

Weekly Recap: Our Kingdom is Not of This World

Jared began with a reading from **Luke 17:20-21**:

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."

The people were seeking the kingdom that would free them from the Romans. An earthly kingdom that would give power to them.

Scot McKnight, in *Kingdom Conspiracy*, writes about kingdoms and says there are several key elements to consider. Kingdoms have a king, a territory with boundaries, a rule or reign, a law, and a people.

Many of us have a very small-scale version of this in our private property. We build fences and put locks on things we want to control. Jared told a story of his dad being ticketed for fishing on Lake Texoma on the Oklahoma side without an Oklahoma license. In many foreign countries, serious problems arise when foreigners do not know the rules of the land they enter.

Jared also read the story of Nebuchadnezzar's dream from **Daniel 2:24-49**. The interpretation told of four kingdoms starting with that of Babylon and going through Rome, but ending with a Kingdom of a Rock that crushes them all. This is a clear prophecy of the Kingdom of God that Jesus is bringing in his incarnation, death, and resurrection.

We then looked again at Jesus's words in Luke 17:

"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."

The Kingdom of God is like a field of weeds and wheat, all grown up together.

Ironically, even after praising God as LORD, King Nebuchadnezzar in the very next chapter commissions a statue of Gold and commands all people to worship it. It's as if he knows his kingdom will end at some point, but he will use his power as he pleases and for his glory in the meantime.

There is a clip in *The Chosen* where Judas talks with his sister and tells her how exciting this new ministry is, and that they can build something to match Rome. There is such a strong tendency to recognize all power as of the same substance and end. We must avoid this intentionally. The Kingdom of God is different.

America has been called "the shining city on a hill", and "the last, best hope of man on earth." This is not America. Only the Kingdom of God fits these descriptions. Jared talked about a childhood experience with trying to honor the flag (you'll have to watch this on the video), and then discussed

seeing an American flag recently hoisted high in the air, with a flag of a cross underneath it. Is it possible that that is a true representation of the priorities of many American Christians?

How can we discern our own priorities with regard to God and Country?

How can we prioritize our witness to the Kingdom that is Eternal?

Our reactions to an assassination attempt, or to the news in general may give us insight. Our priorities must be aligned with the Lordship of Jesus, not Caesar or America. America has boundaries, restrictions, agendas, national interests, and identity. But the Kingdom of God recognizes none of those. It has no geographic boundaries, no national agenda, and no end.

The Kingdom of God is like leaven that works through a whole batch of dough..

The Kingdom of God is like a net full of all kinds of fish.

The Kingdom of God is like a seed that when it grows allows people of all nations to perch in its branches.

The Kingdom of God is like a feast where all people are invited.

It is the only Kingdom we are to put first.