

LIFE IN THE KINGDOM

Part I

 The Kingdom of God Explained

By Judy Howard

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All scripture in this text is taken from

 the New King James Version of the Bible

Dedication

To All Those Who Believe

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A Special Thanks

to my sister in the Lord

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# INTRODUCTION

The Bible should not remain a mystery to anyone when we are this close to the coming of our Lord. Prior to His return home Jesus said, “*this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come*.” (Matthew 24:14).

Despite the many technological advancements and social interactions in today’s society, there are still many people throughout the earth who have not heard, and many others who have heard but do not understand, the truths that are hidden in the Bible. In addition to this, there are numerous denominations all of which purport to be Christian, but yet they have a diversity of interpretation of the scriptures. This has led to the confusion of many people who are honestly seeking truth.

God, however, is not the author of confusion. It is His desire to see all men come to the knowledge of the truth; and Jesus, His Son, said, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Just as earthly parents love to hold their children close to them, God our Heavenly Father desires that the object of His affection be with Him. What or who is the object of God’s affection? You and I – His creation! He created us just for His pleasure (Revelations 4:11). Moreover, He created us to be just like Him.

It is therefore imperative that the gospel of the kingdom be understood and accepted. I have attempted in a few pages to highlight key elements of the gospel (the good news) of the kingdom of God, and my prayer is that the Holy Spirit, who is the revealer of secrets, will bring revelation of the truths contained herein.

The answers you receive here will be substantiated by references from the New King James Version of the Bible and will provide relevant links or quotes, in the event you do not own a Bible or are not familiar with the Bible.

May God bless you and wrap you in His love as you read.

*Evangelist Judy*

# WHAT AND WHERE IS THE KINGDOM

To answer the question of “what is the kingdom of God?” we must first establish the definition of kingdom as it relates to our subject. We need to understand that, when used in this context, the word ‘kingdom’ does not refer to a physical place. In actuality, the word literally means dominion or rule. It is derived from the Greek word ‘basileia’ and first appeared in the New Testament in the gospel of Matthew Chapter 3, verse 2. In this context it refers to the rule of Jesus Christ.We must therefore rid our minds of the modern-day meaning (such as The United Kingdom – a physical place) in order to truly grasp the concept that is being taught here.

Now that we have established that the word *kingdom* means rule (and not location), our next point then deals with ‘where is the kingdom’*?* The best answer to this question is the actual words of Jesus in Luke 17:21.Jesus said, “The Kingdom of God is within you.” This statement, standing alone, may be difficult for someone to understand, so we need to consider it more fully.

In the New King James Version of Luke 17:20-21, Jesus answers a question the Pharisees posed: *“Now when he was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you*.”

At the time Jesus made the above-quoted declaration, the Jewish people had been hoping for a king who would establish an earthly kingdom to save them from the tyranny of Roman rule. Jesus’ response, however, was not the answer they were looking for, but it was and still is the answer that is in the mind of God and speaks of God’s agenda in the earth. Jesus was not sent to overthrow the government and set up another kingdom over which He would rule. His mission, instead, was to show us how to dominate (or rule) in our lives in spite of outside forces.

We were created to be just like God (Genesis 1:26) <http://bible.com/114/gen.1.26.nkjv>. God wants us to be aware that there is another spiritual kingdom in the world which is constantly fighting against us in an effort to crush us; but He has given us rule over its rule, and wants us to treat that kingdom in the same way that He would. That is, to be dominant over evil and evil forces! Jesus spent three years of His life here on earth exemplifying such behavior.

Many people think, ‘Ok, that was Jesus…but how can *I* be like Him and do the same things He did?’ So your question still remains: “where is the kingdom of God?” As we said earlier, the ‘kingdom of God’ means the ‘rulership of Jesus’. Since He did not set up an earthly kingdom as the Jews hoped, where then does He rule? He rules in the hearts of men and women. He said, “*The kingdom of God is within you*.” Simply put, this means ‘the rule of God is in your hearts.’ His rulership in your heart enables you to be like Jesus because He will continue to do the same things He always did through you. Jesus Himself gives us the assurance of this. In John 14:12 He says, “*Most assuredly I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.”* Jesus is able to do more mighty works through many of us across the world than if He were doing it just by Himself.

Your next question most likely might be: “How can a person become a part of the Kingdom of God and be like Jesus?” This is a very important question, and the answer is life-changing.

## Entrance into the Kingdom

Life in the Kingdom begins with joining the Family of God. The Family of God is a very special family. Each person who becomes a part of this Family is poised to be an heir to a wealthy inheritance. The inheritance includes both spiritual and material blessings, and surpasses the inheritance of those outside of the Family. Once you have joined the Family, you are part of the most powerful kingdom in the world – the Kingdom of God, under the authority of a King whose very nature is love.

There are some qualifications, however, which everyone must meet to enjoy the benefits and fullness of all that the Kingdom has to offer.

## Qualifications

The first and most important qualification is known as the Christian belief system. You must believe and accept its “terms and conditions” before you can enter into this Kingdom. Fortunately for you and for me, the “terms and conditions” are very simple, do not cost anything, and are open to all. Here are the terms:

1. You must believe that Jesus is the only-begotten Son of God. (John 3:16 <http://bible.com/114/jhn.3.16.nkjv>).

2 You must believe that Jesus was sacrificed on a cross as punishment for your sin and for the sin of all mankind.

3. You must verbally acknowledge Jesus as *your* personal savior, by thanking Him for taking your punishment <http://bible.com/114/rom.10.9-10.nkjv> .

This is all that is required for any person to become part of the Family of God. Once you have done this, you are happily accepted into the Family of God, and you become a citizen of the Kingdom. You might be wondering ‘how do I accept these “terms and conditions?” You do that by making a simple request of the King. Allow me to tell you a little about our King.

# MEET THE KING

It is my great pleasure to introduce you to the King of kings.

King Jesus lived on earth over 2000 years ago and stayed here for 33 years. During that time He recruited 12 followers whom we call disciples.

## His birth

The most important fact about King Jesus is His birth, because this is the foundation of our belief system, and distinguishes a citizen of the Kingdom of God from all others. His birth was like no other person’s on earth. It is recorded in Matthew Chapters 1 and 2. <https://www.bible.com/bible/114/mat.1.nkjv> . This passage recounts His lineage, tracing it back to the royal throne of David, and then goes on to describe the circumstances of His actual birth through a young virgin girl named Mary.

18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

19. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

20. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

21. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

22. So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:

23. “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

24. Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,

25. And did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus (Matthew 1:18-25).

It all begins with God. When God, the Creator of the Universe wanted someone on whom He could rely to carry out His plan of redemption, no living person qualified to do the job, and therefore He sent His only Son from Heaven to fulfill His plan.

In order for the average person to believe that Jesus was His Son, God by-passed the natural process of conception (between a man and a woman) and instead supernaturally impregnated a young lady who had never been with a man. This maintained the purity and integrity of His divinity and would later satisfy the requirement for the sacrifice He made.

Jesus Himself later affirmed His Divinity. In Matthew 16:16, when He posed a question to His disciples concerning what other people were saying about Him, Peter’s reply, *You are the Christ, the Son of the living God* established the foundation – the rock - upon which He would build His church. This fact - that Jesus is the Son of the living God – is the most important truth of the Christian faith.

An even more authentic affirmation of Jesus’ divinity was proclaimed by God Himself in Matthew 17:5. While Peter, James and John were on the mountain with Jesus, they witnessed His physical transformation, and scriptures records it in this manner: *While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” 6And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. 7But Jesus came and touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid*.” God did not depend on man’s affirmation of Jesus, He did it Himself, and there is no higher authority.

Jesus’ birth was also announced in the heavens in fulfillment of a prophecy which had been made years before. Matthew Chapter 2, verse 2 records that shortly after His birth wise men (astrologers) were led by a star to the place where He lived -- but not just any star-- the Star of a King! Let’s look at that scripture: *Behold wise men from the East came to Jerusalem saying ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”* These men, who studied the stars, knew that a king had been born because of the type of constellation they saw. Jesus, therefore, is not only the Son of the living God, but He is also the King of all kings.

## His Ministry

When Jesus had grown to full age, His character became evident through the things He did and the words He spoke. One scripture sums it up like this: “*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him*.” Acts 10:38

King Jesus was anointed to do good.

The ministry of Jesus has been given to us as an example of what we should do during our lifetime. *There* are no special credentials needed to be like Jesus. If we truly allow His rulership in our hearts, it enables us to be victorious over every circumstance.

Jesus’ ministry also showed up the presence of another kingdom — the kingdom (rulership) of Satan. He pointed out Satan’s agenda in John 10:10 by saying: *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*. Satan (*the Thief)* leaves his mark on the lives he touches, and we saw much evidence of his presence during Jesus’ ministry. We saw sickness, disease, lack, hatred, hunger, depression – all of which robs people of the joy and peace God wants them to have. None of these things, however, have power over the kingdom (rulership) of God, and this was the main principle Jesus demonstrated. This was the example Jesus left for you and me to follow. Once you believe and accept this fact, you too will be able to overcome whatever arises in your life and you will walk in continual victory; because He said, “*I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you*” (Luke 10:19). Serpents and scorpions are symbolic of things that will hurt you.

Jesus’ entire ministry revealed what God His Father is like; yet many people read the parables and miracles of Jesus and still do not see their relevance, nor the relationship between the Father and mankind. God desires His children to know Him intimately, and to work together with Him to enjoy peace, joy and wholeness as we go through life.

## His Message

The message of Jesus’ life and ministry is love – love and compassion. He served others unselfishly and encouraged others to do the same. Let’s read about it in Matthew 4: 16-25.

16. The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”

17. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

23. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

24. Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.

25. Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

The kingdom – or rule – of Heaven is ‘at hand’ – here among you. Jesus demonstrates this in verse 23. Here He shows the authority and power He has over all natural ailments – physical, mental and emotional. There was, and is, nothing He cannot do. Moreover, He ***wants*** to do it.

Jesus did not perform miracles just to demonstrate His power; on the contrary, His motivation was compassion for those who were hurting. “*It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom*” (Luke 12:32). God delights in seeing us conquer the devil, and Christ in us, wants to do so at every opportunity. Why? **Because He loves us and does not want to see us suffer**. Jesus was “moved with compassion” on several occasions ...(Matthew 9:36 for example <http://bible.com/114/mat.9.36.nkjv>). We also see His compassion for the pain Mary and Martha felt after the death of their brother, Lazarus… “*Jesus wept*” (John 11:35). He is still the same compassionate Christ today.

Just as the very nature of our King is love, He wants the same nature to be seen in us. “*I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.* (Matthew 5:44&45). In this He demonstrates the essence of God the Father.

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* John 3:16

Everlasting life – inner peace, satisfaction and joy.

These words of Jesus demonstrate His phenomenal character and serve as the motivation of all His acts and actions. His compassion and love is shown throughout His ministry on earth – love for His Father, and love for His fellow man. In a moment with His disciples, He told them: “*As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.”* (John 15:9). This love caused Him to make the ultimate sacrifice by giving up His life so that others, including you and me, can live. His greatest expression of love is the forgiveness of everyone’s sins.

## His Invitation

As you read this e-book He is asking you to become a part of His kingdom by accepting the forgiveness He offers you. He is lovingly waiting for your acceptance. You can do this by simply saying:

*King Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God. I believe that you paid the penalty for my sin by dying on the Cross of Calvary and I accept your forgiveness. I believe that you rose from the grave, and I accept you as my Savior, my Lord and my King. Come and set up your kingdom in my heart. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.*

Romans 10:9 says: *If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead you will be saved*.

It is my pleasure to welcome you, and to share about *Life in the Kingdom*.

# ADDENDUM

Now that you are part of the Family of God, you will want to discover more about Life in the Kingdom. Once you have accepted Jesus as King of your heart, He immediately connects you with God the Father who loves you with an everlasting love. Be sure to continue reading the Word of God and talking to the Father daily.

Watch out for the sequel to this e-book entitled: Life in the Kingdom – Part 2. This e-book will highlight essential elements of Life in the Kingdom of God.

God bless you.

*Evangelist Judy*

*Life in the Kingdom Series*

Part 1 – The Kingdom of God Explained

Part 2 - The Law of the Kingdom

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