

ChristReformationChurch

Tillamook, Oregon

www.sermonaudio.com/crc

www.unholycharade.com

www.lightfordarktimes.com

The Gospel According to Matthew

Thy Kingdom Come – Christ's Kingdom Has Arrived

*March 25, 2018
(Palm Sunday)*

Sermon Text: Matthew 4:12-25

Scripture Reading: Matt 21:1-17

Listen to the Lord's Prayer:

Mat 6:5-13 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. (6) But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (7) "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the

Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. (8) Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (9) Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. (10) **Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.** (11) Give us this day our daily bread, (12) and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

The kingdom of God. The kingdom of heaven. Christ is King. His elect are a holy nation and we have an inheritance – a Promised Land. The new heavens and new earth that is coming. And so we pray, as Christ taught us, that this kingdom would come in its fullness so that the curse will be ended, everything will be made new, and the Lord's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

If you are a Christian, if you are genuinely in Christ, then you are a citizen of His kingdom, of a country if you will that is not of this present

world. The renovation of this enemy territory has begun. Christ's kingdom is here – but not yet in its fullness. And this is why we have already heard it from John the Baptist:

Mat 3:1-2 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, (2) "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

And now from Christ:

Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Much of Christ's teaching is about this kingdom. For example, when we come soon to Matthew 5 where Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount, He starts off this way:

Mat 5:2-10 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: (3) "Blessed are the poor in spirit, **for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** (4) "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. (5) "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (6) "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. (7) "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. (8) "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (9) "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (10) "Blessed are those

who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, **for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

The kingdom of heaven is that kingdom which all of Christ's people are in and for which they await;

Heb 11:8-10 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. (10) For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

That city he looked to was and is the same kingdom, the same new heavens and earth, that we are looking for. And all of this requires *faith*. Do you have it? Are you looking for that city? Are you getting less and less attached to this present world?

Listen then to the rest of Matthew 4-

Mat 4:12-25 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.

(13) And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,

(14) so 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-- (16) the 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." (17) From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, **"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

(18) While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. (19) And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (20) Immediately they left their nets and followed him. (21) And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. (22) Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

(23) And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and **proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.** (24) So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those

oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. (25) And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Human history and in fact the history of this entire universe, is moving toward one great end point – the fullness of the kingdom of God:

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

Rev 19:6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

Let's consider this idea of "kingdom" some more before we look at Matthew 4 in more detail.

A kingdom consists of:

- A geographical country, with borders
- A king
- A people (citizens)
- Authority that is vested in the king by which he rules

Right now, the nations of this world are kingdoms. And down through history there has been a succession of the rising and falling of kingdoms that attempted to be world kingdoms:

- Egyptian
- Babylonian
- Media-Persian
- Greek (Alexander the Great)
- Roman Empire
- The British Empire

And many others. Each nation in fact is a kingdom. But in God's time, all of these kingdoms are moving toward an end point in which, as we just read in Revelation, *the kingdom of the world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever*. It is ONLY at that time that there is to be a one world order. Until then, all attempts at one world unity without borders are Babels and they are opposed to the will of God and in fact opposed to the kingdom of God.

Now, this is why John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus and the other biblical authors can speak of *the kingdom of God coming among us right now*. Because the King has come among us (and is still among us through His Spirit in His people), and the King's authority has come, defeating Satan (the ruler of this world kingdom), and beginning the reversal of the curse – the healing of the nations and of all creation. Let's look then at Matthew 4:12ff and I will show you how the King and His authority entered this fallen world. Listen again:

Mat 4:12-17 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. (13) And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, (14) so 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-- (16) the 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." (17) From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Remember that John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament Prophets

who had for so many centuries prophesied about the coming Messiah. Now He has come, and John had publicly announced Him as the Christ. The new era had arrived, the old had passed away. John's arrest is not described by Matthew until chapter 14-

Mat 14:1-12 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus, (2) and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." (3) For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, (4) because John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." (5) And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet.

(6) But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company and pleased Herod, (7) so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. (8) Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." (9) And the king was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given. (10) He sent and had John beheaded in the prison, (11) and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to

her mother. (12) And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went and told Jesus.

They went and told Jesus. That brings us back to chapter 4 – *Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.*

Matthew shows us that Jesus fulfilled still another OT prophecy at this point, this time from Isaiah 9. Let me read it to you:

Isa 9:1-7 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. (2) The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. (3) You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. (4) For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. (5) For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. (6) **For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name**

shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (7) Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Understand? Jesus is identified as this One, this King, whom Isaiah foretold. HE is the Light of the world. As He went to trans-Jordan, people sitting in moral darkness in a sin-cursed world see this Light. And He comes with all authority, given Him by the Father. His kingdom reign:

- Will never end. Never.
- It will be a kingdom of perfect peace
- The King will effect perfect justice and the kingdom will always be characterized by perfect righteousness.

This “increase of His government” is the spreading of His kingdom until eventually it fills the entire creation:

Dan 2:31-45 "You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. (32) The head of this

image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, (33) its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. (34) As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

(35) Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. **But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.**

(36) "This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation. (37) You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, (38) and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all--you are the head of gold.

(39) Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. (40) And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that

crushes, it shall break and crush all these. (41) And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. (42) And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. (43) As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.

(44) And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, (45) just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

See it? THIS is the end point toward which all of history is moving and nothing will ever be able to stop it. This is why the Christian need never fear the events in this world or yield to hopelessness. Christ is coming. He has come. His Kingdom has begun and it

is going to do away with all other kings and kingdoms one day, and this time it will never end. Never.

This is what the kingdom of God is and it is what Jesus is announcing. Men must believe and they must repent and prepare themselves for the King. What does that repentance look like? Jesus is going to describe it in detail shortly in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7).

The First Disciples

I am only going to comment briefly on verses 18-22. Follow as I read them:

Mat 4:18-22 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. (19) And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (20) Immediately they left their nets and followed him. (21) And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. (22) Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Remember now that Jesus is the New Israel, the next Moses who does not fail. He is calling out the true Israel from the world and leading them out of Egypt (the fallen world) into the

Promised Land (the new creation). It is not surprising then that eventually He will have 12 apostles, reminiscent of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Matthew does not emphasize “12” however. He Himself is called in chapter 9 and the rest are named in chapter 10.

Notice that Jesus does not call His disciples from the religious leaders. These men are fishermen. Also, notice that they are all Jews and thus Jesus is calling true Israelites out of physical Israel. It is not the physical lineage that makes a person a true Jew, but being circumcised in heart. So powerful is Jesus’ call that all 4 men immediately obey it and follow Him. They left their businesses. They left their father.

The New Creation Breaks in

Mat 4:23-25 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. (24) So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. (25) And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond

the Jordan.

Really, the gospel is “the gospel of the kingdom.” The good news of the kingdom. The good news that the Kingdom of God has come and is coming, and therefore all are to believe and repent.

Jesus’ ministry (apart from His atonement on the cross) is described here in condensed form.

- Teaching (to the Jews first)
- Announcing the good news of the kingdom
- Healing every disease and affliction

Notice carefully the last point because in it we see the curse being progressively reversed:

- Healing disease of all kinds
- Curing demonic oppression
- Curing epileptics and paralytics

The King came with authority – all authority and all power. Here we have a clear insight into this kingdom that we belong to. It is a kingdom described like this:

Rev 21:3-8 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be

his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. (4) He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (5) And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (6) And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. (7) The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (8) But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

Do you believe this? Do you see it? We see it by faith and as your lifetime progresses in this present world I can assure you that as you approach the end of your days, you will either look for the kingdom of Christ with greater and greater anticipation, or you will increase in despair. Faith increasingly lets go of the things here and looks to the things above, where Christ is and where our true home is.