



DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT INTRODUCTION •

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MATTHEW 4:23-25; ISAIAH 61:1-4 • 9/11/2022

MAIN POINT

Jesus taught about and modeled His kingdom, and also described what its citizens should be like.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Do you remember the royal wedding or the birth of the royal baby in Great Britain? Why are people so intrigued by royalty?

What purpose does the British monarchy serve today? Are there any ways this is similar to the purpose of God's kingdom?

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount gives us a full report of the kingdom He brought with Him to earth, the kingdom that's growing in our presence and will be completed

when He returns. Packed into Jesus' sermon are His explanations of who God's people are, what they are to do with their lives, when His kingdom will be complete, where kingdom people live, why they do the things they do, and how to become a part of the kingdom.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 4:23.

Verse 23 sums up Jesus' ministry on earth. What were the three aspects of His ministry, and why was each important?

Jesus' ministry had three key components: teaching, proclaiming, and healing. He was always teaching the Twelve, often proclaiming the gospel to the people, and performing miraculous healing as a teaching and preaching tactic. By performing miracles, Jesus validated the authority He claimed in His teaching.

What message did Jesus preach?

In your own words, describe the kingdom of God. What are its characteristics and its purpose?

How important is it to understand the nature of God's kingdom for the Christian? Why?

The good news of the kingdom, the primary topic of Jesus' preaching, was that the long-awaited Messiah, the human ruler through whom God would establish His reign on earth, had come at last. This was the message proclaimed by John the Baptist (3:2), preached by Jesus (4:17), and emphasized by Matthew through his mention of Jesus' Davidic lineage, the account of His miraculous birth, and his record of the visit of the magi.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 4:24-25.

What do we learn about Jesus from the fact that the crowds gathered from so many different regions and followed Him?

Jesus' earliest followers hailed from Jewish and Gentile regions. Jerusalem and Judea were Jewish regions, Galilee had a mixture of Jews and Gentiles, and Decapolis was a group of predominantly Gentile cities. These geographical references and the diverse peoples entailed by them demonstrate Jesus' desire to serve, heal, teach, and save all the nations of the earth (28:18-20). He came as the world's Messiah.

What needs did the people in the crowd have? What did they learn about God's kingdom?

Central to the good news of God's kingdom is that God has come to us, and He cares for us, as demonstrated by Jesus meeting the physical needs of the people who approached Him. However, the kingdom of God is about much more than physical healing. As the crowds gathered around Jesus, He was preparing to share with them the reality of His kingdom and its implications for their lives.

Are you more quick to notice your physical or spiritual needs? Why?

Why was Jesus concerned with both the physical and the spiritual? What can we learn about our ministry to others through His example?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

In what ways does God’s kingdom seem present now for you? In what ways does it seem “not yet”?

What evidence of the kingdom of God do you see in your life and in the world around you?

How can we follow Jesus’ example of associating with the sick and the desperate? What might we have to sacrifice to do so?

PRAYER

Close in prayer, thanking God that His kingdom has come and that He desires for us to be a part of it. Pray that God will open our eyes to the realities of the kingdom in our midst and the ways we are to conduct ourselves as kingdom people. Spend time praying for any needs in your group members’ lives that became evident during your meeting.

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 4:23-25

A slight shift takes place, as Jesus took His new disciples and showed that following Him meant serving the needs of others (v. 23). Galilee was small but it had over two hundred villages, each with hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of people. This preaching tour throughout Galilee probably lasted several months. We may summarize Jesus' ministry with three words: teaching, proclaiming or preaching, and healing. These words help us understand Jesus' three-fold approach to ministry in Matthew's Gospel. While there is much overlap between preaching and teaching, there is also a distinction. Proclaiming is the banner flying atop the castle (seen far and wide), and teaching is the body of bricks and mortar that supports it (sought out by the followers). Teaching fills out the proclamation, explaining both its support and its implications. Furthermore, Jesus' healing ministry was subordinate to His preaching and teaching ministries. Throughout the Bible, the purpose of miracles is primarily to attest to the authority of the messenger and His message. The benefit to the person healed is secondary. Jesus' miracles validated His claim to be the Messiah, and they validated the message He preached.

Throughout the four Gospels, Jesus is shown frequenting the synagogues as a routine part of His teaching ministry (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 12:9; 13:54). He used the platform available in Jewish culture to teach the true meaning of God's Word. Because of the respect He enjoyed among the people (even Jewish leaders referred to Him as "Rabbi"), He often was given the place of the teacher. The word synagogue is derived from a combination of words meaning "to lead together," and it literally means "meeting place." Jesus' activity was ceaseless as He went from one village and synagogue to the next, conducting His primary ministry of preaching. The phrase the gospel of the kingdom is interchangeable with several other phrases used throughout the four Gospels (e.g., "the good news," "the gospel of Christ," "the gospel of God"). In keeping with his emphasis on the kingdom and the King, Matthew used this terminology. Jesus' message is good news because it focuses on the forgiveness and restoration of God as opposed to the "bad news" or impossibility of "law-keeping."

Verse 23 tells us that Jesus went throughout Galilee healing every disease and sickness among the people. There was no illness too difficult for Jesus to heal. The list in 4:24 illustrates the breadth of Jesus' healing ministry. He healed "lesser" or trivial diseases, but He also faced off with the incurables. None were beyond His healing touch. His miracles were verifiable, not vague. The king's sovereignty was complete. Jesus' healing ministry was moving toward its climax in Matthew 8:17

where Isaiah 53:4 is quoted, indicating the Messiah-King's healing is only an outward symbol of the inner healing based on forgiveness of sins.

The people heard the king's message (v. 25). They came not only from Galilee, but also from Jerusalem to the south and the Decapolis to the east. While we are unsure of precisely what Syria means in 4:24, any territory it might cover is likely included in the list of regions in 4:25. Matthew's point is that Jesus' teaching and miracles were so amazing that word spread fast and far. People came from hundreds of miles around to see Him. In particular, the mention of Galilee and the region across the Jordan remind the reader of Isaiah's prophecy (Isa. 9:1) quoted in Matthew 4:15. Although the multitudes came, the King kept leaving them to spend quality time with His disciples.