

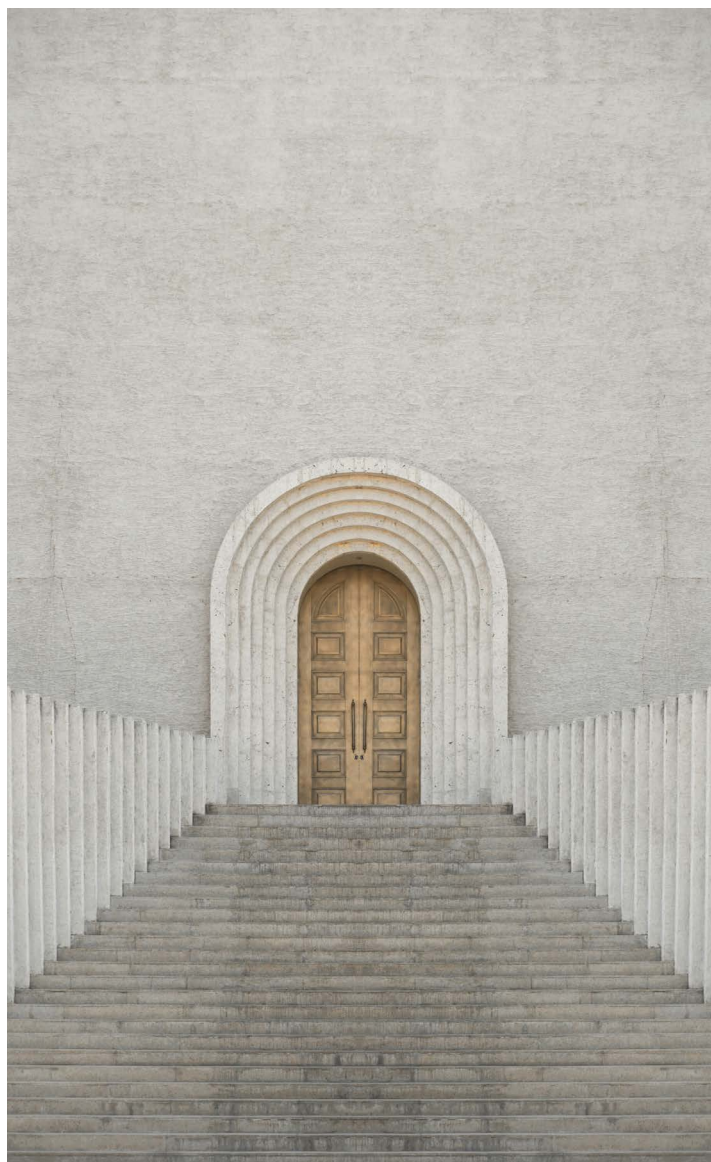
KINGDOM ENTRY | PART 2

Summary:

The Kingdom of God is not a future hope but a present reality. Jesus declared that the time had come and the Kingdom was near, and that Kingdom exists wherever God's will is outworked in the lives of His people. It is not found in buildings or symbols, but in the surrender and obedience of those who call Him King — demonstrated not merely in words, but in action and power.

Entry into the Kingdom requires more than acknowledgement of Jesus as Lord. It demands an active doing of the Father's will, flowing not from self-effort but from a transformed identity. Our doing comes from our being — and that being is not something we manufacture, but something we receive through surrender to God and the ongoing work of His Spirit within us.

That transformation is the second condition of entry: we must be born again. As Jesus explained to Nicodemus, no one enters the Kingdom without a supernatural work of the Spirit. This means dying to self, taking up the cross, and surrendering completely — not as a one-time event, but as the continual posture of every son and daughter of the King.



Finally, we enter the Kingdom as little children — in complete dependence, reliance, and trust. A child turns to their parent for everything: identity, security, understanding, and truth. In the same way, Kingdom entry means turning wholly to the Father for all of these things, trusting entirely that what He says is truth and reality.

Key Scriptures:

Mark 1:15, Matthew 6:9–10, Matthew 7:21, 1 Corinthians 4:20, John 3:1, Mark 8:34–35, Matthew 19:26, Mark 10:14–15

Transcript:

We began last week by looking at the fact that the Kingdom of God is Kingdom Now. Unlike our brothers and sisters of centuries past, we are not waiting for a soon-coming King — the King has come, the Kingdom is Now. Jesus said:

“The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near.” — Mark 1:15 NIV

No more waiting. The time has come, the King is here. The Kingdom is now.

But what and where is Kingdom? The Kingdom is simply found in the spaces, places, and people over which that King has dominion. Where His rule and reign extends, where His will is outworked in the lives of His subjects — that's Kingdom, there's Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God isn't seen in crests, walls, flags, or castles. The Kingdom of God exists, and only exists, where His will is outworked. We see this so clearly in our key scripture for this study — the words Jesus taught us about how and what we should pray:w

“This, then, is how you should pray:
‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’” — Matthew 6:9–10 NIV

Your Kingdom come, your will be done. This brings us to the first point in today's study: there is a heart posture, a surrender, an obedience, a transformation that must take place to be able to enter the Kingdom. Not everyone simply walks in — everyone is welcome and invited to — but there are terms and conditions, as it were, for Kingdom entry. Jesus said:

“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.” — Matthew 7:21 NIV

Our ability to enter in, to remain a loyal subject of the Kingdom, and to see it advance is predicated on doing the

will of Father God. It's more than a mental assent, more than lip service, a fish sticker on your car, or a Jesus Loves You shirt. The Apostle Paul wrote this to the gathering in Corinth:

“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.” — 1 Corinthians 4:20 NIV

The Kingdom of God is not outworked in classrooms, theorising, or pontificating, but in doing the will of the Father. We enter the Kingdom by doing the Lord's — the King's — will, not just by saying that He is Lord, that He is King.

The posture of entry is obedience; the behaviour of entry is doing. But our doing must come from our being. We don't work our way in, we don't work to remain in. We work, we do, because of who we are — because of who He has made us to be. Which brings us to our second condition of entry.

The Kingdom of God is a supernatural Kingdom. There's no dollar price of admission, but there is a cost. There's no working your way in, but there is an expectation of outworking the will of God — without it, you can't enter. You can't change enough to make it through, but everything about you must change to enter.

This was the conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus:

“Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, ‘Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.’ 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!’ 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. You should not be surprised at my saying, “You must be born again.” The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it



comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.’” — John 3:1–8 NIV

Our ability to enter is not dependent on our ability to enter. Our ability to enter is, however, predicated on our complete surrender. We do well to note the imperative: “You MUST be born again.” Entry into the Kingdom, and continued faithfulness within it, is dependent on a supernatural transformation. As we lay our lives down in complete surrender — dying to self and being brought into new life, born of the Spirit, born again — death to self becomes both the entry point and the continual posture of subjects of the Kingdom, of sons and daughters of the King.

Jesus said:

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.” — Mark 8:34–35 NIV

We do well again to note the imperative: “MUST deny themselves.” And we would all agree — that's hard. Even as we set our hearts towards it, even as our desire is to be that, it's hard. Yet this is the way in, and this is the continual posture of the sons and daughters of the King within the Kingdom. It's here we must both remember and surrender.

We remember it's a supernatural Kingdom — not based on what you can or can't do, but on who He is (Matthew 19:26). And we surrender: we lay down our flesh, die to self, and allow the Holy Spirit to transform us, bringing us to new life in Him, born again — supernatural.

We enter as we outwork the will of the Father; we enter as we lay down our lives, being raised to new life in Him, being born again of the Spirit; and we enter the Kingdom as we receive it like a little child:

“When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’” — Mark 10:14–15 NIV

Jesus says “anyone” — all-inclusive — who does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it. We ask then: what does it mean to be like a little child here?

There is much in that picture, and it is well worth exploring in depth the many facets of what it looks like to be “like” a little child. For today’s study, however, we look at the broad, overarching postures. A little child has a complete dependence and reliance upon — and unwavering belief in — their parents.

For everything they need, they turn to them. For discovering who they are, they turn to them. For understanding and making sense of the world, they trust and turn to them. As a dad of four beautiful daughters, I remember so vividly the look in their eyes as they waited for a response to a question they’d just asked — hanging on every word, with no doubt in their minds or hearts that everything their dad said was 100% fact and reality. They never worried about the bills; dad had that sorted. They never doubted that they were loved, beautiful, cherished young women, because they turned to their dad for that affirmation.

We enter the Kingdom of God as we, like little children, turn to Him for everything we need; as we, like little children, turn to Him to discover who we are and to make sense of the world; and as we, like little children, turn to Him trusting that everything He says is 100% fact, truth, and reality.

The Kingdom of Heaven — of God — is Now. We enter it as we do His will; we enter it as we, through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, die to self and come alive in and through Him, born again; and we enter it as we receive it like a little child, in reliance, dependence, and trust. Your Kingdom come. Your will be done.

Reflection Prompts:

Read: John 3:1–8

Head: Why can effort or morality never substitute for being “born again”?

Heart: Are there areas of your life still resistant to full surrender?

Hands: What is one thing you need to lay down this week to make room for the Spirit’s transforming work?

