**St Martins C3 – February 27, 2022**

**Called to be Kingdom Builders**

**Sermon Summary:**

It is such a blessing when it is obvious that God placed us in a particular situation to bring His Life to someone who needs it. It is fulfilling God’s purpose on our lives, to be Kingdom builders.

So far in this series we have been exploring how we can live a lifestyle where we are preparing ourselves to be Kingdom Builders through seeking God’s presence, seeking His Holiness and growing in discernment. As we prepare ourselves in these ways, then we are more likely to be aware of the work of God’s Kingdom.

Matthew 6:10: ***“Your Kingdom come Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”***

Jesus came to bring the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:43) and calls us to do the same (Matthew 10 & Luke10)

***So, what IS the Kingdom of God?***

The Kingdom of God is any situation where God’s will and purposes are done. Where the culture of Heaven comes to earth.

Therefore, when we pray, *“Your Kingdom come…”* we are praying for God’s will and purposes to be fulfilled in this particular situation we are in, in the here and now.

Jesus modelled and taught his disciples to seek God as to how they were to bring His Kingdom purposes to the world around them.

**Example: John 4:1-42**

God’s Kingdom comes to Samaria through an everyday opportune conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well. Here is a few observations from this passage:

1. **Jesus creates an opportunity in an everyday encounter.**

Jesus engages her in conversation and takes a genuine interest in her. As He does so, He weaves Kingdom truth into the conversation.

1. **Jesus is aware of what God is doing below the surface.**

In this situation it was a prophetic insight into here marital situation. As we are looking for opportunities and praying for God to reveal what needs to be revealed, He will give you a question to ask, and insight to share, or an encouragement to give. This will all come from seeking revelation as to where God is working.

1. **Jesus reveals who He really is.**

In verse 26, we read of how Jesus reveals who He is to her. This leads to her coming closer to The Kingdom as well as those she tells back home. Likewise, our Kingdom Building with God will always lead people to Jesus.

A prayer that may help us partner with God in Kingdom building:

***“Lord how do you want me to bring your Kingdom in this situation?”***

**Suggested Connect Group discussion questions:**

*What is something that we have covered in this series that has challenged or inspired you?*

*What did Jesus mean by the phrase, “The Kingdom of God?”*

*What would it look like if more of God’s Kingdom was evident in your life and relationships?*

*Do you think the regularly praying the suggested prayer we looked at on Sunday would make a difference in situations you may be in this week?*

*How may the prayer help you see opportunities you previously may have missed?*

*How may the prayer help you see what God is doing below the surface?*

*How may the prayer help you help someone else consider carefully who Jesus is and what He has done for them?*

**Monday’s Devotion – Ask the Lord for workers**

**Luke 10:2**

*“He told them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”*

This scripture has always intrigued me. Why would we need to pray to God to send more workers for the harvest. Wouldn’t God be already aware of this need? There could be several different reasons why Jesus taught this to His disciples. Here are a couple that stand out to me:

1. **Praying for a need focuses our attention on it.**

Although praying for workers is something we are asking God to do, it highlights to our hearts and minds what God’s purposes are. God is all about bringing in the harvest and we ought to be focused on that as well. It is easy for needs to be highlighted to us and we respond in the moment, but then forget a week later. Praying for workers, keeps the purposes of God front and centre in our thinking.

1. **It will highlight what we can do.**

In my experience whenever I have prayed for God to do something, He has always led me to be involved in some way. Whether that be more prayer, financial giving, or getting involved on the ground or in the background. So, praying for other workers will highlight the work we are to do in the harvest.

Let us pray for workers in the harvest and at the same time be listening for how God is leading us to be a worker too.

**Tuesday’s Devotion – Some will, some won’t**

**Luke 10:3**

*“Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.”*

As Kiwi’s we do our best to not “rock the boat” too much. Where we could speak out, we often don’t. We don’t like to push our opinions on anyone. Possibly because we want to just get along with each other. We often hang back, because we are unsure of the response we are going to get.

Jesus is making the point here that we have to embrace the fact that not everyone will respond positively to the gospel message. Don’t take it personally, they are not rejecting you, they are rejecting Jesus.

This ought not stop us bringing the Kingdom to the world around us. It simply clarifies what we are to expect. Some will accept the message and others won’t.

We are like the innocent lambs going out there with the truth of who Christ is, but there are savage wolves whose agenda is to do all they can to attack the sheep and the truth they are preaching.

Later in the chapter we read of how many did respond positively, despite this opposition, which ought to encourage us as well. We are not going to back off, just because it is hard, or because the message may get rejected. We keep preaching the Kingdom for those who will respond positively.

**Wednesday’s Devotion – Do the work of the Kingdom**

**Matthew 10:8**

*“Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.”*

Jesus is very clear on what the work of His Kingdom looks like. It is to bring God’s life to others. This will include salvation and fighting against that which is not just, but also includes miracles, like healing and deliverance.

This may seem quite daunting. After all, none of us feel equipped to do miracles. However, we are not relying on our power, but His power. I would never claim to be a miracle worker, but I serve a God who is. As uncomfortable as this verse makes us feel, we ought to live with that discomfort and not rationalize it away. If God promised that he would do miracles through us as we go out to extend His Kingdom, then that is what He will do.

The other thing that stands out to me in Matthew and Luke 10, is that Jesus encourages His disciples to focus on the work of His Kingdom, not the many other good works that could distract them. There may be many good things that we could get involved in and give our energy to, but God has called us to Kingdom work. Kingdom work is pushing back the work of Satan and bringing Christ and His life to those around us. So, let us be clear on what Kingdom work is and seek God’s power to do it.

**Thursday’s Devotion – God meets our needs, as we do the work of His Kingdom.**

**Luke 10:4**

*“Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.”*

As we have explored Matthew and Luke 10 this week, we have seen that there is no greater work we can do than the work of God’s Kingdom. It is His Kingdom that will dramatically change people’s lives. Therefore it is a great privilege to be involved in this great harvest.

However, there will be challenges along the way. People will oppose the gospel. We won’t be honoured by the world for what we are doing. On top of all that, we are not going to get earthly rewards for doing the work of the Kingdom. This is a sacrificial work.

An important aspect of Jesus’ instructions in this passage is to not rely on your natural resources for this work. God will meet our needs as we go. I am sure this would have stretched the disciples faith as it stretches ours. I suspect this is the very point that Jesus is seeking to make here. Obedience comes first, resources follow.

May we all have the courage to willing obey God’s call on our lives and trust Him to meet our every need.

**Friday’s Devotion – Eternal celebrations and judgements**

**Luke 10:18-20**

*He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”*

As the Kingdom of God is extended, the powers of darkness are defeated and pushed back. Those who choose to reject the gospel are choosing to align themselves with Satan and will in time face judgement. This may sound dramatic, but it is supposed to. Jesus was very clear on the reality of judgement for those who reject Him.

For those who embrace the gospel and become workers themselves in the harvest, their names will be written in the book of life. They will enjoy partnering with Christ in establishing His Kingdom and defeating Satan.

Jesus quickly sees the danger here, that the disciples will seek to take credit for this themselves and get inflated egos, so He brings them back to the reality. None of this is possible without the power of God. So, yes, let us rejoice, but let us rejoice, not in our abilities, but in the ability of the One whose power will ultimately triumph over sin and bring His Kingdom to reign on earth forever.