

Luke 4:38-44 The Gospel of the Kingdom of God

As Jesus' ministry is summarized in this account in Capernaum what does Luke reveal about the nature of the Kingdom of God? The Kingdom of God is:

- 1) A kingdom of compassion.
 - a) Simon's mother-in-law (v. 38-39); any who were sick with various diseases (v. 40)
 - b) How is great authority and power usually used by humans? First thing is to protect that power. Then, how can we extend that power. Power in the service of power.
 - c) Christ's kingdom is power in the service of people, people who are weak and helpless
 - d) "Defectives" are not removed from society. Defectives are the special objects of Christ's compassion. Christ does not recoil at your weakness and helplessness. He is not uncomfortable with your problems.
 - e) "When Helping Hurts"—so much modern "compassion" is to placate guilty conscience rather than to truly help; real compassion is dirty work. "He laid his hands on them." "Them" being people with various diseases.
- 2) A kingdom of service.
 - a) Simon's mother-in-law immediately rose and began to serve them (v. 39)
 - b) Jesus had served in the day at the synagogue, then served at Simon's house by healing Simon's mother-in-law, and served late into the night healing any who were sick with various diseases.
 - c) Jesus was the king, but rather than being pampered by His subjects, He is pulling long hours to serve them.
 - d) Jesus taught that this was to characterize the people of the kingdom as well (Luke 22:24-27).
- 3) A kingdom of holiness.
 - a) "Demons also came out of many" (v. 41a)
 - b) "He would not allow them to speak" (v. 41b)
 - c) When gaining and retaining power is the goal, people are quick to cooperate with evil. But Christ will give up His own life to destroy evil. His kingdom does not depend on any compromise with evil.
 - d) Already/Not Yet of New Creation and Expunging of Evil
 - e) Analogy: someone from N. Korea learning to live as a citizen of the U.S.—learning curve
 - f) Holiness is a new position that progressively leads to new patterns of thinking and acting.
- 4) A kingdom of catholicity.
 - a) Webster's third definition: "comprehensively wide range"
 - b) They "would have kept Him from leaving them" (v. 42). Those who enjoy the blessedness of Christ may grow content in their personal enjoyment and lack vision to see others enjoying Christ.
 - c) "But He said to them, 'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose'" (v. 43). "To the other towns" will eventually become "to the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8).
 - d) The people of the kingdom look to the "others" because:
 - i) we desire to see Christ revered in the hearts of people;
 - ii) and we desire to see people enjoying the rule of Christ.
- 5) A kingdom of Divine Word.
 - a) "I must preach the good news" (v. 43). Why the necessity of preaching the gospel?
 - i) God's Word is creative—actually calling things into existence
 - ii) God's Word is definitive—forming reality
 - iii) God's Word is redemptive—reclaiming the goodness of His creation as a reflection of His glory
 - b) The people of the Kingdom of God are a people redeemed and defined by the Word of God.
 - c) The people of the Kingdom of God continue to proclaim the Word of God even as we pray for the Kingdom to come in fullness.