

The Kingdom is at Hand

Matthew 4:12-17

Pastor Art Hunt

April 2-3, 2016

Take-Home Truth: The reality of God's Kingdom is present and available now.

Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. ¹³And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—¹⁶the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” ¹⁷From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
Matthew 4:13-17 (English Standard Version)

The Context of Christ's Kingdom Announcement (Matthew 4:12-16)

The Content of Christ's Kingdom Announcement

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
Matthew 4:17 (ESV)

“kingdom of heaven” = “God's reign and rule over all things”

- “The kingdom is the range of God's effective will.” (Dallas Willard)
- “The kingdom of heaven is where what God wants done is done.” (Dallas Willard)
- Living in the kingdom is living with God as King.

He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3 (ESV)

Repentance Involves Two Things

- A heartfelt sorrow for sin.
- Change . . . *metanoia* = a change of mind which leads to a change of life

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
John 3:3 (ESV)

Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. Luke 8:1a (ESV)

Application Tip: What can you do this week to experience God in real time?

- Invite God to sit with you at work as you do a task or as you talk to a person or handle a problem.
- In your school day, pray for each of your teachers as you enter your class and invite God into the period; then be as aware of Him as you can through the class.
- Go on a walk and pour out your feelings and thoughts to God about a relationship you have with another person.
 - After you share your heart, ask Him for His perspective.
 - With Him, think about how your attitude and treatment of this person might better reflect the kingdom of heaven.
- Listen to a song that raises your heart to God, and consciously be with God as you experience the music.
- Identify three feelings—good or bad—that are common for you during a day or a week. Then make a commitment to take those feelings to God *as you experience them* in the coming week.
- When your alarm goes off in the morning, invite God to go through the day with you before you get out of bed.
- Last thing at night, talk to God about your day. Remember where you felt Him close and where He seemed distant. Confess anything that needs confessing.
- As you consider this, add one or two more ideas to this list about how to experience God in real time this week.