

Beginning of a Kingdom

Genesis 12:1 – 3

I. Intro

- A. Thinking about kingdom of God; Jesus spoke a lot about this – used illustrations starting with words, *The kingdom of God is like or the kingdom of heaven is like ...*
- B. The Lord's Prayer, teaching His disciples on how to pray, Jesus used words – *Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*
- C. **Question:** What are thoughts about kingdom of God? Do you give much thought to kingdom of God? Probably like many people think of eternity, new heaven, new earth
- D. See God's kingdom referred to from the very beginning of scripture – where I want to begin today
- E. Book of Genesis, chapters 1 – 11 is the foundation upon which all rest of scripture is built – creation of the world, sin entering the world, Noah and the flood – God's judgment upon the whole world because of sin (Genesis 6:11-12 (NIV)
11 Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence.
12 God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.), **all right up to tower of Babel**
- F. Genesis 12 start new section, God building a nation, choosing for Himself a people, building the foundation for ultimately His eternal kingdom; one thing for sure Jesus Christ and all saints will rule together in God's eternal kingdom
- G. Kingdom of God not something that we just look forward to experiencing and enjoying being part of, we can experience His kingdom here and now, and we as believers in Christ are already part of that kingdom
- H. **READ Genesis 12:1 – 3**
- I. 3 points about make-up, characteristics of the Kingdom of God from these few verses; Gods Kingdom is ...

II. **1** – People Who are Called Out

- A. *ecclesia* – Greek word translated “church” in the NT; literally means the “called out”; the kingdom of God, here and now on this earth, is the church – those who have been chosen, called out, by God as His people by putting their faith in His Son, Jesus Christ
- B. In today's passage, very first words God spoke to Abraham was *Leave ...* ; several weeks ago, message on when choosing to follow Christ there are things we have to leave behind – not talking about things that we're glad or ok to leave behind, talking about things we don't necessarily want to be without – called sacrifice

C. **God told Abraham to leave his home, native land, relatives, father's family, all of his worldly comforts**

D. **To think this doesn't apply to us today is wrong; Jesus' words - Luke 14:26 (NIV)**

26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.; **Jesus saying if we "love" anything, cherish, hold dear anything more than our relationship with Him then we are not truly His disciple**

E. **Apostle Paul said: Philippians 3:8 (NIV)**

8 ... I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ

F. **Colossians 2:9-10 (NIV)**

9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
10 and **you have been given fullness in Christ**, who is the head over every power and authority.

G. **Philippians 4:19 (NIV)**

19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

H. **Question: So why as people, especially as those who profess to believe and follow Christ as Lord and Savior, are we so stubborn about "leaving" all that hinders our growing, maturing in relationship with Christ?**

I. **The kingdom of God are people that are "called out" willing to leave all for the sake of Jesus Christ; reject all the values and lifestyles and priorities that Christ does not command, and to worship and bow down to Him alone**

III. **2 – People Who Will Go**

A. **As the church, God's people which make up the Kingdom of God, we are not the "called out ones" to just leave and wander around – we're "called out" to leave and go**

B. **v. 1: God tells Abraham not only to leave his home and family, but to ... *go to the land I will show you***

C. **Realize, no road map given, no clear destination, no time frame given – for those who like to have everything all planned out, this would've driven you nuts**

D. **But this is a picture of kingdom of God; **Question: How? ... *go the land I will show You*** – God telling Abraham, He will be with him, presence of God traveling right along beside him the whole way; may not know all the details such as the final destination but you know WHO is taking you there**

- E. **God's kingdom, right here and now, and for eternity is God's plan leading us, walking alongside of us, taking us to where He wants us to be – it's what we call being in the center of God's will**
- F. **We may not know the final destinations God is taking us in this life, but we can be assured of our final destination where God is leading us after this life – but every step of the way, whether it's here on earth or in heaven God's presence is with us all the way**
- G. **The kingdom of God is all about that walk of faith; as the words to two well-known hymns say, *He walks with me and He talks with me along life's narrow way*, and *He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me I am His own*, and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known**
- H. **The kingdom of God is not only future, but it's now; focusing on this moment, interaction with another person, opportunity to show His love and use our gifts given by His Spirit to bless others**
- I. **The kingdom of God are people that are “called out” not only to leave all for the sake of Jesus Christ but to go in faith under the leadership, guidance, and presence of God Almighty Himself**
- J. **Ephesians 4:1-3 (NIV)**
 - 1 ... to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.
 - 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.
 - 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (... all of this as we are “going”)

IV. **3 – People who are Blessed to Bless**

- A. **REFER v. 2, 3; notice last line of v. 3 - ... *all peoples on earth will be blessed through you* – **Question:** How is that possible? Only possible because of God's blessings to Abraham**
- B. **Tells us the purpose of God's kingdom, even here and now, is so that all humanity will reap benefits; God's “called out” people as they have been blessed, blessing others**
- C. **Completely opposite of world's thought – all about me; *Look out for number one – get all you can – take all you can – seek/make your own happiness***
- D. **In the kingdom of God, His people understand that all they have is not theirs, it's all been given to them by God and it's all supposed to be shared**
- E. **See this tonight in Acts 2:45 those early Christian believers ... *Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need***
- F. **It's sharing all – materially, socially, relationally, emotionally; share burdens, sorrows, joys, victories**

G. As we bless others as we are blessed, then our blessings become multiplied and there's even greater joy in continuing to help and pass blessings along to others

V. Close

- A. **Question:** Today, as a genuine believer and follower of Jesus Christ, you are right now living in and experiencing the Kingdom of God?**
- B. We are the ones God has “called out”, commanded to “leave” all worldly pleasures and to “go” with the Lord’s presence guiding us all the way and blessing all people as we have been blessed**
- C. [To God] *So, heavenly Father, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth just as it is in heaven***