

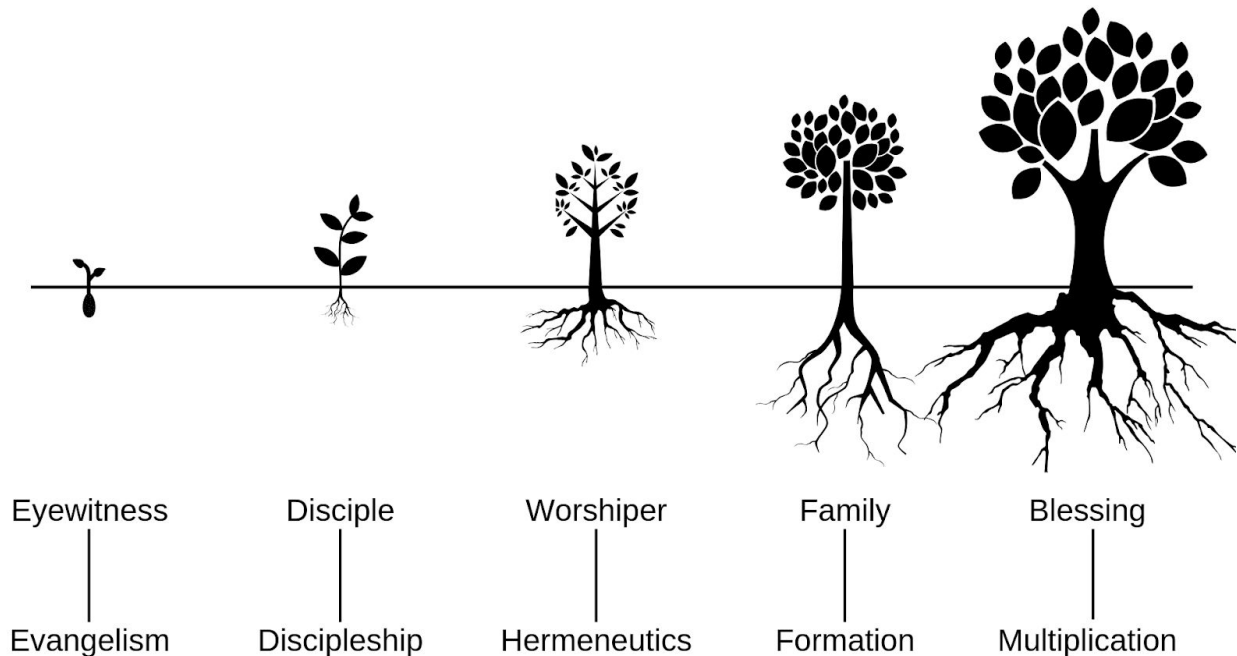
Kingdom Come, Acts 19:1-41

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Introduction

Good morning, my name is Brad and I'm one of the pastors here. I'm excited to be kicking off two things at the same time today. First, a six-month emphasis on one of our five identities as a church: Family.



This is the fourth identity emphasis since we started in the Fall of 2018. The idea isn't just to be renewed in our identities, but also to be trained in how to live them out, so that we all can be fruitful disciples of Jesus. The trainings for men and women during this emphasis will be "formation," which is the care of one another. It's like, 'I know how to believe and obey Jesus through evangelism and discipleship and hermeneutics, but what happens when I'm struggling to believe and obey (or the person I'm discipling is struggling to do so)?' Well, that's a great opportunity for you to be formed by the family of God as we tenderly apply the gospel to one another's souls.

Second, today begins a new sermon series to guide us through this emphasis. It's a journey through Paul's letter to the Ephesians, and we have subtitled it, "Into the Fullness of Christ". The ironic thing about how I want to get Ephesians started is

actually not in the letter itself, but in the story of how the church at Ephesus was established. For that, I invite you to turn in your Bibles with me to the book of Acts chapter 19, which you can find on page 928 if you're using one of the Bibles in the chairs. The title of today's sermon is "Kingdom Come" and the main idea goes like this: "The kingdom of God still comes in power and mystery". And when it does come, what can we expect (by "expect" I don't just "watch for" like a spectator, but more like what can we look for, long for, and live for)? Three things:

- 1) When God's kingdom comes, expect people to be saved - vv 1-10
- 2) When God's kingdom comes, expect idols to be burned - vv. 11-20
- 3) When God's kingdom comes, expect things to be messy - vv. 21-41

Since today's passage is so long, rather than having you stand for the reading of it, we'll be reading it in portions as we go along. With that said, I invite you to posture your hearts to receive the word of the Lord in such a way that we may still say of God's word,

The Lord has spoken to us. [Congregation] Thanks be to God!

Exposition

Let me start with a question this morning. What comes to mind when you hear the phrase, "the kingdom of God"? For me, I always think of one of those really long church names, like "Mount Zion Fire Baptized Holiness Kingdom of God Church of the Americas". But for others...

- Some might think of it as heaven, the place Christians go when they die
- Some might think of it as the church, the people who belong to King Jesus
- Some might think of it as ethics, a call to social action
- Some might think of it as an experience, a sensation that God is present

The hard thing about defining the kingdom of God is that the Bible doesn't provide a simple definition of what it is. Jesus refers to it often in parables just by saying, "The kingdom of heaven is *like*..." It ends up with so many different descriptions that it seems to have multiple meanings, or at least a really vast meaning (which would make sense—it's a *kingdom!*). So here are some attempts at a simple definition:

- "The King's power, over the King's people, in the King's place"
- "A story, a society, and a sphere of reality"

- “Life with God under the rule of God”¹ (my preferred usage for today)

Why are we talking about the kingdom of God this morning? *Because if the kingdom of God had not come to Ephesus, there never would've been a letter to the Ephesians.* And if the kingdom of God had not come into our lives, there never would've been a need for us to read the Ephesians. So let's start with how the kingdom *comes*, and then move into how the kingdom *continues*. We may be surprised by some of the things we find.

The story as recorded by Luke, the author of Acts, actually begins in chapter 18 (if you want to flip back). There we read, beginning in v. 18:

¹⁸ After this , Paul stayed many days longer [that is, in Corinth] and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. ¹⁹ And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. ²¹ But on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus. ²² When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. ²³ After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. Acts 18:18-23

Ok, nothing too exciting here. The question in my mind is, “Where’s the kingdom?” Here’s Paul, the Apostle and greatest missionary ever. Where’s the church planting movement? When God’s kingdom comes, that’s what it always looks like, right? But that would miss what Jesus told us about the kingdom:

¹⁸ He said therefore, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹ It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.” Luke 13:18-19

So it seems the kingdom of God often has small, humble beginnings. And that makes sense if Jesus, the one born in an animal pen, is King of this kingdom. It starts so small, so unimpressive on the outside, and yet what’s growing on the inside is a kernel of the most amazing reality we’ve ever known. So the kingdom can look like laboring for months among a slow-hearted people. ‘What’s up, God? I thought if I rubbed this lamp

¹ Justin Taylor, “The Kingdom of God—5 Questions, 2 Scholars,” <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/kingdom-god-5-questions-2-scholars/>

just the right way, I could have my wishes; I could steer this kingdom.’ But this kingdom, as we’ll see, refuses to be steered or manipulated by the power of man.

Instead, the story goes, Paul leaves his teammates Priscilla and Aquila to continue the work, and while he’s gone (v. 24),

a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷ And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, ²⁸ for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus. Acts 18:24-28

So the seeds of Jesus’ kingdom in Ephesus are largely spread and begin to take root—not by Paul—but *by a random guy from Egypt who hadn’t even been to Paul’s seminary!* God brings Apollos to Ephesus, and this man understands the Old Testament and how it points to Jesus, but he doesn’t yet understand all of Paul’s theology.² So Priscilla and Aquila don’t put out his fire—they fan it into flame³ by helping him understand things more fully. And it seems God uses him to bring some of the Jews in Ephesus to Christ.⁴

Now, did Apollos just water the seeds already planted by Paul, or did *he* plant the church at Ephesus? Who gets the credit? The same question will later rise among the church at Corinth, where Paul will write,

⁵ What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸ He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. ⁹ For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s field, God’s building. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

² I. Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1980), 321-322

³ 2 Timothy 1:6

⁴ Marshall, 322-323; Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), Loc 21860

—the family that God gave birth to. Here’s what we’re learning from this prelude to the most famous part of the Ephesians’ story. The coming of God’s kingdom, whether it’s in you or through you, the leader who steers it is King Jesus. That means it can mysteriously come in power through *anyone* who belongs to him. It doesn’t matter the age, gender, race, ethnicity, language, class, education, personality, or skill.

Hence the reason our primary mission strategy at Antioch is, to quote from Ephesians, “to equip the saints for the work of ministry”.⁵ It’s training you to live out your identity in Christ with *reproducibility*. So that, just like Paul to Priscilla and Aquila, and Priscilla and Aquila to Apollos, and Apollos to the Jews, you can participate in this kingdom movement instead of just watching it pass by.

1) When God’s Kingdom Comes, Expect People to Be Saved - vv 1-10

That said, if you are convinced that you have a place and a role in God’s kingdom, then what should you expect as it comes? This brings us to our first point this morning: when God’s kingdom comes, expect people to be saved. The story continues in v. 1 of chapter 19:

And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. ² And he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³ And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They said, “Into John’s baptism.” ⁴ And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.” ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all. Acts 9:1-7

Now, due to the length of today’s passage I can’t dig into all the details, but let me make a few observations. When Paul returns to Ephesus we’re told he finds “disciples”—who are they? It seems these people are different from the ones Apollos led to Christ. How do we know that? Well, because they don’t have Christ. We’re told they had received John’s baptism of repentance, but they had not believed in Jesus in such a way that his Holy Spirit had come upon them. And according to the New Testament, there’s no way you can be in Christ without the Holy Spirit.⁶ The Spirit is how Jesus goes from “up

⁵ Ephesians 4:12

⁶ Marshall, 323; Schnabel, Loc 21902

there” to “right here,” and from “back then” to “right now”. We will hear this later in Ephesians 1:

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13-14

The Spirit bears the kingdom announcement (as described in Ephesians 4) that the King hasn't just defeated our enemies, he has shared the plunder with us.⁷ He is the means and the sign that the King has conquered your heart.

Now, many have and will continue to use this passage from Acts 19 to twist the focus to baptism and manifestations of the Spirit. But here's what I think is in view: when God's kingdom comes, expect people to be saved. Another way we might say this is, expect that God is already at work. A guy named Henry Blackaby made this idea famous in his book *Experiencing God* when he said simply, “Watch to see where God is working and join him”.⁸ Sometimes we think and act as though we must create the kingdom out of nothing. No—that job is already taken. Our role is to follow where the Spirit of King Jesus leads and give voice to his kingdom announcement, just like Paul in v. 8:

⁸ And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. Acts 19:8-10

Here's the exciting and humbling thing when we watch to see where God is working and join him: *who knows what he will do!* He might soften hearts toward Christ. He might harden hearts against Christ. He might give birth to a new little church in a sea of unbelief. He might even open up such a door that an entire region of people get wind of good news. That's what he chose to do here in Ephesus, to such an extent that it's likely the seven churches of Revelation and several others were planted at this time (which

⁷ Ephesians 4:4-8

⁸ Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1990)

probably means that Ephesians was a letter written generally in order to circulate among them all).⁹

I'm not saying that when God's kingdom comes, you should always expect the big *numbers* of people saved—that's up to God. But you should always expect the big *miracles* of people saved. If you don't, then you'll never pray it or say it with power.

2) When God's Kingdom Comes, Expect Idols to Be Burned - vv. 11-20

This brings us to our second point this morning: when God's kingdom comes, expect idols to be burned. Read with me in v. 11:

¹¹ And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. ¹³ Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." ¹⁴ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. ¹⁵ But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?" ¹⁶ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. ¹⁸ Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. ¹⁹ And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰ So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily. Acts 19:11-20

In order for us to really grasp what's happening here, we need the Wikipedia version of first century Ephesus. This city was a big deal in its day: major crossroads, big harbor, a free Roman city with its own assembly, massive theater, big, wealthy, religious—it reminds me of modern-day Istanbul, Turkey. But what stood out most about Ephesus (literally) was its temple to the goddess Artemis, so large (four times larger than the Parthenon) that it was considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.¹⁰ According to one scholar, "Her relationship to the city could best be described as a [marriage]...she was trusted as the guardian and protector of the city... She was...the virgin goddess, a divine huntress, and a fertility deity. She...would sympathetically use

⁹ Schnabel, Loc 22110; Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), Loc 832

¹⁰ Schnabel, Loc 21799; Marshall, 318-319

her power on behalf of her devotees. Thus, she was [called the] ‘Queen of Heaven,’ ‘Lord,’ and ‘Savior’. She [was believed to wield] power and authority over heaven, earth, and even the underworld. This was especially evident over the various kinds of spirits that people feared”.¹¹

Now, let me ask you, if this is what people believed and experienced as the most powerful thing in the world, how would they ever begin to see that Jesus Christ is more powerful? Here’s how (v. 11): by “God doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul”. In a world where people wake up and their first thought is “How can I appease the spirits to make it through today?”, it’s normal for the kingdom to come in displays of power. But even still, Paul saw these miracles as nothing compared to the power of the gospel, which he said “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,”¹² believes that “Jesus died for our sins...that he was buried, [and] that he was raised on the third day”.¹³

To prove this Luke includes this equally terrifying and hilarious story in Acts 19 where seven sons of a man pretending¹⁴ to be a Jewish high priest try to harness Jesus’ power apart from Jesus’ salvation. The demon they’re trying to exorcise “leaped on them, mastered...and overpowered them, so that they fled...naked and wounded.” I don’t even know why Luke includes that they were wounded, because if you leave a fight where your clothes have been torn off you, oh you got some wounds.¹⁵ That’s a powerful demonic spirit!

But that’s nothing compared to the power of the gospel that then leads unbelievers who hear of this to fear the name of Jesus, and then leads believers to confess their secret sins, their syncretistic practice of magic arts, their idolatry of dark power, their lingering slavery to fear. And they gather in the street and (not sell!) they burn these books. They destroy the incantations whose power is kept in their secrecy.¹⁶ You know what these books were called in that day? “Ephesian letters”.¹⁷ Think about that in light of the true “Ephesian letter” that we’re about to journey through.

¹¹ Arnold, Loc 521

¹² Romans 1:16

¹³ 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Schnabel, Loc 22110; Marshall, 328-329

¹⁴ Marshall, 329

¹⁵ J.D. Greear, “The Gospel vs. Idolatry: Acts 19:11-41,”

<https://summitchurch.com/message/the-gospel-vs-idolatry-acts-1911-41/>

¹⁶ Schnabel, Loc 22243

¹⁷ Marshall, 330-331

And may that same power of the gospel strike you in the heart today, believer, such that you would confess *your* secret sins, *your* syncretism, *your* idolatry. It may not be magic arts, but chances are it's wrapped up in fear. Whatever you fear losing most, or fear never gaining, it's almost a sure bet there's your idol of choice.¹⁸ So when God's kingdom comes, expect idols to be burned—and yours first.

3) When God's Kingdom Comes, Expect Things to Be Messy - vv. 21-41

This brings us to our third point this morning: when God's kingdom comes, don't just expect people to be saved and idols to be burned, but expect things to be messy. Let's read the last long stretch of the passage, beginning in v. 21:

²¹ Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." ²² And having sent into Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

²³ About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way. ²⁴ For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen. ²⁵ These he gathered together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth. ²⁶ And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. ²⁷ And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship."

²⁸ When they heard this they were enraged and were crying out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ²⁹ So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's companions in travel. ³⁰ But when Paul wished to go in among the crowd, the disciples would not let him. ³¹ And even some of the Asiarchs, who were friends of his, sent to him and were urging him not to venture into the theater. ³² Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together. ³³ Some of the crowd prompted Alexander, whom the Jews had put forward. And Alexander, motioning with his hand, wanted to make a defense to the crowd. ³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours they all cried out with one voice, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

¹⁸ Greear, "The Gospel vs. Idolatry"

³⁵ And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky? ³⁶ Seeing then that these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. ³⁷ For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our goddess. ³⁸ If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. ³⁹ But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. ⁴⁰ For we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.” ⁴¹ And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly. Acts 19:21-41

I know that’s a lot of text; I promise to be brief. The long and short of it is, the kingdom has come so deep and wide in Ephesus that it brings opposition to the surface, and people’s hearts are revealed. If you remember during Advent, this is the kind of thing Simeon referred to when he held Jesus in his arms and said, “This child is appointed...for a sign that is opposed...so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”¹⁹ This is what King Jesus does.

The motivation behind the opposition is firstly money, which is never a small idol, especially in a booming city. A wealthy silversmith named Demetrius incites his fellow idol-makers by warning them that Christianity is ruining the demand for idols—so they’re in danger of going out of business. But then he makes it a city-wide issue when he points out that the glory and power of Artemis may be seen as nothing in comparison to Jesus—and then *all of Ephesus* would lose its wealth and significance. No wonder Demetrius has done well for himself—he knows how to pull at the heartstrings of his culture.

This leads to a demonstration that basically becomes a riot. There’s mass confusion about the purpose of their outburst, but even still they all can settle on one thing for which to agree: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” And the other side of that same coin: terrible is anything that threatens her.

I know there are some of us in this room who have experienced what it’s like to be in a foreign city when hostilities break out. It can feel like a death sentence, especially when those hostilities are pointed toward you and you’re holed up somewhere. Paul seems to relate to this, as he mentions in his letter to the Corinthians that he once “fought with

¹⁹ Luke 2:34-35

wild beasts at Ephesus,” which might be literal beasts or, more likely, spiritual powers. In another letter he continues describing this same event, saying,

⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. 2 Corinthians 1:8-10

Maybe Paul is speaking of this very situation, where he listened to pagans shout in murderous worship for two hours while he holed up somewhere, and was so convinced that his time had come that he welcomed it by trying to enter and address the crowd. “Brothers...we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself”—if this isn’t messy, I don’t know what is.

Christian, if you expect God’s kingdom to come into your life and make everything tidy, then you will be disappointed with King Jesus. Church, if we expect God’s kingdom to come among us in ways that don’t stretch us beyond our means and comfort and wisdom, then we will not welcome its inconvenience. We will end up just like the city clerk in this story, who stands before the Ephesian mob and does the only thing that can get them under control—he subjugates them to a greater fear than that which already controls them.²⁰ It’s all they know.

Instead, “do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you”.²¹ When God’s kingdom comes, expect things to be messy.

Conclusion

In order to bring this to a close, I want to circle back to my opening question: what comes to mind when you hear the phrase, “the kingdom of God”? I hope after today’s message what comes to mind are things like this:

- Life with God under the rule of God
- And the expectation that wherever the kingdom comes people will be saved, idols will be burned, and things will be messy.

²⁰ Schnabel, Loc 22633

²¹ 1 Peter 4:12

But even more than information that fills your head, my hope is that the Spirit of God has stirred up a longing to see his kingdom come, in you and through you. And if that longing is within you, then indeed the kingdom has already been coming—so why not all the more? That’s my longing and prayer—that I would recognize God’s kingdom in me and through me already (in its small and unimpressive ways), and that I would see it come all the more (in its big and extravagant ways). That the little mustard seed would become a tree where birds of all kinds might nest in its branches. That I would see people saved, that I would see people burn their idols, that I would see the messiness that proves we’re actually threatening the enemy!

But the temptation is to try to rub the lamp the right way in order to get my wishes, to steer the kingdom a little bit. Find the proven steps for growing a big church, the best method for starting a movement. But the thing about this kingdom is, it refuses to be steered. There’s only one who can do so, and that’s King Jesus. And he says to us,

“The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. ²⁷ He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. ²⁸ The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. ²⁹ But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.” Mark 4:26-29

A harvest that he did not cause to grow—because, remember, “neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.”²² So we would do well today to recognize and obey the same message that King Jesus and his apostles announced as they went from town to town: “Repent, for the kingdom of God has come near.”²³

If you have not been saved, then repent and be saved; if your latest idols have not been divulged, then repent and forsake them; if you’re avoiding the messiness of God’s kingdom, then repent and join this movement instead of watching it pass by you.

Do this, but recognize that even so, you are still at the powerful and mysterious mercies of the King, the same One who says,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind

²² 1 Corinthians 3:7

²³ Luke 11:9, 11; Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15

blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” John 3:5-8

Would you be born of the Spirit today? Would you be filled with the Spirit today? Would the kingdom come in you today? Don't rub the lamp. Come to the King.

Communion

On the night that he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it, he broke it and said to his disciples, “This is my body, which is broken for you; eat this in remembrance of me.” He also took a cup of wine, and after blessing it, gave it to his disciples and said, “This cup is the new covenant marked by the shedding of my blood. For as often as you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you announce the Lord's death until he returns.”²⁴ **Today we are announcing that Jesus Christ is still King.**

Our tradition here at Antioch is to come forward and break off a piece of bread and dip it in the juice. If you're a baptized believer, come and remember who you are and whose you are. If you're a believer but not yet baptized, before coming to the table, we would love to help you first come and declare your faith publicly through baptism. If you're not a Christian, this sacred symbol is not for you, but rather than taking communion, we encourage you to take Christ. He has made himself available to you this very moment. There will be pastors in the back to talk and pray with you about any need you have. Let's pray.

²⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

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