

The Already & Not Yet – The World That Is

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INTRODUCTION

Philippe Petit was a street performer whose big dream in life was to walk between New York's Twin Towers on a wire. On August 7th 1974 at 7:15am, Petit stepped off the edge of the North Tower onto a wire that was hanging 1,350 feet above the sidewalks of Manhattan. With nothing but a long balance stick in his hands, he mystified onlookers by kneeling, lying down, and even dancing on the wire for 45 minutes. For those 45 minutes Petit lived in a state of tension that few of us will ever experience in our lifetime.

To be a disciple of Jesus is to live in tension. We worship one God who exists in three persons. We serve Jesus who is both fully God and fully man. We live in a world that is both good and fallen. And the Kingdom of God that Jesus announced is both already here and is still yet to come. This means that when Jesus came into this world 2000 years ago, he ushered in a whole new era in human history. It was a time when something of heaven became real on earth. So that is why at Vineyard Columbus we pray that the sick would be healed, we pray that broken marriages would be restored, we pray that lives would be transformed. We pray this way because we believe that Jesus ushered in the kingdom of God. So we pray believing that God can do these things. But we also know that not everyone that we pray for will get healed. We know that not every relationship will be restored. And this is because while the kingdom of God was ushered in by Jesus 2000 years ago, it will not be fully established until Jesus returns. So while we can taste some of the realities of the kingdom of God right here and now, we will not experience it in its fullness until Jesus returns. This is what we mean by living in this tension between the already and the not yet.

Group question: What do you think about this concept that to be a disciple is to live in tension?

[Watch the short video] - *if showing the video during the small group meeting*

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

Read: Mark 9:14-27

Discuss:

1. Once sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, what happened to our relationship with God as a result?
2. How did we see this brokenness in Mark 9? How do we still see this brokenness today?
3. How did God decide to bring humanity back into relationship with Him? Why? How did this change the way we relate to God today versus how we related to Him before Jesus?
4. How did you see God's Kingdom breaking through in Mark 9? How do you see His Kingdom breaking through today? In your own life?
5. Does this mean that bad things still can't happen? Why?
6. What hope can we pull out of God's plan for restoration?
7. What is our role in helping to bring God's Kingdom to earth and aiding His will to be done on earth as it is heaven?
8. How have you personally experienced the tension of living in between the already and the not yet in your own life?

RESPONDING TO JESUS

Personal response: Are there moments in your life that you find yourself struggling to overcome your unbelief like the father we read about in Mark 9? Why? Take 5 minutes each day to pray with Jesus to help you overcome your unbelief.

Group response: Please take 15 minutes to pray for one another especially about living in tension.

Group prayer: God, we believe that you want to use each one of us to extend your Kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. So as we embark on this sermon series on the Gospel of God, empower us to live in such a way that this truth is reflected in every area of our lives.