

Introducing Kingdom Mission

Matthew 4:23-25

MPS Jesus is the Christ who came that we might believe in Him, receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life in His Kingdom.

OBJ Every person can understand how Jesus' Kingdom advances by three Key aspects.

READ Matthew 4:23-25

And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. ²⁴So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. ²⁵And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan. **Matthew 4:23-25**

INTRO Throughout the first four chapters of Matthew's gospel we've seen the Christ of God come under the veil of miraculous virginity, held secure by sovereign provision, identified by divine appointment and introduced by glorious proclamation. As we conclude this series, these last three verses bring together Matthew's introduction to Jesus as the Christ of God and His Kingdom. If you ever wonder what life in the Kingdom is like, look at the ministry of Jesus. **Jesus' ministry shows us that He is our hope and help in this world when we trust and obey Him.**

Jesus is the Christ who came that we might believe in Him, receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life in His Kingdom.

ILLUS HS Sports I used to hate the first days of sports practice. They always started the same way. We show up all decked out and ready, and the first thing coach would say was, "Drop your equipment and lap the field three times. Conditioning was never fun but it did get us ready. Then, once tanked from conditioning, drills began. Drills were simple skills repeated mindlessly, and sometimes with severe consequences if the same mistakes lingered. Drills were better than conditioning, but not the glory I envisioned to demonstrate. Then we finally got to my favorite part of practice, scrimmage. Scrimmage brought everything together to demonstrate the full measure of our greatness, or expose the lack thereof. (At least mother was always impressed!) We received no credit for running at every practice, we never scored any points because we executed drills better, and no one recognized our scrimmage record. **But conditioning, drills, and scrimmage were all essential elements to understand and excel in school sports.**

OBJ I want us to understand **Jesus' Kingdom and how God's redemptive plan advances by three key aspects.**

Kingdom Aspect #1: Mission

Matthew outlines the essence of Jesus' Kingdom mission with three defining practices, teaching, preaching and healing. **The first practice is that Jesus came "teaching",** (*didaskon* – to instruct, with an emphasis on moral instruction¹). Jesus ushered in His Kingdom mission by teaching the perfect Law of God so people would understand and could obey. He contrasted and countered both perversions of the law, legalism that seeks to earn righteousness and licentiousness that denies unrighteousness, to reveal that righteousness only comes by faith, and empowers obedience to God by the same faith. Jesus held knowing right from wrong in high priority, establishing a source outside of self and above religion that serves as our "moral compass". **Jesus' teaching showed how the perfect Law of God is rightly understood through the lense of perfect love (gospel / cross) to bring righteousness by faith and divine power so one could walk in obedience.**

The second practice is that Jesus came "preaching", (*kerysso* – proclaim, preach). Accompanying his teaching of the Torah / Law (Old Testament), Jesus demonstrates that His mission was not just one to educate and inform, but to persuade and transform. The gospel is not mere data to digest or principles to apply, but news to be believed! And this news is good

¹ Michael R. Jones, "Teaching," ed. Douglas Mangum et al., Lexham Theological Wordbook, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014). "Denotes the activity of teaching; especially used for moral instruction."



news, more than any other and in a more glorious way than any other. When the Bible is taught absent the gospel (religion), man is summoned toward false righteousness by looking within, stoking pride, trusting human means that produces false glory of self-righteousness, but crushes under the full weight of the law's condemnation. When a good news is claimed absent the Scripture (self-righteousness), man is excused from un-righteousness, pride is coddled in self-centered pleasure and preferences to tolerate, accept and embrace sin by championing false love, reducing God, rejecting judgment of sin, and dismissing any value of righteousness, but only further incarcerates and fortifies sin's prison of condemnation. When the gospel centers all Biblical preaching, Jesus is exalted as the Savior, faith comes by hearing the Word, hope springs forth from Holy Spirit within, sin is confessed as wicked abomination against God, the blood of Jesus is applied for forgiveness of sin, cleansing of conscience, and receiving of His righteousness, and the Holy Spirit is welcomed for God's power to walk in obedience for holiness of life and godliness of living, and joy, peace and love to overflow from God to all. [The gospel of Jesus Christ serves as the glorious, culminating center for all Biblical teaching, and the motivating catalyst for all ministry.](#)

The third practice is that Jesus came "healing", (*therapeuo* – to heal, conceived of as providing care to improve a situation). The Greek word used here is where we get our word "therapy". In describing Jesus' work, Matthew uses this term with acts of both physical and spiritual healing. The word also describes a greater state of wholeness and well-being, and to describe acts of serving in general ministry. [Jesus introduces Kingdom mission by ministering to people in a manner distinct to His authority, purpose and calling, and shows us that gospel-centered ministry is essential to Kingdom mission.](#)

The key is to understand what Matthew reveals about Jesus' focus for Kingdom ministry. Far too often today we too lightly reduce ministry to personal affinities and preferences above spiritual needs, so that any tangible good deed is counted as ministry. Gospel ministry should never be "less than" good deeds; feeding the poor, addressing issues of justice, etc. are all good and worthy endeavors. But ministry that addresses the whole person is explicitly tied to a faithful witness to the gospel, God's work through Jesus Christ on the cross. You may offer a million cups of cold water and quench a lot of thirst, but only the one offered in Jesus' name can impact the whole well-being of that person's life. It is important that we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and give water to the thirsty as much as we are able. [Matt25:40](#) But all of these, and any others, should be accompanied by a faithful witness to the One who is the Bread of Life, who is Living Water, and clothes with righteousness from above when we trust in Him! Whatever you do, Christian, remember it is what is done in Jesus' name, the good deed done accompanied by a faithful witness for Jesus Christ, that eternally impact people's lives. [Kingdom ministry is always accompanied by gospel sharing.](#)

[The Mission of Jesus' Kingdom is not one or the other, but the Spirit-synergized advancement when the teaching and preaching together compel a people to a ministry that engages people with the reality of and eternal hope of Jesus in life.](#)

TRANS Jesus' message is no vain promise, but a power-punch of glory! **But what is so distinct about His Kingdom?**

Kingdom Aspect #2: Authority

Matthew continues (.24), "*So his fame spread throughout...*". This is important because fame is still highly valued today. Jesus' fame spread like a trending topic / hashtag that fills the newsfeed. And this is so important because [Jesus is the only person whose fame was completely deserved but did not fully match His worth.](#)

But Jesus came for revelation, not validation! He didn't depend on fame to build His platform. Rather, He advanced His ministry by something far greater than fame, His authority. Platforms may get you high, and we've seen no few people enjoy the rush, but they can't get you far. And they will not allow you to penetrate areas and places that threaten their security or stability. Authority advances everywhere its scope rules. [This second aspect of His Kingdom is that Jesus had no limit to the scope of His authority.](#)

Consider what comprises fame and how Jesus responded. Matthew records the demand of the world and the response of Jesus when he writes, "*and they brought him all...and he healed them.*" The demand of the world is that they brought Jesus "*all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.*" There was nothing the people brought to Jesus that He did not demonstrate complete



authority over; no problem, no illness, no sickness, no disease, no genetic imperfection, no rejection or cancelation, no oppression, no injustice, no wrong that Jesus faced that He did not perfectly absolve for the healing and well-being of the individual. **Who are the “them” that Jesus healed? The “all” that the crowd brought.** Matthew records a situation of overwhelming demand of the world met with unthreatened authority of Jesus. **Jesus’ authority is supreme over every realm and sphere, over every situation and season of life, on earth and beyond this world for eternity!**

ILLUS The **toll of the Covid Pandemic** is only beginning to be recognized. In my world, I’ve watched as people and church leaders have suffered under the weight of the demand in this time. Sadly, some have not survived. Admittedly, there are days when it feels like it takes till noon to get my shoes tied. The weight feels so heavy at times, the voices clamor so loudly, the information so unrelenting and confusing, the “crowd” so demanding.

Yet—when I read this verse I am reminded, (praise God), and I want you to hear this; **Jesus is not overwhelmed!** His energy is not exhausted! His power is not weakened! His resources are not diminishing; His mercy and grace are not evaporating, His love is not drying up! And this is true because His Authority is under absolutely NO THREAT whatsoever, not in any way, manner, to any extent or in any realm or sphere! **The Kingdom mission of our Lord Jesus Christ advances because Jesus’ authority is without compare and cannot be overwhelmed.**

APPL Jesus is King over all creation, every natural and spiritual law, every principle and precept of all that is operates under His sovereign rule and reign. And you, friend, are no exception. **Nothing in your life holds any exception to Jesus’ authority. He IS able^{2Cor9:8} if you will bring it to Him.**

Finally, consider the third Kingdom aspect. Verse 25 records, “*And great crowds followed him...*”. Jesus had more followers than others, many more! (Let that sink in for a moment.) But that they were following him no more meant that they knew Him. We are confronted by a great spectrum of contrast in these short verses. On one end there were those who hated Jesus, who opposed Him and actively worked to discredit Him in front of others (religious leaders; 10%). On the other end were those who loved Jesus, by believing in Him, and trusting to obey in following Him (real followers / disciples; 10%). In between were the crowds, the vast majority of people who didn’t hate Him, but had not believed to trust and obey Him either. When asked, “**Do you love me?**”, “Well, I don’t hate you.” is of no comfort! **Neutrality or passivity toward Jesus is rejection of Him.**

Kingdom Aspect #3: Invitation

The third aspect of Jesus Kingdom mission is His invitation to believe in Him, receive forgiveness of your sin and His eternal life. It is not enough to remain among the crowd. Jesus does not call us simply to follow along, but to “follow and be made” by Him. **Matt4:19** As long as you remain in the crowd, you may know about Him but you cannot be made by Him. The invitation of Jesus’ Kingdom is to “Repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sin.” **Matt4:17; Acts16:31** **The Kingdom has come in Jesus Christ with the invitation to enter by faith in the One who is the Way, Jesus Himself.**

Yes, the wonder-working power may attract you into the crowd, but only the faithful teaching of His Word and preaching of the gospel can transform you into His image. You will never be personally impacted by the real power of God in Jesus Christ, to be forgiven and cleanses and receive His life, until you believe in Him, and by faith repent and obey. **It is not enough to follow in the crowd. You must believe and become a follower of Jesus Christ!**

Jesus is the Christ who came that we might believe in Him, receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life in His Kingdom.

