

## **The Future Kingdom**

Written by Charles A. Montgomery, Jr.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The good news of Jesus, the good news of the kingdom is experienced in part now, but we will experience it in fullness when Christ returns. All the longings that we have had will be fulfilled. Restored relationship with God, restored relationship with each other, restored relationship with us, and restored relationship with the world. Have you ever wondered what the Future Kingdom would look like? Better yet, have you ever wondered when the Future Kingdom would come? You are not alone! Scripture records the disciples wondering the same thing. Our lesson today focuses on The Master's response. Moreover, His response gives us valuable insight into what we, as Christians, are to do as we actively anticipate the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God in all of its fullness.

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

**Group question (s):** What specific things in this series have motivated you to share the Gospel? Why do you think we need such motivation?

### **ENCOUNTERING THE WORD**

**Read:** Matthew 24: 3 – 14: **3** As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" **4** Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. **5** For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. **6** You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. **7** Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. **8** All these are the beginning of birth pains. **9** "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. **10** At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, **11** and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. **12** Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, **13** but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. **14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

**Discuss:**

**In inductive bible study, we use three main types of questions, observation, interpretation and application. In observation, we are looking at the words on the page**

and pulling out the details from the text so that we can begin to understand the author's original intent (Sometimes these questions seem simplistic, but this step is important understanding the meaning of the text.) Next, we move to interpretation. There aren't any hard and fast answers to these questions. This is where we get to dig in with the Body of Christ and consider the observations we've made and ask the Holy Spirit to give us understanding. Finally, we have application questions, where we build a bridge between the world of the bible and our world today and try to press out what the text is telling us or asking of us personally. The questions are labeled below as to what type they are.

### Inductive Study Questions

- Following Jesus' statement about the temple's destruction, the disciples ask two questions (v. 3). Look through chapter 24; briefly noting ways that Jesus answers these questions. (Observation)
- Throughout history people have set dates for Christ's return and have been mistaken. What events might deceive the disciples into thinking the end is at hand (vv. 4-8)? (Interpretation)
- Before the end comes, what dangers will believers face, and how are we to handle them (vv. 9-14)? (Application)
- What are the main points of this chapter? (Observation)
  - The destruction of the temple foretold - [Mt 24:1-3](#)
  - The sign when things would soon occur - [Mt 24:4-28](#)
  - The tribulation and events immediately after - [Mt 24:29-35](#)
  - The need to be prepared and productive - [Mt 24:36-51](#)
- What questions were prompted by Jesus' prediction? (3) (Observation)
  - "When will these things be? What will be the sign...?"
- What did Jesus say would not be the sign? (4-13) (Interpretation)
  - False Christ's, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, persecution, lawlessness
- What would happen before the "end" would come? (14) (Application)
  - The gospel preached in all the world (cf. [Mk 16:15](#); [Ro 10:16-18](#); [Co 1:23](#))

## RESPONDING TO JESUS

Personal response(s):

1. In this small group series, how has your confidence increased in your ability to share the Gospel with others? Consider some of the weekly challenges that have been put forth in this series. Was some more challenging than others for you? Why or why not? Discuss.
2. Do you believe people in this present age are fascinated with the eschaton (end times)? After reading Matthew 24, how would you personally respond to someone that had questions about how/when the end occurs? What current events happening in the world suggest that the end may be near? Does this give you a sense of fear, security, or both? Discuss.
3. What does Kingdom restoration look like to you? Describe in your own words.
4. What are some specific ways that you can serve as a 'coming attraction' of the Kingdom of God? How can these be manifested in your sphere of influence: your home, to your neighbors, job, school, etc? Review Pastor's Kerry Davis and Insoo Kim's messages for insight on how to do this.

**Group response(s):**

1. Consider going through George Ladd's Book *The Gospel of the Kingdom* and gleaning some practical ways to encourage one another to spread the Gospel of God even beyond your involvement in this series. Make a covenant to do so and refer to it regularly to keep each other motivated to do so.

**Group prayer:**

Share with one another any areas of brokenness that capture your attention as you observe world events, your own relationships, or even within yourselves. Pray with one another for God's Kingdom to come and God's will to be done in those areas as it is in heaven on high.

## **[Text from video]**

One of my favorite pastimes is to go out to the movies with my wife, who is the love of my life. We are always excited to see the movie, but we are equally excited to get there early to watch the previews that advertise the coming attractions.

Designed to entice, the preview focuses on the 'hot clips' of the movie --such as the chase scenes; love scenes; fight scenes, or even scenes with special affects....the point of the preview is to whet our appetites for the upcoming attraction. Someday another big show is coming to town. It's called the Kingdom of God.

But until then, God has left previews in the world. We are His hot clips. God has left his church here to provide clips of the major production that is to come. Since we are God's clips, we want to equip everyone here at Vineyard Columbus with the knowledge of how to spread the Gospel, so that we can all help to promote the Kingdom of God.

Well, what do we mean when we say the Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom of God, in essence is the 'sovereign rule of God', or as our Senior Pastor teaches us----what the world would look like if Jesus were in charge. Can you imagine a world like that? A world that demonstrates the comprehensive rule of God over EVERY area of our lives?

We live in a world today where it seems like all we hear about are wars, and rumors of wars, starving children, High School Shootings, or another friend, family member stricken with sickness.

There are floods, earthquakes, famines, terrorists, Innocent children being shot, greed, cruelty, racism, sexism, and political pandering everywhere we turn.

But in a world where Jesus rules:

War is replaced by peace; poverty is fulfilled by plenty; sickness gives way to healing; order disorder; and racism, sexism classism and every other "ism" are abolished by authentic oneness in community.

I mean can you imagine a world where Jesus rules?

In a world where Jesus rules: captives are set free, wages of our sin are redeemed, the sting of death is no more and the grave is swallowed up in victory

Who wouldn't want to live in a world like that!

Who would not want to live in a Kingdom like that? One that is under the sovereign, comprehensive rule, of almighty God? That excites me! And it should excite you too!

Perhaps it was akin to the excitement that was shared by the disciples over in Matthew 24, when the scripture records them privately asking the Master: What will be the sign of your coming, and of the close of the age?

The text suggests that they had an expectation of the manifestation of the coming of the Kingdom of God. Earlier in this Small Group Series, Pastor's Insoo Kim and Kerry Davis shared with us that the Kingdom has come to us now in part..... and how we now can experience some of its power, get a glimpse of its life, and participate in its blessings

But the Pastor's went on to remind us that a Future Kingdom is coming—a Kingdom where we experience the fullness of God's kingdom in all of its glory. It is this future kingdom I believe that the disciples are inquiring about in Matthew 24 when they ask Jesus, in so many words:

When will your Kingdom come?

The anatomy of Jesus' answer is explored in this lesson, but for our purposes here permit me to amplify what Jesus says in verse 14. He says I will not come until the good news of the Kingdom is proclaimed in all the world, as a testimony to all nations.

In other words, Christ says the Future Kingdom of God will come -- after the people of God - - share the Gospel of God-- to all the nations.

George Ladd in his book, *The Gospel of The Kingdom*, Suggests that in that one verse, verse 14—there are three things tucked away that we ought to take away as we share the Gospel with others

First, we ought to be

1. Confident in the Message of the Gospel---and unashamedly declare it, for it is the power to everyone that believes to the Jew as well as the Gentile.

Second, as Christians we are:

2. Commissioned to Share the Gospel----- which by the way is the reason we have done the Gospel challenges each week, because its not enough to just know the Gospel, but Christ commands us to share it with everyone -- starting within our own sphere of influence, our neighbors, our co-workers, even unto the utter most parts of the earth.

And finally we should:

3. Keep remembering our Motive for the Gospel----

Why is this important?

Because make no mistake about it, there is another team on the field. Satan wants to stop, and stymie, and suppress us from spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

Evil is a reality in this world. In fact the scriptures emphasize the evil character of the last days. But scripture also tells us in the last days, God declares that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. In other words God has spoken for the last days and said that the Holy Spirit will give us power to proclaim the Gospel of God, then, he says, the end shall come.

Friends, spreading God's message must be our mission " even in this Evil Age." We are to do this until Jesus Christ returns in all of His glory to accomplish the last and greatest Victory. A victory where death is conquered, evil is extinguished, sin is broken, and Satan is defeated and bound

This is our motivation--- To see Jesus appear with all authority in heaven and in earth.

There's a song that we used to sing in my church growing up, that said:

**Oh, I want to see Him, look upon His face, There to sing forever of His saving grace; On the streets of glory let me lift my voice, Cares all past, home at last, ever to rejoice.**

The fact that he is coming again to usher in His Kingdom my friends is a reason to rejoice! In fact it should be motivation for all of us --to continue even beyond this series to show the world "clips of the coming attraction."