

Thy Kingdom Come!

During this time of the year, we are finishing the Church calendar that has guided most of the Bible lessons for each Sunday. The focus of the last lessons is the second coming of Jesus to “judge the living and the dead”, as we confess in the Apostles’ Creed. Every time that we pray the Lord’s Prayer, we also recall his second coming when we say, “thy kingdom come.” So, the expectation of his second coming fills the whole existence of the church and should be the reality in which we live our daily calling.

We should not think of it only as a future event because God’s kingdom has become a reality since the very first coming of Jesus, which we celebrate during the upcoming season of Advent. So, the presence of His kingdom has both a present and future dimension. The Bible scholars call this tension the “already and not yet” of the kingdom. This concept holds that believers are actively taking part in the kingdom of God now, although the kingdom will not reach its full expression until sometime in the future. We are “already” in the kingdom, but we do “not yet” see it in its glory.

But, how would you define God’s kingdom? What does it look like? How does it operate? How might I know that God’s kingdom was advancing in the daily grind that is my life, or even in the church’s communal life and mission as it operates in its given community? Few would deny that God’s kingdom is a key theme in the Gospels, but the average person in the pew might have a hard time articulating just how God’s kingdom works itself out in ordinary life, whether that be on a personal level (at home or work), or more corporately (in church life and ministry). Well, first, we should remember that the kingdom of God is simply the place where God rules and reigns. So, when Jesus says that the kingdom is near, what he means is that his rule or reign is at hand; that you are going to see what God’s kingdom looks like in the life and ministry of Jesus. Moreover, a response is expected when the king comes to reign; that is, one should turn away from their old way of life (repentance) to embrace the reign and rule of the king. In Holy Baptism, God has made us members of His kingdom. The cross of Christ becomes the center of His kingdom and everything we are and do flows from that reality.

And secondly, as members of God’s kingdom, whatever we do in the name of Christ, whether it be the preaching of the gospel, serving the community, worshipping together, all of those are an extension of His kingdom and we are part of it. As Christians, we are made for more than just breathing. We are called to partner with God to see incredible change here on earth and to see people’s lives affected by how we live and who we are. Not only that, but we have been given the Holy Spirit, God Himself, to live within us to equip and empower us.

So, while we live in this world (“the “already” of the kingdom) and wait for the consummation and fulfillment of it (the not yet”), we live as citizens of the heavenly realm, being part of God’s mission of bringing Christ to the nations, knowing that Jesus will come back to take us where He is. In the meantime, we continue to pray earnestly, “thy kingdom come!”. In Jesus' name, Amen.

~ *Pastor Adolfo Borges, Associate Pastor*