

Paradise Lost and Restored: What is Discipleship? (Part 7)

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I. Introduction

If Jesus came to fix everything that's wrong with our lives and He promises to do just that for everyone who lives their life with Him, then why are Christians suffering with and failing at the same things that non-Christians are, e.g., addiction, divorce, depression?

II. If Jesus' Kingdom is Here Now, Then Why Don't People Live in It?

Is Jesus' Kingdom here now or not? Some think Jesus' Kingdom is in heaven or in the distant future. But when Jesus came, He came offering His Kingdom, Mark 1:14-15. And He immediately began showing us what life would be like in His Kingdom: there would be love and forgiveness, Mark 2:1-17, redemption and restoration, Luke 22:31-32; John 21:15-17. He came to free mankind from the death and darkness they had live in from the time of Adam. And when He died on the Cross, He did just that; He established His Kingdom and took away Satan's power of death, Hebrews 2:14-15; Revelation 1:18.

How do we know that Jesus' Kingdom is here now? Because that's where God puts us the moment we believe in His Son. He takes us out of Satan's kingdom of darkness and puts us in the Kingdom of His Son, Colossians 1:13. This is also why God speaks to us as if we're supposed to be living in the Kingdom now, that's because we are. Therefore, He says things like, "Don't continue to live in sin. Can't you see that I've freed you from that?!" Romans 6, "You are My beloved children. My Son died to keep you out of Satan's kingdom; don't go back there!" 1 John 3, and "You used to be one of Satan's sons of disobedience, but now you are My children of light, live like it!" Ephesians 2:1-3; 5:8.

If Jesus' Kingdom is here, then why can't we see it? We can't see it because we can't see Him. And we're unable to see Him because we don't have a personal relationship with Him. In many ways, we've turned the Bible into a textbook and God into a subject we study. But Jesus didn't come offering us a Bible lesson. He came to offer us a personal relationship with Him and His Father, John 17:3. In order to see Jesus and His Kingdom, you need to have a personal relationship with Him where His Word actually comes to life.

If Jesus' Kingdom is here, then why don't people live in it? If Jesus' Kingdom is here and it has all the answers we will ever need to every problem in life, then why don't Christians live in it? Why do Christians fail at the same things that the non-Christian do? Why, for example, do Christians divorce 50% of the time? If they have all the answers to marriage, then why are they divorcing at the same rate?

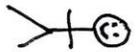
Some might say, "It's because of our sinful flesh; that's why we fail." But this is exactly what Jesus claims to have freed us from, Romans 6-8. Others might say, "It's our difficult circumstances which Satan exploits." But God says that He's given us everything we need to overcome both, 1 John 3. The reason people don't live in Jesus' Kingdom is because they don't know how; they haven't been shown. And this takes more than a Bible lesson. You have to walk alongside them the way Jesus did with His disciples, showing them how to live in the Kingdom, case in point: a young man struggles with an 18 year addiction.

Satan's Kingdom



1. Addicted since 12 yrs old
2. Afraid of everything in life
3. Lazy
4. No girlfriend
5. No car
6. Lives with his mom
7. Believes God is mad at him because of his addiction, he will NEVER get a girlfriend, car, or more out.

Jesus' Kingdom



1. Addicted since 12 yrs old
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Jesus shows up in his life
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1. Still struggles with his addiction but not as much
2. Not afraid to face life
3. Laziness is still a temptation but he now works hard
4. Got a girlfriend
5. Got a car
6. Moved out on his own
7. Though he's still tempted to believe God is mad at him, he now believes God is with him and helping him.