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 A Kingdom Mindset

 “….The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (with outward show): Neither

 shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you”

 Luke 17:20, 21

We would like to carefully step into this discourse on the kingdom of God and show that it is the spiritual sphere of salvation where God rules as King over all who belong to Him by faith. The kingdom of God has a spiritual influence and is the gracious domain of divine rule over the believers’ heart. The kingdom of God is not of this world, for Jesus said in John 18:36 “My kingdom is not of this world”, therefore, it does not strike men’s fancies, but affects their spirits, and its power is over their souls and consciences.

In His teaching of the kingdom of God in Luke 17 we see Jesus answering a question of the Pharisees concerning the coming of the kingdom. Their notion of the kingdom was of a temporal, yet physical kingdom which would be set up to advance the Jewish nation above the Roman oppression they were under at the time. There had been great expectation of the coming of the Messiah who was to set up this kingdom, yet they failed to believe that He was the One. Therefore, they were looking for an external show of what they perceived in their darkened minds to be the coming of the kingdom, when the text clearly states that the “the kingdom of God cometh not with observation”, that is, an outward show”, but is a spiritual influence established in the hearts of men. Christ came to set up His own kingdom, and that a kingdom of heaven, not an earthly kingdom as they supposed. Christ came to set up the kingdom of God among men, that they might be brought into subjection to it, and might obtain salvation in it; and He set it up by the preaching of the gospel, and a power going along with it which some could not grasp because of their inability to accept the message He was preaching. The kingdom of God can only be set up in the heart of those who repent of their current state and believe the gospel message Jesus preached. The Pharisees believed that the Messiah’s triumph would be immediate. They were looking for Him to come, overthrow Rome, and set up the millennial kingdom. However, Christ’s program was altogether different. He was inaugurating an era in which the kingdom would be manifest by the rule of God in men’s hearts through faith in the Savior. Thus, they did not possess the correct mindset of the kingdom of God, and therefore did not recognize Jesus as the One send to set it up according to scripture.

The kingdom of God is a system of operation set up by God so that He can rule in the earth through born again believers who have accepted the Lordship of Jesus by faith. Jesus started His earthly ministry crying out in Matthew 4:17 to “Repent (change your mind for the better, heartily amend your ways, with abhorrence of your past sins), for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” For a man to accept and understand so that he can operate properly in the kingdom of God requires a change of mind. When a man receives the new birth of John 3:3 where Jesus said “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”, God delivers him from the power of darkness, and translates him into the kingdom of His Son (Colossians 1:13). The word “see” in John 3:3 means he cannot know, be aware of, consider, have knowledge of, or perceive what the kingdom of God is, nor consist of. It requires a spiritual understanding which only comes by the Holy Spirit, which a believer receives at the new birth. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom which resides in the heart of God’s people. This spiritual kingdom requires internal repentance, not just external submission. It provides deliverance from sin rather than the political deliverance many Jews desired. Thus, many of the religious leaders of that time as well as today have a hard time grasping the mindset of the kingdom. A Kingdom Mindset has shifted its focus from the external, to the internal work of God in the heart of the believer with the intent of changing his way of thinking to be in line with God and His desire to bring heaven to earth through His people. A Kingdom Mindset has adopted and understands that God created man in His image and gave him dominion in the earth (Genesis 1:26 - 28). The mindset of the believer who has taken hold of this type thinking understands that he has ruling power, authority, or control in the earth. Authority means he has the power to act on behalf of somebody else (God), or official permission to do something. Man was created by God a tripod being; body, soul, spirit, so that he could be allied to both worlds, and through his born again spirit he can bring heaven to earth and rule in the earth just has God intended. A Kingdom Mindset is under the spiritual influence of God and understands the operation of God in and through His people to reign and rule in the earth today. Colossians 3:1, 2 states “if you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ setteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.” Your thinking must shift from the natural to the spiritual intent and purpose which God has for His sons and daughters; this is A Kingdom Mindset.