“Two Kingdoms”

January 10, 2016

Luke 17:20-30

Almost everywhere in the world you can read or hear the lines from “The LORD’s Prayer” that go like this; “Thy Kingdom come.” And when you read the NT you find that there were seven occasions when Jesus preached on the Kingdom of God. We call those particular sermons parables; seven parables on the kingdom.

And beyond the words of Jesus, we have the other Bible authors writing on the subject of the kingdom in twelve more books of the NT. Today’s topic is this; “Two Kingdoms.” Shall we pray?

Let’s begin at the beginning. Take a look with me at the Book of Genesis and the third chapter. Please open your Bible to Genesis three. The devil, according to the Bible, is The Great Deceiver. What appears to be is not always the way it really is. When it comes to mankind, from the very beginning of the world, Satan was determined to get man to reject what God had said and to believe what he said.

Look with me at Genesis 3:1 *“Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (2) And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:*

*(3) But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. (4) And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:…”*

Through all the centuries of the history of mankind Satan’s goal hasn’t changed. The strategies he uses may change. But his goal is the same. The devil’s one large desire for the human race; to get you to reject things that are true and to accept his lies, the things that are false.

Now, aren’t there things you’ve read in the Bible that you have either challenged or outright disbelieved? As I thought this over a while back, I came to the conclusion that Satan’s goal is to get you to believe, to exercise faith, *not* in the LORD; *not* in what He has said, but faith in what the devil says.

This is so evident in the way we sometimes approach the Christian life. I’ll give you a classic example. Here’s Romans 6:17. Here you’ll see that God says that every Believer has ceased being a servant of sin and we have now become the servants of God. And yet, have you not oftentimes been guilty of rejecting God’s word regarding your servanthood?

Are you among those who believed this?

Here’s Romans 6:17 *“But God be thanked, that* ***ye were the servants of sin****, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. (18)* ***Being*** *then* ***made free from sin****, ye became the servants of righteousness.*

*(20) For when* ***ye were the servants of sin****, ye were free from righteousness. (21) What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now shamed? for the end of those things is death. (22) But now* ***being made free from sin****, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”*

We read God’s word on the subject. We see it. But we sin. So, instead of resting confidently in the security of what God has said, we doubt Him. And we then live the life of the constantly struggling Christian. We struggle against our sinful impulses. So you see, you’ve allowed the Devil to become your Deceiver. And if you go on day after day in the belief that what God has said is *not* the way it is, then how can you live the Christian life and truly grow up in Christ?

Actually what happens is that the devil gets you to doubt God and then you fall into spiritual discouragement; maybe into spiritual despair; maybe into spiritual disillusionment. Yet, folks, God has literally filled you with spiritual life and with that life comes a treasure trove of spiritually precious gems of all sorts.

What the LORD has laid on my heart to say to you today has to do with a Kingdom, actually two kingdoms; the kingdom ruled by Satan; which we call the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light; the kingdom ruled by God.

Now please take your Bible with me and open it to the first chapter of the Book of Colossians. Colossians 1:12 *“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet [fit and worthy] to be partakers [joint sharer, participant] of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:”*

Over the years of my Christian life I’ve discovered that finding success in my spiritual life has a lot to do with understanding the things God does and the things He has done for me. And, I’m sure you are finding the very same thing. And sometimes we learn these things from the very same verses that we’ve already learned. My heart is drawn this week to especially verse 13. Look a little closer with me at this 13th verse and see what the LORD has done. Colossians 1:13 *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:…”*

This is a verse that you may have completely memorized. But, when it comes to spiritual things, it’s always good to compare spiritual things with spiritual things. And it’s always good to meditate in your heart what you’ve learned with your mind.

The two kingdoms are as plain as day in this passage.

So, what can we learn from these words?

First, at the moment of your salvation, God saved you. He rescued you. He delivered you from one person’s domain; from one person’s dominion and He translated you into another person’s domain; into another Person’s dominion.

By nature, we belonged to another king. But let me be as clear as I can about this. Most people around you are so deceived by the devil that they don’t see themselves as belonging to him and his kingdom. The Bible teaches us that the world lies in the wicked one.

I John 5:19 *“And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”*

Yet, Satan does not want people to believe this. Before we came to Christ, *we were in another kingdom*, a kingdom where darkness reigns.

Did you know that no matter new thing human beings invent, there is always an element of evil that will attempt to use it to accomplish evil in the world? Back in the 1960, the invention of the internet was a huge leap forward in the progress of the human race.

But today we have the worst of the human race at work behind the scenes day and night attempting to cheat and deceive you. You shouldn’t even get onto the internet without some sort of virus protection today. And identity fraud. It’s costing consumers $137,000,000.00 per day. And immorality; pornography, the worst filth ever is being perpetrated on the internet. Just to use it today, you need to be constantly vigilant. And many children have the internet in their hands all day long today with their own cell phones.

So, we *were* under the dominion of a king; king Satan. But a battle took place and that king who rules over the kingdom of darkness, was defeated. And yet, Satan would never give you the impression that he’s a defeated for.

And, as everyone everywhere knows, when a king is defeated, when he loses on the battlefield, he loses his authority over his subjects. The spoils of war always go to the victor.

I think sometimes the reason we sometimes don’t receive God’s word on a subject like battles and spiritual battles, in particular, is because we’re lazy. The Scripture says we are to “let the word of Christ dwell in us richly.” That means “let your heart and mind be persuaded by the things you read in your Bible; not by the things of this world.” You will certainly be amazed at the freedom you will enjoy when you simply let His word have full sway in your heart.

Let me show you both the battle and the victory. It’s found in this same Book, in the second chapter at verse thirteen. Colossians 2:13 *“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, [that’s what you were when you were in the kingdom of darkness], hath he [Jesus Christ, the Son of God] quickened [made alive] together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;*

*(14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”*

Here’s the battlefield – verse 14 “… *and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”*

When the LORD Jesus died on the Cross, He won the battle with the prince of darkness; He didn’t lose the battle. He won it. He “spoiled principalities and powers.” When someone spoils an enemy on the battlefield, it means “He defeated the king and he defeated his armies.”

Think about a battle you’ve read about in history. Was the king on the front lines? He placed his best generals out on the field. And if and when the battle or the war was lost on the battlefield, the king still lost. Satan lost in 33 A.D. when Jesus was crucified. It was the most significant and amazing battle in all of history. The One Who appeared to lose comes out the complete Victor.

Verse 14 again “… *and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”*

One translation puts it like this, “He disarmed the rulers and authorities.” “He stripped them of their power.” Here’s what we read in the Gospel of John, chapter 12, verse 31 *“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.”*

That means that “this world” has been judged. The prince of this world, the devil himself, is cast out. He, Satan, is now removed from having authority over it. Jesus defeated and completely vanquished the devil at Calvary. And now Satan’s claim to authority over the world is no longer a legit.

Now, I know you know this. I know that you’ve read this or hear it preached. But who believes that? Who here believed that since the day of the Cross when the LORD Jesus died, Satan has been persuading the entire world, even attempting to persuade you and me to believe that he retains his authority or that he has dominion over us or that in some way he won the battle that day. Does anybody see here the blatant lie in Satan’s deception here?

Folks, the last thing Satan wants is for people like you and me to believe or preach or teach this simple message, that he was completely vanquished at the Cross. If the devil could get the message out that the work of Calvary was just a man dying on a cross; a criminal dying alongside other criminals on a hill outside the city of Jerusalem, then, through his lies he’d be doing the exact same thing he did to Mother Eve in the Garden of Eden.

“Did God say that?” “Well, if He said that here’s what he meant.” His question to people today is “Has God said that the Cross of His Son finished me off? No way!”

Now consider this with me. When you choose to receive the devil’s lie about the Cross, you have, in essence, placed yourself at odds with God and with the truth. Has the devil been vanquished at Calvary or not? You see, if we lose the message of the work of Christ, Who totally and completely defeated the devil at the Cross, how could we ever believe that God has “delivered us from the kingdom of darkness”?

Folks, the word is true. On the one hand, it’s simple. It’s clear. And, it’s forever settled in Heaven. On the other hand, Satan has such a deceptive sway over the world, why should we let him sway us who are in the Church of Christ? Even many of God’s people are walking in unbelief when it comes to the kingdom of darkness and its ruler.

Now, please don’t take this to mean that Satan is be completely disregarded. As a matter of fact, you need to be even more vigilant. Youi still need to stand against his wiles and deceits.

Look at the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6:14 *“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, …”* The most powerful weapon you have in dealing with the Deceiver is the Truth. *“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth…”* Every other piece of spiritual armor here is dependent upon the Truth.

Folks, you have the Truth on your side. And Satan despises it. He has made it his main objective ever since the Garden of Eden to get the world to reject the truth and to believe his lies. The Apostle John in his first epistle says this, I John 5:19 *“and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”*

So, yes, there are two kingdoms: the Kingdom of Light and the Kingdom of Darkness.

First, at the moment of your salvation, God saved you. He rescued you. He delivered you from Satan’s dominion.

Second, the largest battle ever has been fought. And the King of Light has vanquished the Prince of darkness.

Look again at Colossians 1:13 *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated [transferred] us into the kingdom of his dear Son:”*

The battle took place on Mount Calvary in 30 A.D. On that day, the day the Son of God defeated the prince of darkness.

Third, everyone who has trusted in the Cross has been “delivered” from the Kingdom of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of God’s Dear Son.

Have you been delivered from the kingdom of darkness?

I like this term “delivered” Today it’s a medical term that refers to the birth of a child. But this term here in the Bible is a military term. It means “I was rescued either during or after a battle.”

Folks, you’ve been rescued just like a soldier who’s been captured and held in prison by the enemy. At one time God was your enemy. Now, now He’s no longer an enemy. Now, He’s your LORD. Now, He’s your King.

Do you remember the O.T. story where Lot was rescued by his uncle Abraham? Here’s what you read in the NT about that rescue. Second Epistle of Peter chapter 2:7 *“And delivered just [righteous] Lot,”*

Well, what had Abraham done to and for Lot? Delivered” = “rescued from.”

Look at these next couple verses and let them sink down into your soul. Romans 11:26 *“…as it is written, There shall come out of Sion* ***the Deliverer****, …”*

II Corinthians 1:10 *“Who* ***delivered us from*** *so great a death, …”*

I Thessalonians 1:10 *“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which* ***delivered us from*** *the wrath to come.”*

Colossians 1:13 *“Who hath* ***delivered us*** *from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:”*

Someone has called this “The Three Greatest Rescues the World Has Ever known.” The Deliverer, Jesus Christ, rescued us from death, from the wrath to come, and from the kingdom of darkness.

You see, the work of the Christ on the battlefield of the Cross was a work of “deliverance,” a real “rescue,” “an eternal rescue.”

And do you know what people around you need? They need to be rescued. Sin, Satan, and death have so engulfed the world that if they aren’t rescued they’ll spend eternity in Hell.

And what are we to be “rescued from”? (Colossians 1:13) *“Who hath* ***delivered us*** *from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:”*

From the “power of darkness.” This word “power” is our old English word for “dominion.” You, as a child of God, are no longer a subject of Satan’s kingdom of darkness.

You’ve been rescued, delivered out of the power of darkness. And you’ve been translated into another kingdom. “Translated” means “transferred into.” It means that you’ve been “brought into” another kingdom.

And that kingdom is the Kingdom of God’s dear Son. You see, it was “God’s Dear Son” that fought and won the battle that day on the Cross. It was God’s Dear Son that defeated the prince of darkness. It was God’s Dear Son that rescued you from Satan and it was God’s Dear Son that transferred you into His own Kingdom.

Now think with me about this new Kingdom that you and I are part of. There have always been those who see the kingdom only as the Kingdom that is to come. And there is a Kingdom that will come. Christ *will* rule this kingdom on the earth someday. But there is a huge disconnect from the truth if that’s all you see in the Kingdom.

Are you not in His Kingdom today? Satan would have you believe that you’re in *his* kingdom and that he has authority over you. But don’t you know better? Isn’t he a Total Liar, A Total Deceiver? Isn’t he attempting to get people to believe that he really is in charge of this world? To believe that the work of Calvary was not a complete work? That he really wasn’t defeated at the Cross?

Folks, God’s goal for you today is to that you see where you are and see Who it is that you belong to and to see Whose Kingdom you are in today and that *He’s* your King today. Don’t let a defeated deceiver persuade you to dismiss the glory of the Cross of Christ and all its implications for your daily life.

These powerful words are used over and over in the Scripture to describe the work of salvation that God has accomplished for you.

First, at the moment of your salvation, God saved you. He rescued you. He delivered you from Satan’s dominion.

Second, the largest battle ever has been fought. And the King of Light has vanquished the Prince of darkness.

Third, everybody across the entire globe who has trusted in the LORD Jesus has been rescued from the Deceiver and has been transferred, placed into the Kingdom of God’s Dear Son.

Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Fourth, and finally, what do you believe? Are you a Believer in Jesus Christ? Or, are you still living with the belief in the lies Satan tells you about himself? Or about God? Or about Christ? Or about His Kingdom?

Everything you are and everything you have is hinged upon that great battle when two kingdoms fought to the finish.

So, which Kingdom is yours?

You may be here and are *hoping* that you are in His Kingdom. But, you know in your own heart whether or not you are truly saved.

If you aren’t truly secure in the Kingdom of God’s Dear Son, today is the Day of Salvation. *Your* need is to Repent of your sins and to Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ.

* To Repent = to change your mind about God, Christ, your sin, and God’s free gift of salvation.
* To Believe = to simply trust Jesus Christ alone as the One Who paid the entire penalty for your sins.

Jesus Christ paid the penalty for every sin you ever committed. He became your Substitute on the day He died on Calvary two thousand years ago. For you, here’s the greatest news in all the world is this: The Father gave His Son to pay the penalty for all your sins. Jesus Christ died on the Cross as your Substitute and wants to be your Savior today. You need to cry out to Him for His free gift of salvation? What could possibly hold you back from having a saving relationship with your Creator?

Think about the LORD as the One Who completely vanquished Satan and He did it for you. He sent His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ, to achieve for you what you could never achieve on your own. He purchased salvation in order to bring forgiveness to your heart. Will you come to Him by simple faith in His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ today?

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

Will you, right now, repent of your sins and pray this prayer to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and LORD? Remember, today is the day of Salvation. Here is that prayer, *“Father, I realize I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died in my place on the cross. I repent of my sins. I want to be completely forgiven today. I am trusting you right now to save me. Thank you. Amen”*

Jesus said, *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with Me.”* Revelation 3:20

Shall we pray?

Sing Hymn # 417 “It Is Well With My Soul”