

January 15, 2023

## **The Story of Reality: JESUS (Week 2) Face to Face with THE KING**

Christianity is about something that actually happened. God sent his son Jesus in REALITY to set us free from the dominion of darkness and bring us into his Kingdom. This is the Gospel—The Story of Reality. The Messiah, King Jesus has done this! He did this by his victorious life, death, burial, and resurrection!

The story is almost complete but not yet. Here's how it will be completed in the future.

*Revelation 11:15 (NIV) The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever."*

Has the kingdom of the world become the Kingdom of the Messiah, King Jesus yet? Not yet, not the entire world, by any stretch. But according to the story this isn't surprising. This will not be complete until his second coming, this time in glory, nothing hidden, nothing undeniable, and everything outside of his kingdom will be judged!

Followers of Jesus should not be surprised that the coming of his kingdom has not yet been fully fulfilled. After all, we are still to pray this prayer as taught by Jesus:

*Matthew 6:10 (NIV) "...your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..."*

The next time it seems like God isn't answering your prayer fast enough, remind yourself, "***This isn't heaven yet!***" and keep praying "*your kingdom come, your will be done!*"

The Kingdom's full fulfillment is still in the future, BUT...

### **I. Jesus' Kingdom is ALREADY HERE NOW**

*Matthew 5:3 (NIV) "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

The kingdom of heaven as Jesus taught is not entirely about the future, His reign and rule came when he came. He did not just say so, he brought it.

*Matthew 4:23 (NIV) Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, **proclaiming the good news of the kingdom**, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.*

He did not just say the Kingdom is here, he brought it. The Messiah, King Jesus **demonstrated** his unearthly authority and heavenly kingdom power with healing miracles and more.

*Matthew 12:28 (NIV) But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then **the kingdom of God has come upon you**.*

- The kingdom came because the King came.
- The kingdom **was established** by what the King did by his life and death and resurrection.
- The kingdom **remained** after his departure because he left his authority and presence, by his Spirit, the Holy Spirit, filling the new temple, which is his body, the church!

You need to understand that the Temple was the place where heaven and earth meet and converge. It's a deposit of what is to come. First comes the Tabernacle, then the Temple, then Jesus' body tabernacling with us, then when he departed bodily, he tabernacled IN US, by giving us His Spirit, the Holy Spirit. We followers of Jesus are God's Temple on earth. Our bodies are temples of the Spirit individually. And any assembly in the Name of Jesus is his body, the church. Church is not a location, or a building, but the purposeful assembly gathered in the name of Jesus. The gathered church is a powerful place where heaven and earth meet and converge! We meet to be equipped to carry Christ's mission. We are His Domain and His Kingdom! We are now currently in the the Bible calls "last days" of the Story of Reality before it comes to the "and they lived happily ever after" part that we is the End, but really the eternal New Beginning.

**Let's review so far:** The Kingdom of Heaven is "already" here, but "not yet" fulfilled because there are still two kingdoms in the World (the bad one and the good one).

## II. It's **MYSTERIOUS**

*Luke 17:20-21 (NIV) ... "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, <sup>21</sup> nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because **the kingdom of God is in your midst**."*

The Jews never expected two comings of their Messiah King. The King himself revealed these details.

**Ancient Jews** are not the only ones who misunderstand what the Messiah's kingdom was all about. Vast numbers of **American believers** also misunderstand what the "*Kingdom of Heaven*" is all about.

**Jesus' message about the kingdom** was more than a message about getting into the "kingdom of heaven"; it's about the "kingdom of heaven" getting into us—our children, marriages, and families, as citizens of his kingdom now.

At this stage of the story now, the kingdom is still hidden, spiritual, and mysterious—but it is real, and something we can learn to discern and experience.

### III. It's a GIFT

*Luke 12:32 (NIV)* "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom."

It's a gift. It's a gift he wants you to want. He does not give it to people who do not want it. Do you want Jesus to be your King?

**A problem with too many Christians is that once they have found the King, they act like they "have it" and stop "seeking the kingdom".** We must never stop seeking his kingdom and his righteousness.

*Matthew 6:33 (NIV)* *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

**God wants to be wanted. Always.** He wants us to seek him. Always. Too many Christians want God "half-heartedly".

Half-hearted seeking misses out on experiencing the reality of Kingdom authority, Kingdom blessing, and Kingdom power.

*Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV)* *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

It's a gift, but for now, it is also something else.

### IV. It's AT WAR

*Matthew 12:28-29 (NIV)* *But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. <sup>(29)</sup> "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong*

*man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house.*

The Pharisees thought they had Jesus' power figured out. They accused Jesus of doing miracles and casting out demons by an EVIL power.

Jesus states the truth. The opposite is taking place. **This is not proof of cooperation with evil but proof of war with evil.**

**There is a war. Choose sides carefully.**

*1 John 4:4 (NIV) You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*

**It is war, but darkness has no real power over light.**

## **V. It requires ALLEGIANCE**

The best decision you can ever make is to pledge your allegiance to the KING.

We renewed our pledge of allegiance to the King this morning already when we took communion.

Jesus said, "*This cup is the New Covenant in my blood*". Every time we do this we are renewing ourselves in pledge to the New Covenant we have with the promised Messiah, King Jesus.

I pledge allegiance to you my King, my Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

Borrowing phrases from Acts 20:28, Ephesians 4:4-8, and 2 Corinthians 5:15, I've written a prayer that expresses it this way.

***We pledge allegiance to you our King, our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, and to your Kingdom for which you stand, because you purchased us with your blood. You have made us one, in one body, by one Spirit, giving us one hope in one Lord, one faith, one baptism, giving us personal access to one God and Father of us all, who is over all and through all and in all! You died for all, so that we who live, should no longer live for ourselves, but for you who died for us, and was raised again! We pledge allegiance to you our King, our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Amen! Amen?***

The Story of Reality-JESUS  
(Week 2)  
Face to Face with the KING

### SMALL TALK

1. What do you think are some of the reasons why people want to run their own lives, and their own “kingdoms”, their own way, rather than trust Jesus, our good and powerful King?

### VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Matthew 13.** This chapter is filled with teaching about “the Kingdom of heaven” (“kingdom” 12 times). As you read, start a list of some of the kingdom “secrets” (13:11) you find in this chapter alone.
3. What kind of response does Jesus expect from his teaching? (13:1-9)?
4. How did he expect his kingdom to grow? (13:31-35)?
5. What value did he place on his kingdom? (13:44-46; also Matthew 6:33)

### GETTING PERSONAL

6. Can you see and hear Jesus at work in today’s world? If so, how?

### MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

7. For you, what would taking the next step in following Jesus look like?