

Navigating the Almost

Living in Between the Now and Not Yet
Living into the Kingdom Series - part 6
Heb 2:8-9; 1 Jn 3:2; Mt 6:9-13

Introduction

- **If God is the Ruler of the Universe, why are things so screwed up here on earth?**
 - Heb 2:7b-8 - (speaking of Jesus, the author writes...) "...You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, ⁸ putting everything in subjection under his feet...he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him."

Everything is NOT YET How God Wants It

- **Authority vs. Control** - God has all authority, that is not a question. Then why are things still messed up? Final say vs. utilizing it to control situation - dysfunction to continue **until the appointed time.**
 - **His heart is broken too - he's in the boat with us.**
- **Recap of Series**
 - We are talking about what it means that we are part of the Kingdom of God, here on earth.
 - What does it mean that we are born again and citizens of heaven, today?
 - What did Jesus change in the world when He came the first time?
 - What should the Christian experience look like on earth if we are ambassadors for the Kingdom of God?
 - **Parable Purpose** - Jesus' stories about a very different reality He started. It's all kinda weird.
- **How the Message is going to go - 2 parts**
 - 1. We'll talk about why things are so complicated**

2. Dig into One Example of an area that is very frustrating and it impacts all of us - Praying for Healing.

Lesson

- **We live in a complicated World**
 - **The Kingdom Above (Heaven)** - things are all perfect.
 - **The Kingdom Below (earth)** - things are broken.
 - **The Kingdom within us (Humans with God)** - things are complicated
 - **The Bible says that WE are,** His Kingdom on Earth, citizens of Heaven, mobile territory, ambassadors...
 - **But, we are broken and live in a broken world**
 - **This is what I want to focus on with our time...**
- **The Complexity of the Lord's Prayer: Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven** - Mt 6:9-13 - *"Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread, ¹²and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (or The Evil One - some manuscripts add "For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.")*
 - **Recognizing the complications in that prayer**
 - Our Father's in Heaven - ultimate help from King of Creation
 - His Kingdom is pressing in but not fully here
 - Currently we still are in lack and need stuff (daily bread)
 - We still sin (debts) and others make our lives harder (debtors).
 - And we are still in danger of The Evil One and temptation - because he's still powerful and effective to a degree.
 - But all the while it's all God's: this world, the power and glory.
 - **Jesus is Our Great Example of present heaven in a broken world** - a human life fully surrendered to the Father and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

- **Human Example** - HOWEVER...
- **Jesus was different than us** - in a variety of ways, but one key way. He was sinless.
 - **The Power of the Virgin Birth** - Jesus came into humanity but came as a pure environment (His Father didn't impart original sin).
 - **But Even Perfect, much was left undone by Jesus.**
- **Believers: Perfect Kingdom Present in Brokenness** - We aren't pure conduits of the Kingdom
 - **We are a conflicted Kingdom Reality:** Our Personal Realities are Complicated
 - **Paul's Struggles and Conflicts** - Ro 7
 - **We are a work in progress** = spotty Kingdom reality through us. MORE on this next week.
- **With Each New Kingdom Reality, there are new rules that apply** - with change comes confusion and resistance.
 - **New Wine & New Garments** - Jesus didn't/doesn't fit in old paradigms (primarily old Jewish context) -
 - **Lk 5:36-39** - *"He also told them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. ³⁸ But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹ And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good.'"*
 - **Primarily Old Jewish Context** - New Covenant...
 - **Application for us:** With each new Kingdom Reality, new rules apply and a new reality dawns.
 - **Your Salvation brought a new Kingdom Reality**

- **Jesus Introduced the Kingdom Reality Shift to His Followers** – Live in it.
 - **Using Kingdom Resources Here**
 - **Practical Outworking** - Jesus cast out demons, did miracles, and healed people (among other things).
 - **So, why doesn't it work as smooth as Jesus' highlight reel in the Bible?**
- **The Mystery of Healing, Sickness and Death**
 - **IF This...Then Why That?** - why don't we see automatic healing with every prayer we make in the name of Jesus?
 - **Cessationist View** - Some say it's because God doesn't do miracles any more
 - **All of Christianity is supernatural**
 - **Hyper Charismatic View** – Some say that its because the church has failed to live up to its calling and do what God commanded. Lack of faith and abilities.
 - **My View** – We live in a complicated time = Kingdom of Now but Not Yet.
 - **Death of Believers = No Full Kingdom**
 - **Complex Kingdom Reality = MORE power and authority** - BUT we need to be mature enough to pray confidently and boldly WITH humility, submitting it to the final say of the Father.
 - **A Command to Set the Captives Free** - we are kingdom ambassadors and the body of Christ. What would Jesus do in the situation? Let's do that.
 - **Not all sickness & suffering is evil.** Some of it's gotta go, but some of it is purposeful.
 - What Does God think is the proper Quality of life here?
 - **God's Glory Always Determines What's Best** – I believe in a theology of Suffering and a Theology of Healing – the determination is what's best from God's standpoint. It's about

Him, it's about His glory. We are part players in this story that is centrally fixed on Him. What glorifies Him the most?

- **So, How Do We Pray and Live into our Kingdom Reality More?** – I'll give you **5 Principles** to a more powerful prayer and kingdom life.
 - **1.) It begins with Our Identity** (Mindset)
 - **Who He Is** - He is able, He is loving and generous.
 - **Who We Are** - We are children of God with access to our Father and His Kingdom.
 - **Prayer is Relational** - It's about operating from the overflow of a relationship with God, not manipulating God.
 - **The Matter of Faith**
 - **The Fig Tree & Faith** (Mt 21 & Mk 11) - If you have faith and don't doubt...but believes what he says will come to pass - it will be done for him. Believe you have received it.
 - **Faith as Confidence in Him.**
 - **The Matter of Being Worthy - It's Not You, It's HIM** - but it goes through you.
 - **It's not about being good enough for God to use** - Peter said, after healing the paralyzed guy at the temple, (Acts 3:12, 16) *“Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? ... his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.”*
 - **It's About Kingdom Living** - setting the captives free.
 - **2.) Conduit & Storehouse** - some stuff's in our pocket, some needs to be downloaded.

- **If it's within our authority and wheelhouse - we command and take action directly.** (you give them something to eat)
- **If it's outside of our authority and wheelhouse - we request from our Heavenly Father** (ask in my name) - John 16:23-24
 - **How Jesus Did It** - again Jesus is different in a few critical ways, but He still gave us an example.
 - **He commanded spirits and sickness and natural things** - by His authority.
 - **He requested from the Father things outside of His scope** -
- **3.) Anointing, Gifting & Unity**
 - **Anointing and Gifting** - Extra easy and powerful.
 - **Unity** - We need each other. Inside BW and outside.
 - **The Beauty of Medicine** - humans helping humans, is a good thing.
- **4.) Authority, Power & Process**
 - **Authority and Power** - badge vs. gun for shootout. How to use power? Go thru process.
 - **Process** - example of disciples and epileptic possessed boy.
 - **Already Had Full Authority** - Mt 10:1 - *"And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction."*
 - **Couldn't Get the Demon Out: Faith Issue** - Mt 17:19 - *"Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast it out?' 20 He said to them, 'Because of your little faith.'"*
 - **Couldn't Get the Demon Out: Prayer and Fasting Issue** - Mk 9

- **Parable of the Persistent Widow** - Lk 18:1-8 - *"And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. ² He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. ³ And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' ⁴ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.' " ⁶ And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? ⁸ Will he delay long over them? ⁸ I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"*

- **Not a Formula (not long words of Pharisees)** - Mt 6:7-13
- Father knows your needs before you ask them.

- **5.) The Matrix of Prayer & Healing** - It's not random but multi-layered. Let me give you **3 examples**:
 - **1.) Process** - we already mentioned.
 - **2.) God's Will** - What does God want?
 - Paul's **thorn** in the flesh mystery
 - Healing Isn't Easy and Automatic and it wasn't in the Bible Either
 - **Sick believers in the bible** - Timothy, Trophimus
 - **3.) Timing** - Why paralyzed guy healed that day?
 - **4.) What's Being Healed?** (layers? Diagnosis correct?)
- **A Word on Temporary Healing** - no blame
 - **A Billiard Ball on a Tilted Shelf** (root cause remains) - drinking and a ruined liver.
 - **Temporary relief of a necessary process**

- **Fact: All Healing is Temporary in this life**
 - Kingdom NOW = rescue, kingdom to COME = deliverance.
 - **Our view of sickness and healing comes from the limited perspective:** the Only One we know
 - Paul called it light and momentary affliction.
- **How to pray healing for someone**

Conclusion

- **We Need to Live Into our Kingdom Reality**
 - **A frustrating process doesn't mean quitting or avoiding, it means growing and learning.**
- **Salvation Invitation** - To become alive for the first time and walk with God through this complicated world.
 - **Baptismal Open**
- **Turn in Notecards**