had the faith the size of a mustard seed they could move a mountain. The Kingdom of God is activated by faith because without faith it is impossible to please God. You don't need to have giant faith, you just need faith the size of a mustard seed.

The mustard seed is smaller than all other seeds, **but when it is sown** it grows and becomes greater than all others. You have to sow it, in order for God to grow it. This shows that what is little in our hands and little in our sight, when we do our part and sow, God will do His part to grow and multiply the seed that we sow.

With this simple fact (that from a small seed a large plant can grow) Jesus illustrates the spreading of the gospel throughout the world. The Kingdom of God (the large plant) grows from the planting of the gospel in hearts of men. The word of Christ from small beginnings can cause enormous growth and have influence attracting people to Christ from far away. This is represented by the birds coming to nest in the branches. When we are connected to the true vine and produce fruit in our lives, others will be attracted to the fruit but it all starts with the seed, even a seed as small as a mustard seed.

Thought for the day:

What kind of mustard seed faith can I sow today, that God can multiply back to me?



Day #10

Jesus Preaches the Kingdom

Read: Matthew 4:17-25

Key Verse: Matthew 4:23 - And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Jesus had one consistent message through the gospels and that was about the kingdom of God. Jesus began his public ministry by declaring repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand (Matthew 4:17). Jesus went all around teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom among the people. The gospel of the kingdom is concerned with influencing earth with the culture of heaven. He would preach about the kingdom and then demonstrate the power of the kingdom to change people's lives. After preaching he healed all manner of sickness and disease among the people. There is no sickness and no disease in heaven, so let me demonstrate and release the anointing for healing and cure this disease so that the glory of God would be revealed.

All throughout the gospels we see Jesus preach, teach and demonstrate the power of the kingdom. Teaching shows his concern for understanding. Preaching shows his commitment to the message and healing shows his concern for wholeness. His miracles of healing authenticated his teaching and preaching, showing that he truly was from God and making the Kingdom message attractive to those who heard this good news. Jesus preached the gospel to everyone who wanted to hear it. Christ can heal us not just of physical sickness but also from spiritual sickness as well. There is no sin or situation that he cannot handle and that is good news for everyone who believes.

Thought for the day:

If Jesus preached, taught and demonstrated the power of the kingdom, how can I follow his example?



Day #11

Jesus Urges us to Pray for Laborers

Read: Matthew 9:35-38

Key Verse: Matthew 9:37 - The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

Once again, we see Jesus going all over teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every sickness and disease among the people. The ministry was growing, it was impactful and the need was great. When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion. He compared them to sheep without a shepherd and with Jesus being the Good Shepherd, he expresses concern over the sheep. He realized how great the needs were and recognized the need to expand the ministry.

He tells the disciples; the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. There are 7.8 billion people in the world and only 2.4 billion Christians and many who have never heard the gospel. So, the harvest is indeed plentiful but where are the laborers. Where are those who will say, here I am Lord, send me. Having been on the mission field abroad, I have seen the needs outside of the United States. The mission field is not for everyone and even if you cannot go on the mission field, you can pray for missions, you can give to missions and you can support those who are going. Besides foreign missions, there are people in our families, in our communities, on our jobs who all need to know Jesus as their personal Lord and savior.

Our prayers should include praying for laborers, those who are anointed to serve and willing to help advance the kingdom in the earth.

Thought for the day:

How can I be of better service and who can I pray for to become a co-laborer for Christ and His Kingdom?



Day #12

Jesus sends out the Disciples

Read: Matthew 10:5-20

Key Verse: Matthew 10:7 - And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Jesus preached to the multitudes in parables but he taught, trained and equipped his disciples to follow his example. He called them, he trained them, he empowered them and then he sent them. When he sent them out he told them to preach the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, the same message he preached, the same message John the Baptist preached and gave them the power to demonstrate the power of the kingdom to heal, deliver, and set the captives free.

In the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20), Jesus instructs us to go make disciples of all nations (all people) baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe whatsoever he commanded them. Jesus told them to preach the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. The Jews were waiting for the Messiah to usher in his kingdom but they were hoping for a political and military kingdom that would free them from Roman rule but Jesus was talking about a spiritual kingdom. The Kingdom of God is still at hand because it is in hearts of his followers today. When Jesus returns the full kingdom will be realized as evil will be destroyed and we will reign with Christ and live in peace for eternity.

Jesus told the disciples freely you have received, free give. God has showered us with his blessings and we should generously give to others of our time, talents, treasure and possessions. God the Father sent God the Son. God the sent God the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit empowers us with the anointing and power to go and continue the work of Christ and bring glory and honor to the Father.

Thought of the day:

Where is God sending me to do the work of ministry and advance the Kingdom of God?



Day #13

Keys of the Kingdom

Read: Matthew 13:13-20

Key Verse: Matthew 16:19 - And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven

Jesus' ministry was continuing to grow and his popularity was spreading throughout the region. Jesus wanted to test the pulse and find out the word on the street, so he asks the disciples who do men say that I am? Then he asks them directly, who do you say that I am? Peter said, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus got excited and tells Peter, blessed are you Peter for flesh and blood did not reveal this to you but my father which is in Heaven. On this, Jesus said he would build His church. He did not build the church on Peter but on the revelation that Peter had that He was the Christ the Son of the Living God.

Jesus gives Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Keys give you access and they can lock and unlock things. The Kingdom of God functions according to laws or principles that Jesus calls keys. When you understand the keys of the Kingdom you will be able to unlock the mysteries of the Kingdom and receive all that God has available to you. Without the keys, you cannot access what is behind the doors. Keys represent access and authority. If you possess a key that means you have been granted authority and access to enter that place. We have a bunch of keys called scriptures but we must learn when and how to use them correctly.

Every time Jesus performed a miracle, or taught a parable he was not just telling a good story, he was revealing some keys. Just like the mysteries of the Kingdom, the keys must be discovered and then used. When you possess the keys of the Kingdom you have access to the resources of heaven and whatsoever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatsoever you loose on earth, will be loosed in heaven.

Thought of the day:

What key(s) am I missing that I need access to this year?



Day #14

Suffer the Little Children

Read: Matthew 19:13-14; Mark 10:13-15

Key Verse: Matthew 19:14 - But Jesus said, suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

In this passage of scripture, children were brought to Jesus so he could lay His hands on them but the disciples rebuked those who brought the children. Jesus did not like it and made a point not to forbid the children from coming to him because such is the Kingdom of God. Children (before they get corrupted by adults and society) are loving, trusting and believing. The attitude of a little child is how we should approach God. Adults tend to complicate things, whereas children believe in the possibilities.

The receptiveness of children was a great contrast to the stubbornness of the religious leaders who let their education and sophistication stand in the way of simple faith needed to believe in Jesus. In this scripture, Jesus is not talking about literally becoming a child but rather that our attitude, our philosophy or how we approach things. Little children are trusting, humble, dependent and forgiving. God wants us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts. I believe that Christ used little children as the example because of their mind-set of childlike faith - the ability to just believe what you tell them and trust that you are going to do what you say.

When my son Mason was young he stood at the top of some concrete steps and said I'm going to jump. He said, Dad, are you going to catch me? When I said yes, without hesitation, he just jumped before I could even think about it he was airborne. I had to spring into action and catch him, which I did, but he had enough faith to believe that if my dad said he would catch me, I believe him so I'm going to jump. This is how God wants us to be with His word. If He said it, that should settle it and we should be willing to jump and trust that what God said, He will do.

Thought of the day:

How can I become more like a child-like in my attitude toward God and others today?



Day #15

Until All Have Heard

Read: Matthew 24:3-14

Key Verse: Matthew 24:14 - And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

In Matthew 24 the disciples wanted to know what would be the sign of Jesus' return and the end of the world. He spends the entire chapter responding to their question. When we look around at the chaos in society, threats of war and rumors of wars, nuclear weapon making, chemical weapons, hatred, racism all the bad we see on the news and on social media, it really appears that the end is near.

However, Jesus says all this stuff is just the beginning of sorrows. In Matthew 24:14, Jesus said the Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world unto a witness from all nations and then shall the end come. The end cannot come until all have heard. Could it be that we are holding up the return of the Lord because we are not preaching, teaching and sharing the gospel with those that have not heard? This was the disciples' mission and it is ours today. Jesus talked about the end times and final judgment to show his followers the urgency of spreading the good news to everyone.

The Kingdom of God, which Jesus constantly preached, ushers in a new lifestyle of living by faith. This means that God and his Kingdom should be our only source and supply, where you don't need any government or anything else in this world to take care of you. You don't even have to try to meet your own needs because the kingdom has a supply for whatever you need. We just need to learn how to seek the Kingdom first, so the things that we need can be added to our lives.

Thought for the day:

How can I help to spread the gospel of the Kingdom to those who have not heard?



Day #16

Riches and the Kingdom

Read: Mark 10:17-25

Key Verse: Mark 10:22 - And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

Poverty is not godliness for our God is not poor. There is a wrong perception and mentality, that the poorer you are the more holy or righteous you are but this is simply not true. In fact, Abraham, the father of our faith was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold (Genesis 13:2). Many people believe that money is the root of all evil but the scripture in **I Timothy 6:10 says the love of money is the root of all evil...** Not money but the love of money, having a wrong relationship with money, where money becomes your God. There is nothing wrong with having money or being blessed financially. God just does not want the money to have you.

The rich young ruler came to Jesus asking how to inherit eternal life. Jesus responds by giving him the 10 commandments. Like a good religious person, he responds I have kept all of them from my youth. Jesus said one thing you lack, go sell all you have, give to the poor and you will have treasures in heaven, take up your cross and follow me. He was given the opportunity to follow Jesus directly but he went away sad because he had great possessions. Keeping his money and possessions was more important than following Jesus.

The Kingdom of God has a supply for whatever you need that's why Jesus said don't worry about what you will eat, what you drink, what you will wear but rather seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all the things that you need will be added to you.

Thought of the day:

How can I make sure my trust remains in God and not in my money and possessions?



Day #17

I Must Preach the Kingdom

Read: Luke 4:42-44

Key Verse: Luke 4:43 - And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

Jesus was out preaching and ministering to people and they were so enthused to have Jesus in their midst that they did not want him to leave. He responded, I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also for therefore am I sent. The people wanted to keep Jesus to themselves, like many people today who know and love the Lord, who go to church but they want to keep Jesus all to themselves. Jesus on the other hand, said I must preach the kingdom to other places also, for this is why I was sent.

Jesus came and introduced a new system called the Kingdom of God. It is the sovereign rule of God, the government of God designed to meet every need that a person has independent of what is happening in the world around them. The Kingdom of God includes salvation through Christ because that is your entry into it but it's also about learning how to bring heaven down to earth. To let His Kingdom come and His will be done in the earth, just as it is in Heaven.

Even after going to the cross and dying for our sins and rising with all power. Jesus returned and spent 40 days with his disciples and continued his same message. Acts 1:3 says after his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the Kingdom of God. From the start of his earthly ministry, to the time he ascended back to Heaven, Jesus preached the Kingdom of God because that is why he was sent.

Thought for the day:

If Jesus said he must preach the kingdom, how can I make sure that I am living the kingdom principles and not just going through religious traditions?



Day #18

The Father's Good Pleasure

Read: Luke 12:22-32

Key Verse: Luke 12:32 - "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom".

In this passage of scripture which echoes Matthew 6, Jesus reminds us not to worry about our life. God knows what we have need of before we ask. Worrying stops us from trusting God and from walking by faith. Instead of worrying, we should be seeking the kingdom first. Jesus said, it is your father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. God desires to give you all that the kingdom has to offer. Romans 8 says that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. This means we have an inheritance but you cannot claim it if you don't know what is in His will and testament. The bible is the will of God and it contains all your rights, privileges, benefits and promises as a citizen of the Kingdom of God.

Seeking the Kingdom of God is about making Jesus, the Lord and King of your life. He must be in control of every area – your work, your plans, your play, your relationships, your decisions. Is the kingdom only one of your many concerns or is it the center of all you do? It is the responsibility of the King to take care of those in His Kingdom. The Lord wants to provide all of your needs and He has the means and the supply to do it but we must make our pursuit of Him and His Kingdom our priority.

It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom but you must be willing to ask, seek, knock and discover all that is available to you. We often have not because we ask not.

Thought of the day:

What can I do today to understand the Kingdom better so I can receive what I need and give the Father some good pleasure?



Day # 19

The Kingdom in You

Read: Luke 17:20-21

Key Verse: Luke 17:21 - Neither shall they say, lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

The Pharisees asked Jesus when God's Kingdom would come, not knowing that it already arrived. The Kingdom of God is not like an earthly Kingdom with geographical boundaries. Instead it begins with the word of God activated by his spirit in people hearts, in their lives and in their relationships. Still today we must resist looking for institutions or programs for evidence of the progress of God's Kingdom. Instead we should look for what God is doing in people's heart.

Just like the Pharisees and Sadducees, many miss the kingdom because they are looking for a literal physical kingdom and that will not happen until Jesus returns to set up a physical kingdom. In this age, it is spiritual kingdom in the hearts of believers but it becomes visible when you are living a life that reflects kingdom values by letting your light shine before others, so they see your good works but glorify your father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:17).

The purpose or goal of the kingdom is to manifest on earth the operations of heaven. In the Lord's prayer, it says thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. So, if your life on earth is not reflecting heaven, then God's Kingdom is not visible. God's Kingdom is only visible when someone on earth is emulating or reflecting heaven. Jesus said in **Luke 11:20, if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you.** In other words, when Jesus cast out of a devil, he was demonstrating the power of the Kingdom to change things on earth. When it happened, the Kingdom of God became visible to those who witnessed the event.

Thought of the day:

In what ways can I apply the word to my life or my situation so the Kingdom of God can be seen?



Day #20

My Kingdom is Not of This World

Read: John 18:32-37

Key Verse: John 18:36 – Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."

When Jesus was standing before Pilate in the judgement hall, he asked Jesus, are you the King of the Jews? Notice Jesus did not say, no I am not a King. He said, my Kingdom is not of this world. This is important because you cannot have a kingdom without a King and the domain or territory of a King is his Kingdom. Jesus said, my Kingdom (the place where I rule) is not of this world (realm).

Jesus was referring to where it is sourced from not its location. If His kingdom is not of this world and your kingdom is of this world, then you and God are not on the same page. He is speaking of the nature of the kingdom not the location. Jesus said for this reason was I born. He was born into this world to bring the kingdom to this world. But the kingdom he's brought to this world is not of this world, even though it is in this world. As believers in Christ, we are supposed to be in this world but not of this world.

If there is no commitment or dedication to the King or His Kingdom, you will not see the manifestation of the Kingdom in your life because Jesus said, my Kingdom is not of this world. So as long as you operate from the world's perspective, you will not see the kingdom rule and overrule the affairs of your life. In the movie Black Panther, they lived in Wakanda. Wakanda was in the world but not of the world. They had a way of doing things that was different from the outside world. They had a saying that's not how we do things in Wakanda. As ambassadors of Christ and citizens of the Kingdom of God, we are supposed to be in the world but not of the world. We are supposed to lift up a different standard, where we can say that's not how we do things in the Kingdom.

Thought of the day:

How I can make sure my life is reflecting the Kingdom way and not the world's way?



Day #21

Entering the Kingdom

Read: John 3:1-20

Key Verse: John 3:3 - except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

We don't understand the concept of a kingdom because we live in a democracy and in a democracy, we vote for president and government officials but in a kingdom, you don't vote for the royal family you must be born into the royal family. Jesus is not a president, he is not a prime minister. He is a king, in fact he is the King of Kings. The only way into the Kingdom of God is that you must be born into it.

This is what Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about in John 3. Nicodemus heard Jesus speaking about the kingdom and demonstrating the power of God and he could not understand why with all their religion, with all their studying of the law, with all their knowledge of scripture – he never saw the power of God like that. In response to his question, **Jesus said except the man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God** – in other words, you cannot experience, you cannot enter, you cannot relate, you can't even understand the kingdom. Why – **I Corinthians 2:14 - But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.** When you are not born again, you can only rely on human logic and cannot understand the kingdom. This is why Jesus said in **John 3:5 Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** Being born-again makes you a citizen of the kingdom.

We have made the born-again experience the whole gospel and it is only meant to be the beginning step. Following me, through our acceptance of Jesus we can enter the door of the kingdom. Now we have to learn to live, think and act like we know who we really are - children of the king and citizens of His Kingdom.

Thoughts of the day:

Now that I am born-again, how can I experience and exercise my rights, my privileges, my benefits and my responsibilities as a citizen of the Kingdom of God?