

The Kingdom of God Vs. Kingdom of Heaven

The term 'kingdom of God' and 'kingdom of Heaven' are used interchangeably in the gospels. They are not different kingdoms. Kingdom of Heaven is used 32 times and only in the book of Matthew. Kingdom of God is used 70 times in the New Testament; 5 times in the book of Matthew. Whenever Mark and Luke record the same incident as Matthew, they use the term kingdom of God where Matthew used the term kingdom of Heaven.

The kingdom of God is not physical but spiritual (Luke 17:21). Both John and Jesus said that the kingdom of God was close (Matthew 3:2, Mark 1:15). Yet when Jesus preached the sermon on the mount, taught his disciples or any of the parables he told; they were not to people who were part of the kingdom of God. To prove this Jesus said that the kingdom of God is not far from you and that some would not die until they saw it (Mark 9:1). Jesus tells us (John 14:2) 'I go to prepare a place for you'. Satan has many ways of deceiving us, but two obvious ones are changing the Word of God and changing the meaning of words. Merriam Webster 1828 dictionary defines 'place' as 'a way of admission, or transit'. Jesus then says he is the way (John 14:6). David says he will praise Gods' word (Psalms 56:10), hope in his word (Psalms 119:81) and that His word is settled forever in Heaven (Psalms 119:89). The book of John begins by saying 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God' (John 1:1). The first chapter of John states that Jesus is that "Word". Jesus says that if He with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you' (Luke 11:20). The kingdom of God includes all those who have had righteousness imputed unto them (Romans 4:22)(Luke 13:28, Matthew 8:11). Righteousness defined by Noah Webster 1828 dictionary is 'the cause of our justification', which is Jesus Christ. Jesus says to seek a righteousness that only comes from God (Matthew 6:33). Paul says that Jesus has been made our wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30,31).

In the sermon on the mount when Jesus lists all these things that we have to be better than, He is not meaning that we are to strive to live blamelessly, but that whatever we do will never be good enough: only His righteousness will suffice (Matthew 6:33). The kingdom of God was "among them" but could not remain until Jesus returned to the Father and the Holy Spirit returned to be upon each believer (John 16:7). The sermon on the mount is found in Matthew 5-7 and Luke 6. Jesus was with his disciples but spoke to everyone (Matthew 7:28-29, Luke 6:27 & Luke 7:1). Jesus makes some really tough claims to live by, which if taken by themselves would give you a twisted theology. Both in Matthew and in Luke he concludes those claims by putting them in perspective. In all things, consider, if it was you who presented the request to someone you love, would you expect it to be complied with, and if so; do the same, not only to those you love but to your enemies also (Matthew 7:12 & Luke 6:31). When Jesus says to be perfect as your Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48), it means whole-hearted with God, not without sin because that would be an impossible request. Jesus said that some of them would not die until they saw the kingdom of God come with power (Mark 9:1). Paul says that the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power (1 Corinthians 4:20).

Jesus said that (Matthew 7:21) 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven'. He says that (Matthew 7:22-23) '22Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity'. Therefore Jesus is saying that by imitating Jesus we can look like we are a part of the kingdom of God but that he never knew us.

The kingdom of God is not what we do but what the Holy Spirit does in us (1 Corinthians 4:20). If you plant a fruit tree in poor soil with minimal water, it will never produce fruit. On the other hand if the tree is planted in optimum soil conditions that has adequate moisture and appropriate pruning, the tree will have an abundance of fruit. If we study Gods' word (2 Timothy 2:15) and get to know him, as the Holy Spirit works (Philippians 2:13) within us, we will display the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). This

fruit is not the actions we do like visiting the sick or feeding the poor or other social justice programs: those are just our reasonable service (Romans 12:1). Each tree will produce the variety of fruit (Luke 6:43-44) it was designed to produce, just as God has created each of us differently (1 Corinthians 4:7).

The kingdom of God is not about living to a certain set of standards and making disciples of others to do the same. It is about believing (Acts 8:37) that Jesus, the son of God, shed his blood for your sins by being crucified, dying and then overcoming death by arising from the dead and then personally accepting that payment on your behalf (Ephesians 3:17). You will then receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38) who will the work within you (Philippians 2:13) to produce much fruit (Ephesians 5:9). This gift will then teach us (1 John 2:27) as we study His Word (Hosea 6:6). We become his disciples (John 8:31) if we study his Word (2 Timothy 2:15) and in obedience apply it to our lives (John 14:15, 15:10). We are then to share this good news with all the world (Matthew 28:18-20).

²¹Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:21)

²And saying, Repent ye:
for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matthew 3:2)

¹⁵And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand:
repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:15)

¹And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. (Mark 9:1)

²In my Father's house are many mansions:
if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (John 14:2)

⁶Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life:
no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

¹⁰In God will I praise his word:
in the LORD will I praise his word. (Psalms 56:10)

⁸¹My soul fainteth for thy salvation:
but I hope in thy word. (Psalms 119:81)

⁸⁹For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. (Psalms 119:89)

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

²⁰But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. (Luke 11:20)

²²And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. (Romans 4:22)

²⁸There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. (Luke 13:28)

¹¹And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 8:11)

³³But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:33)

³⁰But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

³¹That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:30,31)

⁷Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away:

for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
(John 16:7)

¹And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain:

and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

²And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, (Matthew 5:1-2)

²⁸And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

²⁹For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.
(Matthew 7:28-29)

²⁷But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, (Luke 6:27)

¹Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. (Luke 7:1)

¹²Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:
for this is the law and the prophets. (Matthew 7:12)

³¹And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. (Luke 6:31)

⁴⁸Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)

²⁰For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. (1 Corinthians 4:20)

²¹Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 7:21)

²²Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

²³And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:
depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:22-23)

¹⁵Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

¹³For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13)

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.(Galatians 5:22-23)

¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1)

⁴³For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

⁴⁴For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. (Luke 6:43-44)

⁷For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? (1 Corinthians 4:7)

³⁷And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Acts 8:37)

¹⁷That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, (Ephesians 3:17)

³⁸Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:38)

⁷(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) (Ephesians 5:9)

²⁷But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you:

but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. (1 John 2:27)

⁶For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (Hosea 6:6)

³¹Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; (John 8:31)

¹⁵If ye love me, keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

¹⁰If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. (John 15:10)

¹⁸And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:

and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)