

# ENTERING THE KINGDOM

*God's Sovereign Rule, Fulfilled in Christ*

## The Kingdom

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### Key Idea:

The kingdom is God's promise of redemption to his sovereign rule, which was fulfilled by Jesus Christ's perfect life and sacrifice on the cross, allowing us to be adopted as heirs into the kingdom.

### Key Text:

*"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."*  
(Daniel 7:13–14)

### Key Points:

- **The kingdom of God begins with his rule, and man was made to rule alongside him.** From the opening line of Genesis, God is shown to be sovereign over all things — “in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). Man is made in his image and given dominion over creation (Gen. 1:26), so that humanity's purpose from the very start is to rule the way God rules. Understanding the kingdom is not a peripheral theme; it is the central storyline of Scripture, and it is the subject with which Jesus begins his own ministry: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:14–15).
- **The fall corrupted man's ability to rule as God's image bearer, but a promise of redemption followed immediately.** Instead of ruling with God, man rebelled against him, and sin distorted even the deepest relationships (Gen. 3:16). Creation itself was subjected to futility and groans, waiting for redemption (Rom. 8:19–23). Yet even in the curse, God promised that a seed of Eve would one day crush the serpent's head — the first thread of hope for a groaning world, and the seed that the rest of the Bible anticipates.
- **The entire Old Testament is the story of God's people failing to rule like him, while pointing forward to the one who finally would.** Abraham is promised offspring as numerous as the stars, through whom the nations would be blessed — a glimpse of the kingdom, though Abraham himself was far from perfect. Israel was called to be a nation set apart, yet strayed from God almost as soon as the law was given. The judges were meant to lead the people back to God but instead saw them grow “more corrupt than their fathers” (Judg. 2:19), until “there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 21:25). Even Israel's best king, David, was implicated in murder

and adultery. By the end of the Old Testament, God's people are still groaning for a king who can rule rightly — the son of man of Daniel 7.

- **Jesus is the Son of Man of Daniel 7 — fully God and fully man — who alone can rule the kingdom rightly, and he does so as a servant.** Jesus explicitly claims the title before the high priest (Mark 14:61–62) and demonstrates the kingdom's arrival through his authority over evil (Luke 11:20). Where every human ruler before him was corrupted by sin, Jesus is sinless, uniting full divinity and full humanity in one person, fit to rule all nations forever.
- **At the cross, Jesus dealt with sin once for all and secured an everlasting kingdom for his people.** Christ bore our sin and died in our place, then rose to rule over death itself, so that his “dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away” (Dan. 7:14). Through his ransom we are delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of God, adopted as children and heirs — this is the good news the whole Bible has been building toward.
- **We enter the kingdom once, by God's call and our response, and then live in it as citizens awaiting Christ's return.** Entering the kingdom means being called by God (1 Thess. 2:12), being born again by the Spirit (John 3:3), repenting and believing (Mark 1:15), and being baptized as the appropriate response to grace (Acts 8:12). Life inside the kingdom then means expecting tribulation (Acts 14:22), doing the will of God from a genuine faith (Matt. 7:21), proclaiming the good news in ordinary ways, praying for the kingdom to come, worshiping reverently, and bearing the fruit of the Spirit as we long for the day when all creation is restored and we reign with our king forever.

### Discussion Questions:

- Before this study, how would you have answered the question “what is the kingdom of God?” How has that understanding grown or changed?
- Daniel's vision describes a “son of man” given “dominion and glory and a kingdom” that will never be destroyed (Dan. 7:13–14). Why do you think this image became so central to how Jesus described himself and his mission?
- Genesis 1:26 says humanity was made in God's image to have dominion over creation. What does it look like, practically, to “rule like God” in the callings and relationships you have today?
- The teaching traced a repeated pattern — Abraham, Israel, the judges, the kings — of God's people failing to rule rightly and needing a better king. Where do you see that same pattern playing out in your own life or in the world around you?
- Jesus establishes his kingdom as a servant rather than a conqueror, teaching that “the first will be last.” How does this “upside-down” kingdom challenge the way you naturally think about power, success, or leadership?

- Entering the kingdom is described as something we do once — through God's call, being born again, repentance and belief, and baptism — while life in the kingdom continues day by day. Where are you in that picture: still counting the cost of entering, or already living as a citizen of the kingdom?
- If you truly believed — not just in your head, but in how you live — that Jesus rose from the dead and reigns right now, what would change about how you spend this coming week?
- The teaching closed by describing life in the kingdom as marked by tribulation, good works, proclaiming the good news, prayer, worship, and the fruit of the Spirit. Which of these feels most present in your life right now? Which feels most neglected?

### **For Further Study:**

- Read Genesis 1:1–2:15 and Romans 8:18–25 together to see how man's original calling to rule creation connects to creation's ongoing longing for redemption.
- Trace the kingdom promise through Daniel 7, Genesis 12:1–3 (Abraham), and Judges 2:16–19 and 21:25 to see the Old Testament's building anticipation of a righteous king.
- Compare Mark 1:14–15, Mark 14:61–62, and Luke 11:20 to see how Jesus announces, claims, and demonstrates the arrival of the kingdom.
- For a picture of what it means to enter the kingdom, read John 3:1–21, Acts 2:37–41, and Acts 8:26–39 alongside this week's text.
- For life inside the kingdom while we wait for Christ's return, read Matthew 6:25–34, Acts 14:19–22, and Revelation 11:15–18.
- Visit the church website to explore teachings organized by [series](#), by [Scripture](#), or by [topic](#) for deeper study of the kingdom, redemption, and the return of Christ.