

The Coming of the Kingdom of God (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] Luke 17 verses 20 through 37. So that will be our text actually not just for today but for next Sunday as well.

! Take a couple of Sundays and look through this larger passage and it's an incredible passage. So let me go ahead and read the text and then we'll start to look at it.

Chapter 17 starting with verse 20. Now when he was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation, nor will they say, See here or see there.

For indeed the kingdom of God is within you. Then he said to the disciples, The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man and you will not see it.

And they will say to you, Look here or look there. Do not go after them or follow them. For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in his day.

[1 : 23] But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man.

They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all.

Likewise, as it was in the days of Lot, they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built. But on the day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he who is on the housetop and his goods are in the house, let him come down to take them away.

And likewise, the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife? Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it. And whoever loses his life will preserve it.

[2 : 31] I tell you, in that night, there will be two men in one bed. The one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together.

One will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field. The one will be taken and the other left. And they answered and said to him, Where, Lord? So he said to them, Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

All right? So, very lengthy text. And it's going to take us a little while to work our way through it. And yet, I would say to you right now that this morning, we're just going to look at two verses, the first two verses.

And then we'll look at the rest of it next week. Now, the subject of this portion of Luke's gospel is really fairly easy to identify. It is, if we could sum it down to one statement, it is the coming of the kingdom of God.

That's the subject here. It starts with the question, of course, that's asked of him. And then Jesus not only answers that question, he also spends some time speaking to his disciples.

[3 : 40] So the subject is the coming of the kingdom of God. But what does the kingdom of God mean? I mean, what does Jesus mean? When he, especially in this particular passage, when he speaks of the kingdom of God, what is he talking about?

What does it mean? What is the kingdom of God? That's what the Pharisees, the Pharisees wanted to know a certain thing about that. They wanted to know when it would be. And Jesus answered their question.

And then he spent quite a bit of time, the bulk of the text actually, speaking to the disciples about the kingdom of God. But what does he mean by the kingdom of God?

And I would say to you that this should matter to us, the kingdom of God, and being able to define it and identify it. That should matter. And we can't just simply say, well, you know, this is complicated and difficult, and so I think, well, I'll just not worry about it.

You can't have that kind of attitude because the kingdom of God is such a major theme in the Bible, both Old and New Testament, and especially the New Testament, and especially in the Gospels.

[4 : 51] As a matter of fact, the word kingdom, just that word kingdom, *basileia* in the Greek, appears 128 times just in four books. The Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, 128 times you find the word kingdom.

And the expanded phrase, kingdom of God, occurs 52 times in the Gospels. 52 times.

Kingdom of heaven, which is not another thing, but the same thing, just a different way of saying the same thing. In fact, it was the wording that Matthew preferred. And so in his Gospel, you have kingdom of heaven appearing 33 times.

33 times you put that together, and the specific terminology, kingdom of God, kingdom of heaven, that specific terminology appears 85 times in the Gospels, 32 times here in the book of Luke.

So can we disagree that this is an important subject and one that we ought to understand?

Apparently it was important to the Pharisees, by the way, because they were the ones who asked the question.

[5 : 59] It was not important to the Sadducees because they were sad, you see, right? Because the Sadducees didn't believe in anything about the kingdom.

I mean, they were willing to work with the kingdom in the present world. They were working with the Romans, and it would be fine with them if they could just get in with them to work along with them. So they weren't concerned about any kind of coming kingdom.

They didn't believe in any kind of resurrection. They certainly did not believe in any kind of future reign of God. And so that's why I say they were sad, you see, the Sadducees.

But the kingdom of God was a very important subject to most Jews of Jesus' day. Still an important subject today. But the Pharisees asked Jesus on a number of occasions about the kingdom of God, about the timing of it and so forth.

Jesus' own disciples on a number of occasions asked Jesus about the kingdom of God. So it was important to them, and therefore it ought to be important to us.

[7 : 01] Now, we're going to, as I've said, spend a couple of weeks looking at this particular passage, studying this passage about the kingdom. And by the way, we're going to come back to this subject when we get to chapter 21 of Luke and when that will be, only God knows.

But, so the subject is going to be discussed in quite detail as we approach the end of the Gospel of Luke.

Now, this particular text that I read a moment ago, the larger text, can be divided into two parts, really. That's why I've decided to take one this week and the other part next week.

Though the subject is the same, the kingdom of God, all throughout, Jesus' audience changes.

That's one thing that we notice. First, he speaks to the Pharisees, verses 20 and 21, and then he turns to his disciples and he speaks to them about the same subject.

All right, so the subject is the same, the audience is different. But also, again, though the subject is the same, Jesus presents really two distinct aspects of it, aspects of the kingdom of God.

[8 : 12] First, he speaks to the Pharisees about his, we could call it, present kingdom, the kingdom that's here right now. And then he turns to his disciples and really speaks primarily to them of his future kingdom.

Now, it's not two different kingdoms, two distinct kingdoms, same kingdom, but two different aspects of it. One of them in its incipient form as it first came into this world.

He's going to speak to the Pharisees about that. And then in its consummation, the consummation of his kingdom, and that will be his subject with the disciples. So, same kingdom, but two different aspects of it, and that's why we need to spend some time looking at it.

Now, keep in mind, and I've said this before on other occasions when Jesus would switch from the Pharisees to the disciples and kind of go back and forth, keep in mind that both the Pharisees and Jesus' disciples were privy to all that Jesus said about the kingdom here.

What he said to the Pharisees, the disciples heard. And what he said to the disciples, the Pharisees heard. And this is important because both groups, Pharisees and disciples, had some erroneous beliefs about the kingdom of God.

[9 : 29] And Jesus is going to correct those errors in their thinking, in their understanding. And really, in both cases, both the Pharisees and the disciples, their error was not so much in they didn't understand certain aspects of the kingdom, but that they had incomplete understanding of it.

And Jesus is going to correct all of that error. And possibly error in our own hearts and minds about the kingdom of God. All right, so it all started with this question, this inquiry from the Pharisees, and they wanted to know simply when.

When is the kingdom of God to come? That was their question to Jesus. And that really has been the question of the ages, has it not?

At least on the part of those people who believe in some sense of the kingdom of God. Everybody's been asking that question for now several thousand years. But we need to understand that their question really requires answers to three questions.

Very simple questions about the kingdom. And it begins with what. And then where. And then, finally, when.

[10 : 51] So, the what, where, and when of it. These questions must be answered in order for us to understand really what Jesus is saying about the kingdom.

What is the kingdom of God? That is, how may we define it? Where is the kingdom of God? How may we identify it?

And then, finally, when. Is the kingdom of God. That is, when may we expect to see it? To see it. Alright?

So, the answer to this third question, by the way, the when question, we'll get to it, really has two parts. And, or two aspects.

And we're going to see as we kind of look at the whole text over the next couple of Sundays, we're going to see that the answer to the when question really is right now.

[11 : 50] It's right now. That's the when. Right now, but also yet to come. Not yet. Right now, but not yet. Or, here and now.

The kingdom is here and now. And I assure you, it is. In fact, it's present right here in this building. It's here and now, but also there and then. It's something future.

So, the kingdom of God is here and yet to come. It's coming. And we'll deal with that second aspect of the kingdom next week. So, don't miss it.

Okay? Alright, so let's get to it. First of all, here's the first question. What is the kingdom of God? We've dealt with this at least a couple of times in our study of Luke and I have kind of tried to define it in a number of other occasions when the subject would arise.

But we need to answer this question and the question again is, what is the kingdom of God? And I would say to you that the answer to the question is found in the question.

[12 : 59] Right? The answer to a point is in the question. The Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God would be coming.

And Jesus answered their question by saying the kingdom of God of God does not come with observation.

So, in a sense, you've got to know the what of the kingdom before you can really answer anything else. And the what of the kingdom of God begins with the who.

The who of the kingdom. And so, here's the answer just in a nutshell. The kingdom is the rule of God.

It's just that simple, isn't it? It's not complicated. You don't have to be, you know, a very learned theologian to understand this thing. The kingdom of God is the rule of God.

[13 : 58] The reign of God. Now, that gets us started. That's not the full answer. But that's really what it is. The kingdom is the rule, the reign of God.

And in the broadest sense of that, God's rule, his rule over his realm is all of creation.

Right? It's all of creation. As its creator, God is the supreme and sovereign ruler over all the universe.

That's where we need to begin. Now, think about it. The whole universe. How big is that? Well, I don't think we know. We have best estimates based upon science and math and observation.

You know, the Hubble telescope has helped us a great deal in this. But how big is the universe? Well, let's see. One light second. That's 186 plus thousand miles.

[15 : 10] I mean, light travels that fast. In one second, it can travel 186 thousand plus miles. That's pretty fast, isn't it? All right, so one light second, 186 thousand miles.

And so with what we have been able to observe to date, the universe, they say, is 13.7 billion light years from border to border.

If you could think of the universe in terms of any border. 13.7 billion light years. That's the one light second. Times 60 makes a minute.

Times 60 makes an hour. Times 24 makes a day. Times 365 basically makes a year. And so 13.7 billion light years between its known limits.

That's huge. That is, by the way, if you're writing this down, 547 sextillion miles in diameter. You say, I don't know what a sextillion is.

[16:22] Well, I don't either. I just know it's 547 with 21 zeros after it. That's huge. It would take a spacecraft traveling, you know, using the fastest known propulsion that we have today, it would take a spacecraft 3.1 trillion years to travel from one end to the other end of the, I say, known universe, what we know today.

Well, you've got to bring that down. And it would take a jet flying 500 miles per hour, 125,000 trillion years. And if you want to walk it, it's 13 million trillion years.

That's how long it would take you. If you want to walk it, you better get started. Now, contained in the universe, this vast universe, are many galaxies, right?

Many galaxies. How many? Well, best estimate based on the data of the Hubble telescope, 176 billion galaxies in our universe.

And galaxies are really, really big. You know, they're made up of solar systems. And how many solar systems are there in our galaxy, the Milky Way? Well, around 500 solar systems in our galaxy, 500, of which ours is, they say, a medium size, all right?

[17:49] And our solar system, by the way, is 7.5 billion miles in diameter. Are you getting all these statistics, Dan, by the way? 7.5 billion miles.

That's the size of our solar system. And our Earth, very tiny in relation to all of that, sits 93 million miles from the sun, you know, just a fraction near or furthers all the difference between freezing to death or burning up, or burning up and freezing to death.

That's amazing. So our solar system is one of 500 in our galaxy, and our galaxy is one of 176 billion galaxies in the universe, a universe that spans 547 sextillion miles, best estimate.

And how long did it take God to create it? Six days. Six 24-hour days. planets. And that's not counting all the other things that are out there in this universe.

That's not counting how many planets are there. They say about 50 sextillion planets in our universe. And that's not counting stars.

[19:04] How many stars are there? Well, I don't know. We don't know. We don't know how many stars there are. I guess we really just don't have a number for that. Not one that could be articulated.

They do say, they think there are about 200 billion stars viewable in our galaxy, from our galaxy. That's a whole bunch.

Now, can you then begin to fathom the size, the sheer magnitude! And the complexity and mathematical precision of our universe?

universe, because it's not just sitting out there. It's all moving in perfect order and sync. Otherwise, you know, it'd all be colliding into one another.

It's perfectly precise. That's our universe. And who's in control of it? That's the point. Now, we know, don't we? The creator is in control of it.

[20:06] The one who existed before it. The one who spoke it all into existence. He is in control. He is the sovereign ruler. Ruler of the universe.

God is the sovereign ruler. Psalm 103 and verse 19. The Lord has established his throne. That means his rule in the heavens and his sovereignty rules over all.

Literally all of it. Every part of it. And so, listen, we really have to think about his sovereign rule extending even down to the very smallest of known elements in this creation.

That would be the atom. Well, beginning with the atom and everything inside of it. Because everything is made out of atoms. God is in sovereign control of every single atom.

How small is an atom? I heard this illustration, or read this illustration the other day. If you took a grapefruit and somehow took all the atoms of a grapefruit and expanded the size of all those atoms to the size of a blueberry.

[21 : 17] So each atom is the size of a blueberry. You know how many blueberries it would be? Well, I don't know in numbers, but it would be as large as planet Earth.

Huh? That's just taking the atom of one single grapefruit, making each one the size of this planet. That's pretty tiny. But, you know, there are things smaller than atoms. The elements of an atom. You know, it's nucleus, protons and neutrons, and all the electrons that are spinning around the nucleus in perfect precision.

How small are those things? Well, they say that a nucleus of an atom is so small that if you were to make the nucleus, or excuse me, the atom the size of a blueberry, we'll use blueberry again, so the atom is the size of a blueberry, you'd have to have a blueberry the size of a football stadium in order to visibly see the nucleus of the atom, and then it would only be the size of a marble.

Incredibly small. And, you know, scientists don't know what holds all that together. You know, those electrons spinning in a particular kind of way, a precision way around the nucleus so that they can bond with other atoms and form molecules and form everything.

[22 : 54] And scientists don't know what keeps all that together. Well, we know, don't we? the Bible says in Colossians 1:17, and he is before all things. And in him, or by him, all things consist.

That is, all things hold together. Now, all that's very interesting, but having said all of that, our text is not really talking about that aspect of the kingdom of God.

creation. He's not talking about God's realm of creation. The creation. It's visible, right?

It's tangible. It's measurable. That kingdom, and it can be observed, and so forth, if you have eyes to see it.

And see that this is the rule, the realm. of sovereign God. That's visible. Psalm 19, verse 1 says, the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork.

[24 : 03] As a matter of fact, I was looking at foxnews.com the other day, and they had a little article there about the latest pictures from Hubble Telescope. You have to look at it.

Have you ever seen some of the pictures? Incredible. The things that are out there, trillions of miles away, sextillion miles away, that have been able to be observed by Hubble.

And what's all that out there for? We're not going to ever go there, at least not in these bodies. What's it there for?

I mean, it takes a telescope to see it. Well, the heavens declare the glory of God. The glory of God. The firmament shows His handiwork.

In fact, Romans 1:20 says, For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes are clearly seen. Can't see God, but you can see His attributes, and they're clearly seen.

[25 : 08] How? They're seen, understood by the things that are made. What Paul said. Even His eternal power is seen in the things that He has made.

Even His Godhead, which equates to His absolute sovereign rule and reign, are seen in those things that are made so that they are without excuse, that His unbelievers are without excuse. But again, notice the text here. In this text, Jesus said, the kingdom of God does not come with observation. observation.

That is, it's invisible. The kingdom of God, in the sense in which, in the aspect in which Jesus is referring, and really the same sense in which the Pharisees are inquiring, the kingdom of God, in that sense, does not come visibly.

It doesn't come with observation. The Greek word that's translated observation is *parateresis*, and the Greeks use this word to describe the work of an astronomer, and an astronomer could carefully watch the heavens, and the astronomer could, and scientists could watch the course of a planet, or the trajectory of a comet, and so forth, and thus be able to measure and forecast where it would be at a certain time.

[26 : 40] That's the idea behind this word observation. It means careful observation. In fact, some translations word it that way. Careful observation. He says this kingdom, the kingdom I want you to understand and know about doesn't come that way.

It doesn't come by observation, using methods of careful observation. He said in verse 21, nor will they say, or anyone be able to say, see here, here it is, or see there, there is the kingdom of God. Now, it won't be able to do that. This particular aspect of the kingdom of God, the particular aspect of his reign, his rule, cannot be located that way.

It can't be located that way. You cannot use your physical eyes to see it. You cannot say, ah, okay, there it is. It's right over there. It can't be done that way.

You can't map quest it, or Google search it, or use your GPS. Yes, Sherry and I were in Houston a month or so ago, and we were trying to find a certain place, and had my phone using the GPS, and that sweet lady's talking to us, you know.

[27 : 51] And she says, in a quarter mile, turn thus and such place. And so we do that. And then she says, in a quarter mile, turn thus and such place. And so we do that. And then it says, in a quarter mile, turn thus and such place.

We did that four times before we realized we were going around in a circle. We had something wrong. Well, of course, Sherry said she was wrong. The lady on the GPS, she probably was. And we're just going around in circles. And the point is, the Pharisees were just simply going around in circle after circle looking for the kingdom of God, but they couldn't find it. They couldn't see it. And why? Well, in the first place, because it's spiritually discerned. That's what Jesus said to Nicodemus. He said, you must be born again. If you're not born again, you can't see the kingdom of God. But primarily, they were wrong because they had incomplete knowledge about it. They were not thinking of it rightly. They thought that the kingdom of God was solely defined by an earthly king sitting on an earthly throne, ruling over an earthly realm, and that's all they knew about it.

[28 : 55] And indeed, one day, it will be that way. It will. When Jesus comes and sits upon the throne in New Jerusalem and rules the kingdoms of the earth for a millennium and the church will rule with him, but that's a subject for next week, okay?

It will be that way someday, but they knew nothing of an aspect of the kingdom of God that would come first in a sort of incipient form.

Just its newness, its beginning point. They knew nothing of that. And so that leads us to the second question, where is the kingdom of God?

Where is it? Where is this aspect of it? And Jesus said something really strange, at least at first glance, and depending on what translation you use.

He said the kingdom of God is within you. That's the New King James version. It is within you. And that's about as literal as you can get, by the way.

[30 : 10] If you were to go to the original language, that's very literal, though the word order is a little bit different. It is entos, which means inside, humon, you, in this case it's plural, and esten, meaning it is.

And that's the order of the word. Inside you, it is. Kind of sounds like Yoda from Star Wars. But that's what he said. But now seriously, the wording poses a bit of a problem.

Inside you, is he speaking to the Pharisees? You see, the Pharisees had asked, when will the kingdom of God come? And Jesus basically responds by saying, you don't understand the kingdom of God.

You have incomplete understanding about it. You can't see the kingdom of God when it comes. You can't see it with physical eyes. See, you've got this wrong. It does not, literally he's saying, really, what he's addressing is their desire to see signs of it.

And he says it's not preceded by signs. A little bit later in the text we understand what he's talking about there. It's not preceded by signs. Not yet, not here, not this time.

[31 : 27] And that's what they were looking for. They were looking for signs. Something more than just healing someone and, you know, raising people from the dead. Some cataclysmic kinds of signs.

That's what they were looking for. And Jesus says it's not preceded by signs. You can't say it is here, it is there. because, you see, the point is the kingdom of God is internal.

That's what Jesus means by it is within you. It's internal. And so initially, in its incipient form, and we're still in that phase of the coming of the kingdom, it is not manifested as a visible monarchy. It's not manifested by some standard form of government or some political system, whether it's a monarchy or a democracy.

It's not manifested that way. It's not identified by a physical throne in a physical place. It's not established through military might. You know, they're looking for somebody to come and throw the Romans out.

[32 : 40] It's not manifested that way. It's not announced through a series of cataclysmic signs and wonders in the heavens. The kingdom of God is inside.

It's inside. Within. Inside the heart. Now, let me make sure you understand, not the Pharisees' hearts. They were unbelievers.

It didn't reside there. Jesus didn't mean that. The pronoun you is plural, but it's not inclusive. He's not saying in every one of you. It's just a general statement.

The kingdom of God resides inside. Inside the human heart. And so here's the answer to the where question. The what question is answered this way.

God, the kingdom is God's rule. The rule of God. The kingdom of God, in the sense in which it has come right now, is wherever God is recognized and revered as king.

[33 : 45] That's where the kingdom is. You want to know where it is right now? It's wherever God is recognized and revered as king. Is that in your heart?

That's where it resides. That is where the kingdom of God has come first. Over 2,000 years ago. Came into this world invisibly, intangibly.

It came into this world spiritually in the hearts of those whom God has redeemed. In the hearts of those where God is recognized and revered as king.

And so the kingdom of God exists in the realm of his creation. Yes, that's one aspect of it. But the kingdom of God exists in the realm of his new creation.

That's you, that's me I hope, in the hearts and lives of the redeemed of the Lord. So God rules the kingdoms of the universe that he created and God rules the kingdom of the heart that he has recreated in Christ Jesus.

[35 : 01] That's where the kingdom is. The kingdom of God exists wherever God is truly recognized and revered as supreme sovereign king.

That's where the kingdom is. And that, all that helps us answer the third and final question and that is the when question. When is the kingdom? We already know it then, don't we?

This kind of gets us back to the original question. He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come and Jesus' first answer is, it's here right now. It's here right now, that's what he's saying, it's here right now.

In fact, he could have said, you know, you're looking for signs of the coming of the kingdom. Well, how about this sign? I'm standing right here before you. Now that's all the sign they really needed, or should have needed.

I'm right here. You see, the presence of the king is a pretty good indicator that there is a kingdom, and so where the king is, there is the kingdom. And so Jesus says the kingdom is right now.

[36 : 09] It exists wherever God, again, it's redundant, but I want us to get it, it exists wherever God is recognized and revered as king. That's where his kingdom is.

It exists today in the hearts of the redeemed of the Lord, and so that means the kingdom of God has been here on this earth for now two millennia, over two millennia, 2,000 years.

This is only part of it, as I've said, because we're going to look further in this passage, and we'll get to this next week, Jesus is going to say the kingdom of God is right now and not yet.

The kingdom of God is already here, and yet it's still coming. two different aspects of, really, the kingdom of God, and we'll get to that second part next week.

But let me just wrap this up this morning with a few applications. I mean, what does this mean to us? Well, first of all, if it is true that the kingdom of God is wherever you find Jesus truly recognized and revered as king, if that's true and it is true, then we should know this, that it is absolutely crucial that we live our lives in such a way as to display the rule of King Jesus.

[37 : 40] Right? We can't be secret citizens of this kingdom. kingdom of God. And how we live our lives ought to be always consistent with the reality that Jesus is our king.

That changes everything. Second, if it is true that the kingdom of God is wherever you find Jesus truly recognized and revered as king, you ought to have that memorized by now.

If that's true, then we should know that the building of his kingdom is worldwide. It's going on all around this globe.

God is recreating a people for himself. And they are from every tribe, every tongue, every people group, every recognizable, definable nation.

He's making a people for himself. His kingdom is worldwide. Third, if it is true that the kingdom of God is wherever you find Jesus recognized, truly recognized and revered as king, then you should know that God's kingdom is not tied or connected with any particular expression of government or any particular situation, socioeconomic situation.

[39 : 22] God's building his kingdom. And he's building his kingdom in countries where his people are persecuted. We might think, well, that would really stifle the growth of the kingdom.

Actually, it's just quite the opposite. But God is building his kingdom in countries where the truth and those who follow the truth are persecuted and those who submit to the one true God and his Savior, Jesus Christ, are going to be persecuted, imprisoned, even killed.

And God's building his kingdom there and it's happening all around the world. Think of China. Think of Iran and Iraq and Afghanistan and Yemen and all of those Muslim countries right now.

And he's building his kingdom also in countries where the truth and his people are tolerated too, like in America. Though that is very quickly disappearing right before our very eyes, but God's not hindered in building his kingdom regardless.

No matter what the political situation and socio-economic situation, I mean, in countries where great wealth and affluence exists, God is building his kingdom. In countries where poverty, abstract poverty is the norm.

[40 : 47] An economic decline is going on. God is building his kingdom. See, this God is going to build his kingdom. And it doesn't require, well, this is what the Jews should have understood.

It did not require that the Romans be taken off the throne. In fact, God built his kingdom when Rome was in power and persecuting the church.

So the kingdom is not going to come by kicking the Romans out. That's what they should have understood. And we can bring it to our day. The kingdom is not dependent upon a Republican being president or a Democrat being president.

It's not dependent upon any of those things because it's not connected, attached to any particular form of government or any particular level of freedom or any particular level of economic wealth or situation.

It's not dependent upon, it's not connected to any of those things. God's kingdom is not tied to, it's not dependent upon any particular civil or socioeconomic situation.

[42 : 00] And one more, fourth, if it is true that the kingdom of God is wherever you find Jesus truly recognized and revered as king, then you should know that God is the one who is building his kingdom.

God is doing that. He is building his kingdom. Now we have the duty and joy and opportunity to participate in God's building of his kingdom, but God builds it.

And he's not going to fail in that. And sometimes he builds it with us and sometimes in spite of us. But he will build it. He will build his kingdom and the gates of hell shall not come or stand against it. I want you to listen to the words of this old hymn as I close this morning.

Written by a guy by the name of Samuel Stone way back in the late 1800s and it ought to be very familiar to us. Now listen to some of the words. The church's one foundation.

[43 : 16] Know this hymn? The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord. She, the church, is his new creation by water and the word.

From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride. With his own blood he bought her and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation yet one over all the earth. Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth, one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food.

And to one hope she presses with every grace endued. The kingdom of God.

It's here. It's here right now. King Jesus rules and reigns in the hearts of those who trust him.

[44 : 35] Take care. Thank you.