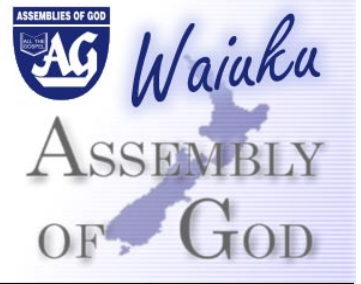


Small Group Discussion Outline



PART TWO IN OUR "LIVING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD" SERIES

In the first study in this series we identified four aspects of the Kingdom of God. For the rest of this series, we will be focusing solely on the experience of God's Kingdom in the present.



Read: John 3:1-8

In this passage Jesus reveals two keys to understanding and entering the Kingdom of God.



1. **What do we need to do to *SEE* the Kingdom?**
2. **What do we need to do to *ENTER* the Kingdom?**

The words Jesus chose in this passage are not simply a play on the same thing; they are two separate things. To see the Kingdom of God is one thing, to actually *enter* it is another.

The Greek word translated 'see' is the word ὁράω (horao) and means literally 'to see or perceive something with the eyes or mind.' The Greek word translated 'enter' is the word εἰσερχομαι (eiserchomai) (pronounced: ice-er-comb-ah-ee). It means literally to 'come in and enter, or of entrance into a state or condition, also to come into existence.'

The two words are clearly different in meaning so Jesus is obviously teaching two different things about the Kingdom of God.

To **see** the Kingdom we need to be "born again", a better translation is "born from above." Birth is the means by which we enter this world; we cannot enter this world unless we are created and formed in the womb of something that is of this world and adapted to it (i.e. a human.)

NIV 1 John 3:9 *No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.*

Humans are formed in the womb to suit the conditions of the world they are born into; in order to enter the Kingdom of God, we need to be spiritually transformed in order to suit its conditions. To be "born again" or "born from above" means to be transformed by the power of God to suit the environment of His Kingdom.

To actually **enter** God's Kingdom, Jesus teaches that we need to be "born of water and the Spirit."

Entering The Kingdom of God

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This means more than simply being water-baptised and filled with the Holy Spirit; the world is filled with Christians who have been “born again” and water-baptised and filled with the Holy Spirit and yet live their lives merely *seeing* the Kingdom of God - not *entering* it.

Being “born of water and the Spirit” means to live a life of repentance ,allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us. Repentance is not a one-off act that we do; it is a constant and consistent change for the better, of bringing our lives under God’s authority and submitting to His desire’s.

To enter the Kingdom of God we need to exchange the culture of this world for the culture of the Kingdom of God.



Read: John 10:10

The Bible teaches that there are two kingdoms in this world; the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Darkness, sometimes called “The Kingdom of the World.” (Ephesians 2:2; Colossians 1:13; Revelation 11:15)

Both Kingdoms have a king, purpose and culture. The purpose of each kingdom is determined by its king; the culture reflects the kings character, and the culture fulfils the purposes of the kingdom.

Kingdom of God	Kingdom of Darkness
KING = Jesus	KING = Satan
PURPOSE = “life to the full”	PURPOSE = “steal, kill and destroy”
CULTURE = surrender to God, obedience, holiness, faith, forgiveness, ‘Fruits of the Spirit.’	CULTURE = selfishness, sin, unbelief, unforgiveness, opposite ‘Fruits of the Spirit.’
REFERENCES: John 10:10; Luke 22:42; Matthew 16:24; Luke 9:23; 1 Peter 4:2; Galatians 5:22; 1 John 1:9	REFERENCES: John 10:10; Galatians 3:22; Galatians 5:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; James 3:14-16;

We can see that the end result of living according to the culture of either kingdom will be the fulfilment of the purpose of that kingdom.

Becoming a Christian doesn’t mean we automatically experience life in the Kingdom of God; being water-baptised, filled with the Holy Spirit and even repenting do not instantly result in life in the Kingdom of God. To fully enter and experience the Kingdom of God we need to live by the culture of the Kingdom. This means obeying the laws of God’s Kingdom and living by the principles of God’s Kingdom. This is no easy thing and will often cost us immensely. Only in God’s strength can we do this - but first we need to act in obedience and faith, count the cost and ‘just do it’ in the faith that, as hard as things may get, the Holy Spirit will help us.

The life lived in the Kingdom of God is lived under God’s authority, His blessings, and His power.



3. ***Why do so many Christians fail to fully experience this life?***
4. ***Which aspects of our worldly ‘culture’ are hard to let go of?***
5. ***What will happen if we don’t fully exchange cultures?***

The benefits of life in the Kingdom of God are far greater than any sacrifice we could ever make.

Live the culture of the Kingdom through the strength of the King and fulfil the purposes of the Kingdom!

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