

## THAT WHICH WAS LOST

**Text:** Luke 19:10

The Lord Jesus made this statement at the close of his encounter with Zacchaeus. The crowd was murmuring among themselves because he was going home with Zacchaeus to be a guest at his house. Though Zacchaeus was a dishonest and thieving tax collector, he had just repented and believed in the Lord. He had met the conditions for salvation and Jesus pronounced him saved before the crowd. He stated that Zacchaeus was a descendant of Abraham which was the mission field Jesus was sent to. Then he makes this statement “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”.

I’ve always found this statement interesting for this reason, if it’s only people that need to be saved then he would have said “those who are lost”. So, the question on the floor is “What is that which Jesus came to seek and to save?” It is the kingdom of God. What was established in the beginning was the kingdom of God on earth. **Genesis 1:26-28** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. God made Adam and Eve in His image and likeness to have dominion over the creation and to subdue the earth. Dominion and subdue are kingdom words. Dominion means supreme authority over a territory or people. Subdue means to conquer or bring under control by force. God planted a garden eastward in Eden. That means he put things in order and gave Adam and Eve the command to dress it and keep it. But the rest of the world was not in order... we miss that. The creation was good, but the world was not in order, so the garden was a pattern created by God for them both to maintain and to spread throughout the world. They were to fill the earth with God’s image and bring order and beauty everywhere for the glory of God.

The kingdom of God is defined simply this way: it is the rule of God through His people, over His place. God did not give Adam and Eve a religion, He made them co-rulers in His kingdom. It pleases God to share His rule with His children. Adam and Eve were only given one law to obey to stay in relationship with God **Genesis 2:16-17** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest

thereof thou shalt surely die. Satan tempted Eve to eat the fruit and she did, and she gave to her husband and he ate to. When they ate the fruit, they rebelled against God and their relationship was severed. Since their relationship was cut, their right to rule was lost! The image of God was marred by sin, and the earth has been in rebellion against God ever since. Satan's kingdom is now ruling on the earth. His kingdom is rebellion, darkness, and confusion. The kingdom of God on earth is what Jesus came to seek and to save!

The kingdom of God is a theme that runs through the entire Bible. If you miss that, then you miss God's purpose. After the fall, Satan's kingdom was dominating the earth by **Genesis 6:5-6** And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. So, God destroyed the earth with the flood, saving Noah and his family. When they came off the ark on the other side of the flood, they were given the same command as Adam **Genesis 9:1** And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. Generations later rebelled against God by refusing to spread throughout the world and in their defiance to God built a city and a tower in their own name as a monument to their rebellion. God confused their language and scattered them throughout the world which created nations. It is this time that God calls Abraham out from his country and family and reveals that He is going to create a nation for himself out of his descendants. Through Abraham and Sarah, God produced Isaac which begat Jacob which begat the twelve tribes of the nation we know today as Israel. When God brought Israel out of Egyptian bondage, He asked Moses to ask them if they would accept His rule over them and promised to make them His kingdom if they said yes:

**Exodus 19:3-6** And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

God brought Israel out of Egypt to bring them into the land of Canaan. Canaan was a beautiful and abundant land overrun with Satan's kingdom. The land was full of wickedness, abominations and giants. God's will was to use Israel to invade, conquer and replace the Canaanites. When Israel supplanted the Canaanites, they were a nation governed completely by God without an earthly king. The kingdom of God was being reestablished on earth. Their mission was to be the light of the world to all the other pagan

nations around them. God promised if they would serve Him only and keep His rule, they would be blessed and protected by Him above all people on the face of the earth. But they forsook Him and went after the idol gods of the nations around them leading to them losing their kingdom and land. The northern kingdom was carried off by the Assyrians, and the southern kingdom was carried away to Babylon.

God brought the people back from captivity to rebuild the city and the temple, but they were under the rule of Rome when Jesus enters the picture. Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of all the prophecies, and he was born the Messiah and King of Israel. His ministry starts like this **Mark 1:14-15** Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. Jesus had one message and it was the kingdom of God. The sermon on the mount is a kingdom of God message. He spoke about the kingdom of God 54 times in the gospels. Jesus said to Nicodemus “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” teaching us that the new birth is a kingdom of God message. In his sermon on the mount, Jesus made these statements **Matthew 5:13-14** Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. The nation of Israel was created to be the representatives of God’s kingdom on the earth and be the light and salt of the world. In other words, be the guiding light that leads the rest of mankind back to God. But they didn’t want that. They became isolated and religiously proud. They looked down on the rest of the world as Gentile dogs that were unworthy of the grace and love of God. They were religiously blind and thought they actually were keeping the law meaning they had no need of a savior. When they rejected Christ as their king, they lost their privilege of representing the kingdom.

**Matthew 21:33-43** Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in

their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

The church was a mystery hid in God. The church is the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. But the church is also a royal priesthood and holy nation. The representation of the kingdom of God was taken away from Israel and given to the church! It's our duty and privilege to represent the King and His kingdom in the world. **Colossians 1:12-13** Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Jesus kept on speaking and teaching the kingdom of God to his apostles after his resurrection: **Acts 1:3** To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: The book of Acts spans 35 years and at the close of the book the kingdom of God is still being preached by the apostle Paul: **Acts 28:30-31** And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Look at how the Bible closes: **Revelation 5:8-10** And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. **Revelation 20:3-4** And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. **Revelation 21:1-3 (KJV)** And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he

will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be their God.*

The goal of God is bringing the kingdom of God to earth and to make both places one. We as the church often have the wrong mindset. We think of salvation as means of an escape to heaven and the earth is just an afterthought. I'm just enduring this life so that one day I can go to heaven forever. But the Bible doesn't end with us in heaven, it ends on the new earth with the kingdom of God ruling. Today's message begins a series on the kingdom of God. If you are apart of the church today, you are an ambassador for the kingdom of God and you should have three things on your mind:

- **Submitting to God's rule in your life**
- **Seeking the kingdom of God**
- **Serving the King with what He has given you**

We want to represent him now so we can rule with him later!