

Entering the Kingdom

By David Phillips

Introduction

1. Many people are aware of the kingdom of heaven.
2. Many people want to enter.
3. But not many people know how to enter.
4. Through His ministry Jesus teaches us how to enter the kingdom of heaven. We must apply His teachings if we want to have the hope of eternal life.

Discussion

I. Proper Attitude for Entering the Kingdom

- A. Matt. 5:20: Righteousness exceeds the scribes and Pharisees:
 1. Scribes and Pharisees only had an outward appearance of righteousness (Matt. 23:25-26).
 2. Righteousness that exceeds theirs is righteousness which begins in the heart.
 3. See teachings following Matt. 5:20: Angry without cause, adultery in the heart, sanctity of marriage, honest heart—things that the scribes and Pharisees did not practice.
- B. Matt. 18:3: Become as little children (Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17)
 1. Trust in God as little child, not arrogant, self-reliant adult.
 2. Kingdom requires attitude of meekness, humility, poor spirit, absolute trust, total obedience—as a little child.
 3. Child with the character of God (Eph. 5:1).
- C. Matt. 21:31: Tax collectors and harlots enter first.
 1. These were willing to acknowledge their sinful condition.
 2. See Luke 18:10ff—tax collector and Pharisee.
 3. Pharisees thought they were righteous of themselves (Rom. 10:1-3).
 4. Tax collectors and harlots acknowledged their sinfulness and therefore sought the grace of God for salvation.

II. Giving Up All for the Kingdom

- A. Matt. 13:44-46: Those who enter are willing to sell all for the kingdom.
 1. The kingdom is most valuable and first priority in their life (Matt. 6:33).
 2. When it comes to choosing, the kingdom comes before all else (Phil. 3:8).
- B. Matt. 19:23-24: Hard for a rich man to enter (Mark 10:23-25; Luke 18:24-25).
 1. Not riches that hinder. Being rich is not a sin.
 2. Rather, trust in riches which keep a person out (“*How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter...*” Mark 10:24).
 3. Those who trust in riches are not capable of trusting in God; therefore it is difficult for them to enter.
 4. But not impossible—1 Tim. 6:17-19.

- C. Mark 9:47: Pluck out eye, cut off right hand—cast off things that cause to sin.
 - 1. Cast off everything that hinders from entering kingdom.
 - 2. Friends, sinful activities, possessions (see rich young ruler), etc.
 - 3. “*lay aside every weight*” (Heb. 12:1).
- D. Matt. 7:21: Do the will of the Father in heaven.
 - 1. Cast off everything that hinders, but must be replaced with something.
 - 2. Replace with the will of God. Make His will our own.
 - 3. Not “what I feel” or “what pastor or creed says” but God’s will—according to Scripture.
- E. Acts 14:22: Through many tribulations enter the kingdom.
 - 1. Be willing to obey at all costs.
 - 2. Though the world hates us, know that we are servants of God and not of men.
 - 3. Seek reward in kingdom (Matt. 5:10-12).

III. Taking the Proper Steps to Enter the Kingdom

- A. John 3:5: Born of water and of spirit.
- B. Baptism involves water and Spirit.
 - 1. A person must come having faith in Christ and in the power of God to forgive sins.
 - 2. Having that faith he must be baptized in water (Col. 2:12; Acts 8:36-38).
 - 3. When he is “*buried with Christ in Baptism*” he is raised from the water to “*walk in newness of life*” (Rom. 6:4).
 - 4. Now we know that physically there is no change in our baptism, but spiritually we are made clean, we have a new life, we are born of God (1 Pet 1:22-23).
 - 5. Thus, born of water and spirit.
- C. Those who do so are being “*conveyed into the kingdom*” (Col. 1:13).

Conclusion

- 1. The first thing Jesus preached was the kingdom of heaven (Mark 1:14-15).
- 2. Through His teaching He shows us what is necessary to enter that kingdom.
- 3. It begins in our conversion—being born again.
- 4. Once we are born again we must strive to attain the other attributes listed above: putting on the proper attitude as citizens in the kingdom, making the kind of sacrifices necessary of citizens in the kingdom.
- 5. If you wish to enter the kingdom of God in which is eternal life—will you come?

October, 2006

Avondale church of Christ
 1606 Glen Willow Rd., P.O. Box 421, Avondale, PA 19311
 Phone: (610) 268-2088
 Email: info@avondalechristians.com
 Website: www.avondalechristians.com

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