

# The Kingdom of God has Come!

## Part 4: The Kingdom of God comes in Power

### 1. Review

- a. Kingdom – the place where God rules! The King’s Domain!
  - i. **We bring the Kingdom of Heaven to earth.**
    1. Thy Kingdom Come...Thy will be done...on earth as it is in heaven!
  - ii. **We live by a different standard.** By heaven’s standards...of supply, of victory, of life, of health!
- b. **Those who don’t pray allow darkness to continue ruling.**
  - i. This has huge implications for everything! (God limits much of His activity in this world to the prayers and declarations of His saints).
  - ii. We wonder why evil, disease, sickness, poverty exist in the world and in our neighbors lives? Because we haven’t brought the kingdom of God to bear upon them! God isn’t going to “do” it until we ask/declare for Him to do so.
  - iii. The enemy’s greatest efforts at deceiving the Church are centered on the purpose and effect of prayer.
    1. Satan isn’t bothered that God’s word is fulfilled in heaven (it already is) just as long as it is never fulfilled in the earth! As long as Christians write off the inactivity of God toward sickness, lostness, as the sovereignty of God, the devil rules!
    2. Until we begin to believe and act upon that belief that God is waiting for His people to pray...nothing will change! Evil will continue to dominate in people’s lives and in the world without us bringing the kingdom! **We must bring the kingdom!** **Say with me: We must bring the kingdom!**
  - iv. The word God speaks, the will of God in heaven, cannot be fulfilled in the earth unless it is first believed. Satan’s primary work is spreading “unbelief” among God’s people!

### 2. 1 Corinthians 4:20 *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.”*

- a. Words or power? Human reasoning or the power of God? Which comprises the gospel?
- b. Quote: *“As our ministry teams travel around the world, they have come to expect certain things. Healing, deliverance, and conversions are the fruits of our labors. While healing is seldom the subject we teach on, it is one of the most common results. As we proclaim the message of the Kingdom of God, people get well. The Father seems to say, Amen! to His own message by confirming the word with power. Peter knew this when he prayed for boldness in his preaching, expecting that God would respond by “extending His hand to heal, and signs and wonders would be done in the name of His holy servant Jesus.” God has promised to back up our message with power if our message is the gospel of His kingdom.”* (Bill Johnson, Bethel Church).
- c. *Therefore I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you. But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.* —1 Corinthians 4:15-20
  - i. *Imitate me* – Paul urges his listeners to “imitate him.” How are they to imitate him? They are to imitate his “way of life in Christ Jesus” which matches his teaching that he proclaims everywhere in the church.
    1. The subtlety of this statement is something you and I would overlook, but he is saying that his conduct and his words match. When most of us hear that, we THINK about not being hypocrites, of having our walk match our talk.

2. But I believe that Paul is alluding to something less visible than that. Hypocrisy is already understood to be wrong. Paul is calling them to something even bigger, something even higher.
3. He calls out the arrogant teachers of the church in Corinth and basically challenges their credentials. Do you see how? He says, “does their walk match their talk?” He says it in a unique way though. Look at what he says, in v19-20, “...*then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power*”
- ii. In other words, “Let them show if they are from God by their power not their words!”
  1. **I say all of this to make this point.** When Paul is telling his followers in Corinth to follow his example, he is them to not to just be able to argue the right arguments, but to demonstrate the power of God in every day living and conduct as they interact with the world around them, just like he does.
  2. **We have all grown up in a doctrinal environment.** Correct doctrine has been stressed above living in the power of the Holy Spirit. Being able to communicate what we believe has been drilled into our heads. (and mind you, it is not unimportant!).
  3. **But we have neglected the power!** We have learned to depend upon our flowery words instead of exercise the power of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. Paul makes it clear that the *kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.*

### 3. The Holy Spirit is the **dunamis** of heaven.

- a. A genuine encounter with God is often a power encounter.
  - i. When I met Christ, I had a power encounter...one of God’s amazing presence and the sensation of His love flooding the room in which I sat, and realizing that I had spent my life rejecting his love, gave my heart to Him. That is a power encounter.
  - ii. My own mother’s encounter with Christ was during last rites, when she was dying of bone cancer. God touched her and not only healed her, but reassembled all of her crumbling bones. To say the least, she became a follower of Christ for the rest of her life.
  - iii. You heard last week how Jennifer prayed with a woman at Giant Eagle and the woman became acutely aware of the presence and power of God upon her in the middle of a busy parking lot.
- b. Such encounters vary from person to person according to God’s design.
  - i. If you look at the bible and the encounters people had, everyone of them had a unique one. Yours is unique. And God wants to use you to deliver an encounter to someone. Last week, we said, “We owe the world an encounter with God.
    1. The gospel is not just an argument to agree with or a doctrine to believe.
    2. It is the power of God unto salvation. Power of God unto salvation. Say it with me. **The gospel is the power of God unto salvation.**
    3. That’s biblical you know? Romans 1:16 “*the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes*”
    4. For most of us, we think the power is in the message. But the power is in the person of Christ in us as we deliver the gospel of the Kingdom!
- c. But it’s the lack of power encounters that lead to a misunderstanding of God and His Word.
  - i. Experience is necessary in building a true knowledge of the Word.
  - ii. Many fear experience because it might lead away from Scripture.
  - iii. The mistakes of some have led many to fear the experiential pursuit of God.
  - iv. But it is illegitimate to allow fear to keep us from pursuing a deeper experience with God!
  - v. Embracing such fear causes a failure on the other extreme, which is culturally more acceptable, but significantly worse in its eternal significance.

- vi. Sometimes I think that the thing that holds us back from venturing into demonstrating the power of God is the fear of man...what will they think of me?
- 4. Romans 15:18-19 *“I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit..”* (NIV)
  - a. Paul didn’t limit his action to “speaking.” In this passage, he says, “by what I have said and done.”
  - b. And he exercised the power of signs and miracles through the power (dunamis) of the Spirit.
    - i. Folks, it is NORMAL for you and I to work in the power of the Holy Spirit and for God to heal people at our prayer and declaration.
    - ii. It isn’t about how good we are, it is about how good God is.
    - iii. It is about God revealing His nature and love to people...when His kingdom comes, He shows up and changes everything about everything He touches!
  - c. Mark 16:20 *And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.*] [And they promptly reported all these instructions to Peter and his companions.
    - i. Some say the signs don’t need to follow.
    - ii. Folks, **the world isn’t looking for just a message, they are looking for an encounter.** If your message doesn’t bring an encounter with God, then the message is missing something!
    - iii. Every leader in the Old Testament had an encounter with God which changed their life, changed their spiritual dna in such a way that they were never the same. People follow men and women like that .
- 5. Repeat after me (quotes from the book).
- 6. God desires to use you. Not just the pastor. Not just the prayer teams. Everyone here. That is from the boldest and loudest of you to the quietest and shyest among us. He wants to use children, teens, adults and senior adults. He wants to use Floriene Collins just as much as He wants to use Kaylee Barbina. The only thing God requires of you is enough faith to take a risk and ask someone if you can minister to their need...and invite the Kingdom of God into their situation! Then ask them what they see, feel, etc. If nothing happens, ask if you can pray again. Pray in faith and in declaration. Don’t take the chicken way out...take the risk of asking God to do what He already has in heaven!
  - a. Impartation?