



DISCIPLES OF JESUS **“The Kingdom of Heaven” Matthew 4:12–17**

No.6316

Stuart Briscoe

The ministries of Jesus and John the Baptist started out in similar fashion - both preached, “The kingdom of heaven (God) is near”- a message the disciples themselves would later be sent out to proclaim. We need to be thoroughly familiar with this message too.

I. The Significance of “The Kingdom” Message.

- A. Kingdom of heaven/God mean the same thing – see Matthew 19:23-24
- B. Kingdom of heaven preferred by Matthew – Jews reluctant to use God’s name.
- C. Kingdom message preached by John, Jesus, 12 apostles and Paul and his team.
- D. Kingdom message called “good news” – gospel! Mark 1:15.
- E. Kingdom is near, has come, but will come – go figure! Matthew 4:17; 6:10; 12:28
- F. Kingdom is the realm of God’s rule overcoming Satan’s dominion
- G. Kingdom message preached in “whole world” before “the end” Matthew 24:14
- H. Kingdom message illustrated by many parables in Matthew. Matthew 13
- I. Kingdom neither understood nor experienced without “new birth” John 3:3-5

II. The Content of “The Kingdom” Message.

- A. In John’s preaching. Matthew 3:1–12.
 - 1. The Kingdom announced by promised Forerunner Matthew 3:1-3; Isaiah 40:1-5.
 - 2. It was about sin and the need for confession and repentance. Matthew 3:2, 6
 - 3. It demanded repentance that led to changed lives – “fruit “ Matthew 3:8
 - 4. It focused on judgment–see contrast with Jesus’ message. Matthew 3:10
 - 5. It was preparatory-pointing to the “more powerful” one. Matthew 3:11
- B. In Jesus’ preaching. Matthew 4:12–17
 - 1. Matthew sets the stage by quoting Isaiah’s prophecy. Isaiah 9:12-16
 - 2. The expectation of the King and Kingdom’s arrival was intensifying. *See 2 Samuel 13,14; Isaiah 9:6,7; 11:1-10; 65:13-19; Jeremiah 23:5,6, 31:31f.; Ezekiel 37:24-28; Daniel 2:44; 7:13,14*
 - 3. It would be accompanied by baptism “with the Holy Spirit ...and fire.”
 - a. The Holy Spirit promising blessing.
 - b. The fire predicting judgment
 - 4. Knowledge of this reality should lead to repentance – see 2 Corinthians 7:10-12

III. The Challenge of “The Kingdom” Message.

- A. The incontrovertible evidence that the Kingdom has arrived
- B. The corresponding evidence that it is being fiercely resisted.
- C. The personal call to examine whose reign we live under.