



ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
SESSION 25 - TRUE & FALSE
DISCIPLES - LORD, LORD! (Mt
7:21-23)

True and False Disciples (Mt 7:21-23)

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?'

Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'



Initial Questions

- What does saying “Lord, Lord” mean?
- What is “entering the kingdom”?
- What “will” do we have to do exactly?
- Where did “the evildoers” go wrong”
- What do make of the ability to perform miracles or prophesy then?
- Never knew Jesus?

Context

- On the home stretch....
- Several comparisons
- The Broad and Narrow Roads (Mt 7:13-14)
- Good and Bad Trees (Mt 7:15-20)
- **True and False Disciples (Mt 7:21-23)**
- Wise and Foolish Builders (Mt 7:24-25)
- Close: When Jesus finished saying these things... (Mt 7:28-29)

So.... what is the Kingdom of heaven?

- Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
- Two important questions:
 - *Q1: Where is this kingdom of heaven?*
 - *Q2: When does the kingdom get entered?*
- In our culture, it is commonly assumed that:
 - *A1: in heaven, a spiritual, non-physical blessed place with God.*
 - *A2: when we die*
- But, is that what Jesus teaches about the kingdom?



Recap on the Kingdom

- Virtually all references to “the kingdom of heaven” are found in Matthew’s gospel. Other writers use “Kingdom of God”. Same thing.
- The kingdom of heaven is **near/at hand**. (Mt 3:2, 4:17, Mt 10:7, Mk 1:15)
- Beatitudes: poor in spirit, persecuted – theirs is the kingdom of heaven, (Mt 5:3,10)
- Until heaven and earth pass away... least/great in the kingdom of heaven... Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Scribes and Pharisees you will not enter the kingdom. (Mt 5:18-20).
- From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven **has been** subject to violence... (Mt 11:12)
- Knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven **has been given to you** (Mt 13:11).
- Many parables : *the kingdom of heaven is like....* (Mt 13, Mt 18, Mt 20, Mt 25 etc)
- Pharisees shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces, and **do not enter** (Mt 23:13)
- Some of Jesus’ disciples not taste death before **they see the kingdom** (Lk 9:27-8)



Kings of the day

Matthew's gospel:

- *After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of **King Herod**, (Mt 2:1)*
- Herod "the great".

Luke's gospel:

- *In those days **Caesar Augustus** issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (Lk 2:1)*
- Same event, but different way of marking the timeframe. What does that tell us?

Recap on the Kingdom

- The **gospel** (the *euangelion*) is a message about the coming of a ***new king and a new kingdom***.
- Jesus is the king.
- “Already – and not yet” idea. Here now where people are following Jesus’ ways and teachings, but not yet fully consummated. The trouble in the world clearly shows that God’s reign is not complete yet. The Bible teaches that happens when Jesus returns to create a new heavens and a new earth.
- Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.” (Lk 17:20-21)

God's project

- God wants to redeem and restore his creation.
- Salvation includes a redeemed creation.
- Resurrected humans will play a role in this renewed creation. A restored role that was lost in Genesis.
- God is planning on living with his humans.
- *And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."* (Rev 21:3-4)
- *N.T. Wright, Bible Project have more on this.*



Entering the kingdom

- Like a child Mt 18:3-5, 10:15, Lk 18:17)
- Hard for the rich Mk 10:23
- Greatest commandment – not far from the kingdom (Mk 10:33-34)
- No one can see the kingdom unless they are born again (Jn 3:3)
- We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said (Acts 14:22)
- Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him. (Mt 21:31-32)

Seeking the kingdom...



- But **seek** his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. (Lk 12:32-32)
- them. But **seek** first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. (Mt 6:33-34)
- So how far away does it seem to you now?



Saying Lord, lord.

- So when Jesus says: Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (Mt 7:21) – what is he saying?
- Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? (Lk 6:46)
- What does “**Lord**” mean for Jesus?
- What does “**Lord**” mean for us?
- **Some people will be surprised. Why?**
- **Their definition of Lord is different to the one Jesus is using.**

The response...

- **Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ (Mt 7:22)**
- Propheying in Jesus’ name – what is that?
- Driving out demons – who can do that?
- Performing many miracles- evidence that God is with them, or not?
- How many people?
- How many miracles?
- What’s going on?

I never knew you...

- **Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' (Mt 7:23).**
- **There was NO relationship ever?**
- **Why does Jesus cause them evil-doers?**
- **If you are not willing to take on God's kingdom project by following Jesus' teachings in your everyday life, then you are not finding a place in his kingdom. If you are not being a part of God's project, you are not part of the kingdom.**



Putting it all together



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- What is Jesus intending to communicate to his listeners?
- I am not looking for the religious deeds you are used to thinking about. This is new. It's not about your acts of piety. It's about your complete willingness to follow me. We are using a different accounting system here.
- Does that make us feel more secure or more nervous?

Category Busting...

- Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” (Jn 3:3-5).
- How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things?”
- Nicodemus – A Pharisee and member of the Jewish ruling council. Highly educated, expert in the Torah. Highly respected. What was going on here for Nicodemus?
- Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can *enter the kingdom of God* unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. (Jn 3:5-6)



Kingdom – upside down to the world

- Hard for the rich to enter, but given to the poor.
- You have to change and become like a child.
- The least is the greatest, the greatest is the least.
- Servant leadership.

In your own words

Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven...

How would you say it in your own words?



Reflection

- Am I over-reliant on spiritual formulas?
- Have I entered the kingdom?
- What do I think about this idea of a renewed creation?