

The Good News of the Kingdom of God

'New Beginning Studies' #1 of 4 (UPDATED 9-20-17)

Q: What does “*the Kingdom of God*” mean to you? How has the good news of the Kingdom of God affected the way you think and/or the way you live? Why is the Kingdom of God “good news”?

Read Matt. 9:35

*“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the **good news of the kingdom** and **healing every disease and sickness.**”* (NIV)

The words “*good news*” are one word in the original Greek—“*euangelion*”.

- According to Holman Treasury, “euangelion” was originally used to describe the “good news” of a military victory.

The word Jesus used when He said “*kingdom*”, was the Greek word “*basileia*”.

- It means “*region or country governed by a King*”.
- **The Kingdom of God is a real kingdom with a real King!**

Q: Why would Jesus use this military word to describe the Kingdom of God?

- Because the Kingdom of God is coming to earth as an invasion... similar to Allied troops landing at Normandy on D-Day.
- [Matt. 6:9-10](#) “*This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’*” (NIV)
- God’s Kingdom is a real Kingdom that has been coming to earth, and advancing since the day the King – Jesus – arrived!

Q: Why did Jesus heal “*every disease and sickness*” when He was telling people about the Kingdom?

- He was demonstrating God’s power to set things right, which is what the Kingdom of God is all about, and His power over the Dominion of Darkness.

Q: What is the Dominion of Darkness?

Read Col. 1:12-14

*“... giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in **the kingdom of light**. ¹³ For he has rescued us from **the dominion of darkness** and brought us into **the kingdom of the Son he loves**, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”* (NIV)

Paul mentions two kingdoms here that are in opposition to each other.

- The “*kingdom of light*” ([vs. 12](#)) or the “*kingdom of the Son*” ([vs. 13](#)),
 - These are other names for the “Kingdom of God”.
 - The Gospel of Matthew sometimes calls it the “Kingdom of Heaven” ([Matt. 19:23-24](#)), but they are all the same Kingdom.
- The “*dominion of darkness*”. ([vs. 13](#))

The “*Dominion of Darkness*” is the opposite of the “*Kingdom of Light*”.

- The Dominion of Darkness dominates people, and keeps them in the dark so they can’t see what is really going on.
- In the light, you can see what is really happening; but in the dark, you’re clueless!

How did the Dominion of Darkness get control of the Earth?

Read Rom. 5:12

“Therefore, just **as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—**” (NIV)

Q: Who is the “one man” Paul is talking about?

- Paul is talking about Adam, the first man God created.
- If you’re not familiar with the story, you may want to go back and read the first 3 chapters of Genesis to see how it all began.

Q: What is sin?

- The Hebrew and Greek words translated as “sin”, throughout the Bible, revolve around two major concepts.
 - **Transgression**, which means “to step across” or “to go beyond a set boundary or limit”.
 - **Missing the mark**, like shooting at a target and missing.

Q: How did sin and death enter the world through Adam?

- In the beginning, God created a much different world than the one we live in now.
 - What God originally created was perfect and good ([Gen. 1:31](#)).
 - There was no death in original creation; in fact, neither man nor animals killed for food ([Gen. 1:29-30](#)).
 - God walked with man in the Garden ([Gen. 3:8](#)) because there was nothing to separate God and man.
 - **It was literally Heaven on Earth!**
- God created man to rule over His creation ([Gen. 1:26-31](#)) and warned Adam death would enter the world if he sinned by eating fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil ([Gen. 2:16-17](#)).
 - When Adam and Eve sinned by eating the fruit ([Gen 3:6-7](#)), sin entered the world and began taking people captive ([John 8:34](#)).
 - Sin separated Adam and Eve from God, and ended what God originally created – Heaven *ON* Earth – and left us with Heaven *AND* Earth with a wall of sin separating us from God.
 - When the source of light and life was separated from the earth, the dominion of darkness gained control of the earth... and mankind has been held captive by darkness ever since.
- God promised Adam he would die **WHEN** he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ([Gen. 2:16-17](#)), but Adam lived to be 930 years old ([Gen. 5:5](#)). How can we explain this?
 - **Physical death** happens when the soul or spirit of a person is separated from their body.
 - **Spiritual death** happens when a person is separated from God, who is the source of life.
 - Adam died *spiritually* the moment he disobeyed God by eating the fruit, and then died *physically* when he was 930 years old.
- Adam changed the earth we were created to live in by bringing sin and death (both spiritual and physical) here, and letting the Dominion of Darkness take over.
- Living under the Dominion of Darkness, we all eventually sin and find ourselves separated from God (spiritually dead) ([Romans 3:23](#)).
 - Satan’s plan is to keep you in the dark, so he can have power over you!

God is a good creator; He never gave up on what He created! Right from the beginning, He had a plan to restore His creation.

Read Gen. 3:14-15

*“So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; **he will crush your head**, and you will strike his heel.” (NIV)*

Q: The serpent was Satan, who tricked Eve and brought out the worst in Adam. But who is the offspring that will crush Satan’s head?

- Jesus! ([Romans 16:20](#); [1John 3:8](#))
- God didn’t fully explain His plan, (He seldom does), but He always had a plan to fix His broken and vandalized creation.

Read Exodus 19:5-6

*“Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations **you will be my treasured possession**. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶ **you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” (NIV)*

Q: God said this to the Israelites 3 months after He brought them out of slavery in Egypt ([Ex. 19:1](#)). God revealed a little more of His plan to bring Heaven back to Earth. Can you see what He had in mind?

- God’s plan includes a Kingdom—A Kingdom of priests and a holy nation!

Read Luke 1:31-33

*“You will conceive and give birth to a son, and **you are to call him Jesus**. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and **he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.**” (NIV)*

Q: When did the Kingdom of God come to earth?

- When Jesus was born ([Matt. 2:2](#)).
- When God sent His King to the earth, the Kingdom came with Him!

Read Luke 17:20-21

*Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “**The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed,** ²¹ **nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.**” (NIV)*

Q: Why couldn’t the Pharisees see the Kingdom of God?

- Jesus said it was in their midst, which means it was (and still is) **hidden in plain sight**.

When John the Baptist ([Matt. 3:1-2](#)), Jesus ([Luke 4:43](#)), and the apostles ([Matt. 10:5-7](#)) all told the people that the Kingdom of God had come near, they knew it was truly Good News... and they wanted in!

- They wanted to see God's side win, and for the Dominion of Darkness to be defeated.
- They wanted to see Heaven come to Earth, and they wanted to help God restore His broken and vandalized creation by becoming members of His Kingdom and serving Him.

How was the Dominion of Darkness Defeated?

Read Col. 2:15

*"And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, **triumphing over them by the cross.**" (NIV)*

Q: What are the powers and authorities Paul is talking about here?

- The Dominion of Darkness ([Eph. 6:12](#))
- Jesus, the King, defeated the Dominion of Darkness by dying a sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus came to our world and became one of us, so He could pay the debt for sin and buy back everyone who had been sold as a slave to sin ([Isaiah. 50:1](#); [Rom. 7:14](#); [John 1:1-5](#); [Phil. 2:5-11](#); [Isaiah. 53](#); [Heb. 9:26-28](#); [2Cor.5:21](#); [Col. 1:19-20](#); [1Peter 2:24](#)).

Read Acts 17:30-31

*"In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. **He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.**" (NIV)*

Q: How do we know that the Good News is true?

- God raised Jesus from the dead, and there were over 500 eye witnesses to it ([1Cor. 15:5-8](#))!
- Check out the Minimal Facts of the Resurrection here: <http://pleaseconvinceme.com/2013/the-minimal-facts-of-the-resurrection/>)

Read 1Cor. 15:20-26

*"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, **the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.** ²¹ For since death came through a man, **the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.** ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ **But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.** ²⁴ Then **the end will come**, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death." (NIV)*

Q: What else will happen because of Jesus' resurrection?

- Jesus is just the first to be resurrected—the “firstfruits”.
- God plans on resurrecting everyone ([John 5:28-29](#)) when Jesus returns!

Q: Jesus ascended into Heaven to sit at God's right hand after His resurrection; but one day He will return ([Acts 1:9-11](#); [1Thess. 4:13-17](#)). What will happen then?

- When Jesus returns, those who belong to Him (those who are in His Kingdom) will be resurrected just like He was!
- Then the Kingdom will be handed over to God the Father, and death will be destroyed!

[Read 2Pet. 3:10-13](#)

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. ¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.” (NIV)

Q: The Good News of the Kingdom of God is a story that hasn't ended yet. According to Peter, how is the Good News of God's Kingdom going to one day end?

- With “a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells”.

Q: Now that you've heard the Good News of the Kingdom, how will you answer Peter's question: “**Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?**”

What about you?

Q: Do you want God's side to win?

Q: Do you want to see Heaven come to Earth?

Q: Do you want to help God restore His broken and vandalized creation?

[Read Matt. 12:30](#)

“Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” (NIV)

Q: Jesus says there are only two possibilities: You are either with Him and helping Him, or you are against Him. Which side are you on?

Q: Would you like to be on His side... and help Him? If yes, then let's look at what it means to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.