

THE GOAL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD: IMPACTING YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Text: Matthew 5:13-16

Last week began a series of messages all about the kingdom of God. Jesus made the statement “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”. What was lost was the kingdom of God or God’s reign on the earth. Through Adam’s fall, man was lost and Satan’s kingdom entered in the world. That’s why the world is full of darkness, confusion, perversion, and rebellion. When Jesus Christ entered the creation through the womb of a virgin, God inserted himself into our mess. At thirty years old he began his public ministry and the first message he ever preached was “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand”. **Luke 16:16** The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. Jesus Christ is the King, and he invaded enemy territory and reestablished the kingdom of God on earth. The conflict of the ages is the kingdom of God versus the powers of darkness. Sin and Satan rule over mankind, but the kingdom of God is about the rescue of mankind from the slavery of sin to the loving rule of God. The call to repent is a profound change of mind, heart, and direction, involving a sincere turning away from sin and turning toward God. When we repent and believe on Jesus Christ, we change kingdoms - **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:

Now that we are in God’s kingdom, what’s His plan for us? For many Christians, salvation is about leaving earth for heaven, but the story of scripture is quite the opposite. The message of the kingdom of God is not an escape from earth to heaven but God’s reign coming from heaven to earth. The focus of God’s reign is His people, but the scope of God’s reign is all of creation. That’s what Jesus meant when he taught his disciples to pray “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”. When people submit to and obey God’s will, His kingdom comes on the earth. So, the point of being a disciple is not escaping earth but bringing heaven to it! The verses we read for our text today is taken from the Lord’s sermon on the mount which is a kingdom of God message preached to the nation of Israel. As we said last week, Israel’s great privilege was the representation of the kingdom of God on earth. Jesus said to them “You are the salt of the earth and the light of the world”. In other words, “It’s your responsibility to impact the earth for the kingdom of God”. But because of

their blindness, idolatry and rejection of Jesus...the privilege of representing the kingdom of God was taken from them and given to the church. So, what Jesus said that day now applies to us. We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, meaning we are called to impact our environment for our Savior and his kingdom. Being the salt of the earth means we are called to preserve, purify, and positively influence a decaying world. Similar to how salt preserved food in the ancient world, Christians are to slow moral decay and positively impact society. Being the light of the world means that Christians are to be a reflection of his truth, character, and love, actively shining in a spiritually dark world through good works and a holy life. The call is for believers to make their faith visible to others, dispelling darkness, confusion, sin and despair...so that God will be praised! **The goal of the kingdom of God is for Christians to impact their environment.**

Is your environment impacted for the kingdom of God because you are there?

Your response maybe “What could I do? I’m just one person and Christians are the minority in society. I’m the only saved person in my family. I’m the only saved person where I work.” The kingdom of God only needs one person to work through -READ ACTS 8:5-8 The kingdom of God has power in it! Power to overcome the enemy. **Acts 8:12** But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. *This city was impacted by the kingdom of God through one man!* READ ACTS 8:26-38 The same Spirit of God that sent Philip to the Samaritan city sent him into the desert for one individual showing that the kingdom of God is powerful enough to convert a city and compassionate enough to care about one human being!

If we want to impact our world for the kingdom of God and our Savior, there are some Bible steps that must be followed or we will be unsavory salt and good for nothing.

- **Give yourself to God - Romans 12:1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. **Acts 13:1-2** Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.
- **Go when you are sent** - The angel of the Lord gave Philip a direction (go toward the south) and he immediately went. He did not know his destination or what God had in mind when he got there. Obedience is submitting to God’s rule. When he went the

direction the angel gave him, he got more instructions from the Spirit of God that led to the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch. When Peter obeyed the Spirit of God sending him to Cornelius's house, the whole house was saved. Go when and where you are sent.

- **Good works must be seen** – The light is shown through actions, such as compassion, agape love, kindness, giving the gospel and obedience to God reveals His presence. Philip went to a city of Samaria which was a place full of people despised by the Jews, but he preached the gospel and let the power of God work through him which brought salvation and deliverance to those people. He climbed in the chariot of a stranger of a different race and culture and helped him find Jesus Christ in the scroll of Isaiah.

The goal of the kingdom of God is that we make an impact on our environment for Jesus Christ. Will you submit to God and let Him use you to impact the earth for heaven?