

# Weaving the Word

## *Dwelling in the Kingdom*

Part 7 – March 23, 2014



We're weaving together Jesus' 3½ year mission in the Gospels, connecting the jots of the OT Law and Prophets, and pausing on the people and parables and signs and symbols that populate it.

Have you noticed it's been a while since I've said we're following the outline in Mark's condensed Gospel? That's because ... *we aren't*.



Two months ago we followed Jesus to Capernaum (*Village of Comfort*). Remember how we closed our eyes and prayed with Jesus on the shore?

We compared its green hills and quiet waters to the Lord's Prayer; and, not only does Isaiah call it the land of the shadow of death, but it sits at the entrance to the Jordan Valley. We saw how **there's a huge difference between Good News (the Gospel) and good rules.**



**Every religion, and no-religion, can only offer advice.** Christ came to proclaim *freedom* from sin and death through His victory. **We all long to escape the darkness, and the good news Jesus began to preach in Capernaum was the Gateway back into God's Garden.**



But, I couldn't skip the stories Mark doesn't include, like *Nicodemus at Night* and *The Woman at the well*; or, the prophetic visions of Christ as the *High Priest Covered in Filth*, the *Faithful Bridegroom*, and the *Rejected Servant*.

*That's* where we left off last week, in Jesus' hometown with His own people trying to throw Him over a cliff ... overlooking Capernaum. And *this* is when **Jesus descends from His home to bring His kingdom to those in the valley below.**

Mt Nitai; most likely, Nazareth

Scriptures used in the video:

**"The time has come,"** he said. **"The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"** – Mark 1:15 NIV

Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali — to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles — the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” From that time on Jesus began to preach, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”** – Matthew 4:13-17 NIV

**The kingdom of God** (Mark 1:15) **doesn't mean heaven; even the kingdom of *heaven*** (Mat 4:17) **doesn't mean heaven, it's His kingdom come and His will being done, on earth *as it is* in heaven.** (Mat 6:10)



And, the kingdom was *near* because Jesus was here!

**“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”** – Revelation 3:20 NIV

**Did you know He really does *knock*?** I have an actual recording of Jesus *knocking*. Listen. **I think we ask Him into our *heart* because it's the one body part created to knock!**

**You better open before He stops knocking!** Because, **that door won't open when the knocking stops!** And notice, **He's not just *knocking*; He's *beating* on your heart, because He *really wants in!***

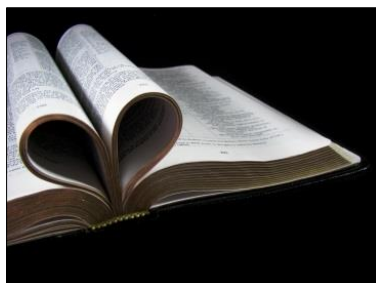
In heaven, God already has full reign. **The Kingdom of God is the realm of His rule.** And, **He's expanding His realm heart by heart.**

Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, **“The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”** – Luke 17:20-21 NIV



Thus, **we enter His kingdom by letting Him reign in our heart.** And, **this kingdom is within you, so don't expect it to be around you.**

If you're born in a US embassy on foreign soil, you're a citizen of the United States of America. **If you're *reborn* in the embassy of Christ, you're a united citizen of God's eternal Kingdom even as you dwell down here.**



Suddenly, **we're straddling two realms: the temporal *and* eternal.** And, **we must choose to which our true allegiance will align.** You see, **we're called to be Ambassadors of Light in an outpost of darkness.**

After we've heard His voice, answered the Door, and opened our heart, **why's He keep knocking?** *Buh-bum, buh-bum, buh-bum ...*

There's more than one door. Far more!

Did you know that there's an actual door we must physically open, if we want Jesus to enter.

God's Word is the door we open again and again.

When Jesus, the Word made flesh, rose from the dead and appeared to His disciples, He passed *through* a locked door. (John 20:19) **Why didn't He open the door, or *knock on* the door?**

Because He *is* the Door!

**"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved ..."** – John 10:9 NAS

It's not religious rules to read, but a relationship to cherish! He's the Door. He's the Word. He's the Light. **As you enter His kingdom, He enters your heart. As you open your heart, He opens His Word, and implants His Spirit of Truth within you.**

**"... you are in me, and I am in you."** – John 14:20b NIV

So, **why does Jesus keep knocking?** Because, **He doesn't stop leading.**



**What do you see when you open God's Word? Passage after passage and *so many doors!* And, each opens to a different dining room where the Lord waits to serve a meal He's prepared just for you. Don't let it get cold ... *your faith that is.***

You say, "But, I'm not hungry ... it must be an *acquired taste.*" Did you know that **starving people stop craving food?!** Starving children must be reintroduced to the nutrition they need!

U.S. Food and Agriculture Ambassador, Tony Hall, fasted for 22 days, and wrote about it ...

"The sensation of hunger faded in about a week. **It's as if the body gives up on getting food and stops demanding it.** From then on, **I could join my family at mealtimes and not be bothered a bit.** I now fully understood, in a way I never had before, a strange phenomenon I had witnessed during famines: starving children who refused to eat when food was finally offered to them." – Tony Hall, "*Changing the Face of Hunger*"

**If you have no hunger for food,** it means one of two things: **you're either satisfied from eating, or empty from starving. And, to confuse the two means certain death.**

**The Bible has been miraculously composed to offer whatever your heart most deeply desires.**

Want to surrender to Truth, Light, Life, and Love? The more you seek, the more He'll serve. Want a set of religious rules to master for a false sense of self-worth? If that's *all* you seek, that's *all* you get. Want a reason to reject Jesus and justify sin? Look through *that lens* and you're *bound* to find a flawed, vengeful, irrational God.



**Do you come to God's Word as ruler and judge, or royal child?** Do you *come* to God's Word? Do you *want* His kingdom to come and His will to be done? *Buh-bum, buh-bum, buh-bum ... He's knocking.*

Do you want to be transformed? Do you want to hear Him say: "Good job, faithful servant,"? **Behold, the kingdom of God is at hand! In fact, it's *in* your hand!**

**Just as the Light chose to dwell in the darkness, so we must choose to either dwell in the Light or descend in the darkness.**



**So, go ahead and show Him who's boss.**

**"And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."** – Matthew 11:23-24 NIV

**With revelation comes responsibility. And, with *great* revelation comes *great* responsibility. I don't mean to alarm you, *but ... we've been given a compilation of every revelation!***

Behold, the kingdom of God is at hand! *Literally.*

**The garden is jotted with Easter eggs! And, a revelation awaits under every leaf, every page, every passage, another doorway to the kingdom.**

**The age of good rules is passed; the Kingdom of Good News is come!**

**The King is your loving Father and faithful friend, and He's in the Garden, just inside the gate, calling you to come and find Him.**

He is the Great High Priest. He is the Bridegroom. He is the Suffering Servant. He is the Lamb. He is the light. He is the Bread of Life. He is the Word.

He is the Savior, the Redeemer, and the Messiah. He is God.

**He *is* the Kingdom!**

**And, He has placed Himself in *your* hands.**

**So, what *will* you do?**