

The Kingdom of God, pt.10, 10.14.07
Advancing God's Kingdom!

The most important activity in the world is the advancement of God's Kingdom!

Short review of the KOG.

As we look at the advancement of the KOG at the beginning of Jesus ministry it's like watching a blitzkrieg. An overwhelming force rises up and quickly overtakes enemy territory. This wasn't a gradual advance or quiet or exterior advance, but one that radically changed the course of civilization and humanity's destiny!

There are two necessary factors in advancing God's Kingdom. They are an overcoming mindset and catalytic activities.

- I. An Overcoming Mindset
 - a. Intro – an overcoming mindset is critical. If you don't have it you will not advance the KOG to the degree and in the manner God desires. It's not about simply having a positive, mental disposition though that's helpful. Rather, it's understanding and believing that God is your ally and friend. He isn't out to get you, but to make you great so you can most powerfully advance his Son's Kingdom.
 - b. God is for me!
 - i. Rom.8.31–35
 - ii. This means God is working everything together for my benefit so that I can fulfill His destiny for my life. It's a partnership. You have to do your part.
 - iii. Even when I sin & get away from Him, he creates circumstances in my life that draw me back to Himself. He brings conviction, discipline and w/draws His protective covering from me in order to direct me back to the way of life.

- iv. 2 Pet.1.3 – God has given me everything I need for life & godliness.
 - v. Everything! He wants me to succeed in accordance with His standard of success for my life.
 - 1. For some that might mean making lots of money to bless others with; for others it might mean serving lunch at the school lunchroom.
 - 2. We know that God is for us
 - 3. He isn't going to shoot me in the back as I advance His Kingdom. God doesn't accidentally or intentionally kill his troops.
 - vi. By sending Jesus to die for our sins is the clearest sign that God is for you! Don't ever let the devil deceive you into believing that God doesn't love or care for you. The cross is the supreme example of God's steadfast love for us!
 - vii. He isn't out to sabotage you, but to encourage and advance you.
- c. He has made me a co-heir with Jesus Christ
- i. Rom.8.16f. – For His Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory.
 - ii. I'm a first class citizen in God's Kingdom. I have been seated with Christ in heavenly places (Eph.2.6)
- d. He has given me victory and authority in this life – Rom.8.37 (more than a conqueror)
- i. Victory over sin – Rom.8.1–4. My sinful nature has been destroyed. I'm still tempted, but I'm not dominated by sin.
 - ii. Victory over sickness – Matt.8.16f. I don't have to tolerate a weak, sickly body. He has purchased for me a healthy, strong body.
 - iii. Victory over satan – Col.2.13–15. He defeated every demon who had us bound!

- iv. Victory over circumstances – Rom.8.35–39. Every calamity, or hardship that I face I have God on my side giving me strength, perseverance, strategy and encouragement to stand.
- v. Bill Johnston’s concept of carrying the weather system of Heaven. When a hurricane moves through an area it changes the entire environment and impacts everyone in different ways. We carry the weather system of whatever is in our heart. If we’re a negative, condemning and judgemental person, we spread that atmosphere to everyone we’re in contact with. When we have an overcoming mindset that says, “God is for me...” we spread that in the atmosphere of everyone we know.

- II. Activities that Advance the Kingdom (Luke 3 – 5)
 - a. Intro – Illust like massive D–day invasion. There’s been a little radio chatter, but for the most part it’s calm. There’s a sense that something is about to happen (3.15) and then Jesus explodes on the scene. Everything changes in one day! (Note: look for the “suddenlies” of God) Satan has a hold of the kingdoms of the world and there’s this huge D–day like invasion that rips his stronghold apart and is the beginning of the end for him.
 - b. In Luke 3–6, we look at activities that advance God’s agenda on the planet in a quick manner! These things establish God’s purposes in a region. Do you want to advance God’s Kingdom at home, school, workplace, etc? Then do these things
 - c. Our personal mandate from God is to be a part of bringing transformation to Southern Brazoria County. These are your personal assignments to fulfill that mandate!
 - i. Matt 11.12 – **From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.**

ii. **The following are ways we forcefully advance God's kingdom.**

d. **Get aggressive with sin** (3.3, 7-9).

- i. "to show they had repented of their sins" "prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins"
- ii. Don't just say you're dealing with sin, but do something. The more aggressive we are with personal sin the more we can expect God to advance His kingdom in & through us!
- iii. Sin is Satan's currency. As long as you mess around with it you're messing around with him. He has a hook in everything.
- iv. We looked at a couple of weeks ago Matt.18-19. Jesus said pluck your eye out, cut your hand off, etc. Do whatever it takes!

e. **Go one step beyond** (3.10-17)

- i. Move beyond what is normal - eating (normal for all), corruption (normal for a tax collector), extortion and blackmail (normal for a soldier) - into mercy and quiet integrity.
- ii. Advancing the KOG isn't always about the big meeting or the big God encounter, but about living a life of honesty, character and mercy in front of others.
- iii. What's "one step beyond" for a student, engineer, retiree, volunteer, store clerk? That "one step" is how you advance God's Kingdom.

f. **Be empowered by the Holy Spirit** (3.21-22; 4.1,14)

- i. W/o the empowerment of the HS we will get mired down in the stuff of life. It will be like a continuous storm system in which there's no breakthrough.
- ii. What provides breakthrough is the Spirit empowered life, which is beyond what is given to you at the moment of salvation.
- iii. Jesus already had the HS before this encounter, but he didn't have the empowered life. How much more so us?

iv. You must ask for it...come forward today & we'll pray that you receive it.

g. Resist the devil (4.1-13) & don't fear the demonic (4.33-35)

i. Jesus didn't get overwhelmed with fear. We're in a war with a real enemy that hates us; you must resist him. The most common way we resist him is by obedience. Do God's will!

ii. Jesus didn't go looking for a fight. Jesus didn't go looking for the devil; the devil came to him. Don't go looking for a fight. When he reveals himself then fight.

iii. Like in warfare, you don't have to destroy every enemy stronghold to keep advancing. You can advance in imperfection, but in the Lord's time take on the stronghold. This is what I've found as I advance in one area it weakens the stronghold and sometimes destroys its.

h. Persevere through accusations, misunderstandings & intimidations (4.16, 22, 28-30)

i. Jesus was besieged with antagonisms. He didn't try to address them all. He allowed for the misunderstandings and kept moving ahead spreading the Kingdom message.

ii. Just think what His life would have been like if he kept trying to explain everything (though Jesus did some of that with his disciples) to his critics and cynics to get them to move with him; or work through every misunderstanding so people wouldn't be offended.

iii. In warfare, there is collateral damage - the destruction of unintended property and killing of innocent - and as the KOG advances there is collateral damage - strained relationships & criticism from others. We have to persevere in a way that is redemptive (not scathing or harsh - turn or burn) and concerted (4.30 - but he passed right through the crowd and went on his way.)

iv. Subpoint "p." Expect resistance from -

- i. **Show mercy** (4.38, 40; 5.12f)
 - i. One of the biggest bombs in the arsenal of God – mercy, compassion, love...outwards demonstrations of concern.
 - ii. Jesus is not only able to heal (power) but he wants to heal (mercy).
 - iii. There are many ways mercy is expressed. One of the greatest ways is by responding to the proddings of the HS – giving a person a call, sending an email.
 - iv. We're too concerned that we might be wrong or nosey. We think it's better to give a person space. You let them decide about the space, but you show mercy.
 - 1. Example of a wounded animal – some will let you help while others will back away.
 - 2. Mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2.13)
 - 3. Have people stand who need prayer & ask one person to go stand with them. Ask everyone to begin to pray for one person; then get quite and see if God gives you something for that person & then go share it with them.
 - a. Mercy is action oriented
 - 4. Conclusion: Matt.11.12 – we advance the KOG by force when we demonstrate mercy – give a gift, say a prayer, tell them we love them, etc.
 - 5. Estella Maldonado story of the angel for her boss' assistant; the assistant's father had died months earlier and that day was his b-day.

Pt.2, 10.21.07

Intro: Quick summary; picture of advancement; pictures of weather systems

- j. **Expect the miraculous when you pray for others (4.38–40, 5.12–13).**

- i. When Js prayed for Peter's m-i-l they both knew Js would & could do something. They also anticipated change.
- ii. Appl – When we pray we need to expect something to happen & when we receive prayer we need to expect something to happen.
 - 1. This is more than anticipation...like anticipating a good football game betw rivals.
 - 2. It's anticipating with full certainty...like anticipating a special day. It's a given that it will happen, and you can't wait until it does.
 - 3. When I pray in accordance with God's will, I wait in anticipation and thank Him for answering even before the manifestation.
 - a. Ex of Bill Burnham
- iii. I've prayed for thousands of people and sometimes God answers within a moment to 5 days, most have been gradual & sometimes there's been no response. I don't understand all the unanswered prayers, but I won't allow that to change my approach to prayer.
 - 1. Mat.18.19f.
 - 2. Mk.11.22–25
- iv. I can't allow unanswered prayers to dictate my understanding of Jesus' words. Js' words are plain & when my experience doesn't line up with His words then I'm not going to change His words to make me feel better.
- v. Advancing the K means, I'm expecting the miraculous when I pray for others.
- vi. Why is Willow pressing into the supernatural, offer LITS, bringing in Becky Fischer? It has everything to do with the transformation of SBC – Luke 10.13–14

k. **Spend time with the Father** (4.42, 5.16)

- i. This is the refueling point. You can't maintain an advance w/o a retreat. You can't advance the KOG w/o retreating to the Father.
 - 1. "often"
 - ii. Explain the supply line in warfare. The supply line is indispensable. You can survive for a time w/o them, but eventually the reserves are depleted & then you're defeated. Forward advancement eventually stops when the supply lines are interrupted.
 - iii. Appl – The supply line is the life line.
 - iv. Pastoral – As a staff & LT we're concerned about the spiritual vitality of our church. There are people who are taking hits & they aren't recovering. The war has grown long & your spiritual fuel gauge is on empty. It's not just us, but in other churches too.
 - 1. Mt.13.20–22 – trouble, hardship, clutter, busy-ness, lure of wealth all dry up the supply line
 - v. Your walk with God is your major supply line and when its in tact you can take a hit & keep moving.
 - vi. When you don't resupply spiritually every problem & difficulty seems insurmountable. You grow overwhelmed & apathetic.
 - 1. Like the grandsons who put limburger cheese on their grandfathers mustache. He thought everything stunk
 - vii. Getting back into relationship with God; dealing with sin issues; being consistent by maintaining a daily walk with God; working on relationship problems...gets us back in a place where we can quickly advance God's Kingdom.
- I. **Preach the Good News and speak the truth** (3.17f; 4.23–27, 31, 43f, 5.1)
- i. Read text & explain.

- ii. This week receiving articles from people about the relative nature of truth and that falsehood should have the same standing as truth.
- iii. We are living in a time no different than the early church experienced where there were competing views about origin & purpose, monotheism or polytheism, etc.
- iv. We are blessed to be a nation with a Christian heritage, but today it's a philosophical and theological free-for-all with the loudest & weirdest having equal value to the clearest & most sane.
- v. Controversial statement: I don't think we have to defend our faith to prove its truth. In other words, out argue the other side. The truth is we can win the debate, but that doesn't bring transformation to the heart. I think the place for Christian apologetics is to strengthen our faith and to provide answers for those seeking the truth.
- vi. We preach the GN and let the chips fall; the GN is confrontive but Js didn't get into roaring arguments with people. He moved on & he instructs us to do the same - Lk.10.5-12.
- vii. What I have seen is that the real reason many people have disagreements with Christianity is b/c of a lifestyle issue, pride (biggest reason Phar didn't turn to Jesus), hurt from Christians or they're too lazy to seek the truth & thus they hide behind a rouse of intellectualism or spirituality.
- viii. The KOG is advanced when we preach the GN & speak the truth

m. Fulfill your calling at each stage of your life (2.49, 4.43)

- i. If Jesus had started preaching at 12, it would've been the wrong time. He wasn't ready nor were those he would speak to.

- ii. Stay in the moment & fully develop there. At the place you are today, where can you advance God's Kingdom.
- iii. The tendency is to look ahead & not fully experience what God is doing now. The future always looks brighter than the present.
- iv. You can't advance God's Kingdom if you're aggravated with our current place in life. If you keep looking down the road for the next thing or the big thing, you'll miss the opportunities around you.
 - 1. My grandmother at 90 encouraging others and bringing the weather system of Heaven to change the environment of others.

n. **Take risks** (5.4–7)

- i. This was both a risk for Peter & Jesus, but they obeyed the promptings of the HS.
- ii. I believe we radically advance the KOG when we respond to the promptings of God that seem so far fetched.
- iii. God may be calling you to do something small or large, but the impact on you & others could be huge
 - 1. My parents moving to Glen Rose was a huge risk but it changed me and it has impacted you and it has even touched the community
- iv. Jesus & Peter's willingness to take a risks, led to a miracle, led to Peter's conversion & eventually to Peter being at the center of advancing God's Kingdom in the world.
- v. Appl – Follow those promptings with appropriate actions. You may follow those promptings and there's been no results just like my parents with me. Give it time to develop.
- vi. Ss

o. **Enlist others to advance the KOG** (5.10–11, 27–28)

- i. Luke 10.2
- ii. The harvest around the world

p. Expect resistance from:

- i. The devil & demons (4.13, 33–36)
- ii. Family and friends (4.16,22, 28)
- iii. People of influence in your life (5.21; 6.7, 11)

Activities that stall the Kingdom of God

1. Compromise with sin & the enemy
2. Trying to make people happy (4.16, 42; 5.21)