

Possessing the Kingdom

Presentation by

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The theme for our meeting this week is "Possessing the Kingdom: A Call to Truth and Love."

I like to share with you about possessing the kingdom. It's something that goes as a golden thread through everything that we do as the Disciple Nations Alliance – the DNA.

DNA is about awakening, equipping, and mobilizing the church to first of all, discover the Kingdom of God. The second thing that's important for us to understand is that it is not only to discover the kingdom but to adapt a perspective, a world view of the kingdom, and then to apply that to an area of life. The third component is not only to discover and to adapt, but to then demonstrate, to put in practice, the principles of this kingdom. The one thing that stands central is what James calls the royal law - of loving our neighbors as we love ourselves.

So, I would like to share what I will refer to as the critical mass of information regarding the kingdom. But sharing this with you is not to say that that it is something you don't know. It's more to share with you something that is broad enough to connect with wherever you are at in your walk with God, so that we will be able to connect and affirm your understanding of the kingdom. It is to look together at some of the principles.

For me the Kingdom of God is probably the only message that I came across that is worthy to live for and to die for. If there was ever a time for the Kingdom of God, it's now.

Let us commit our time to the Lord and really trust him and the working of his Spirit that he will reveal to us where the Kingdom of God is and why the theme of "Possessing the Kingdom" is so important.

Father God, we would like to commit our meeting to you. We acknowledge your presence in this place. We want to acknowledge that we are living before your face; that we are sitting before your face; that you are welcome in this place; that you will be the first and the last; that you will be the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the author and the finisher, the yes and the amen of our time together. As I facilitate and

my brother translates, Lord, make us nothing and you be everything. Enlighten our spiritual eyes and we may be able to comprehend the calling that we have in Christ for a time as this. We all stand in Jesus' name.

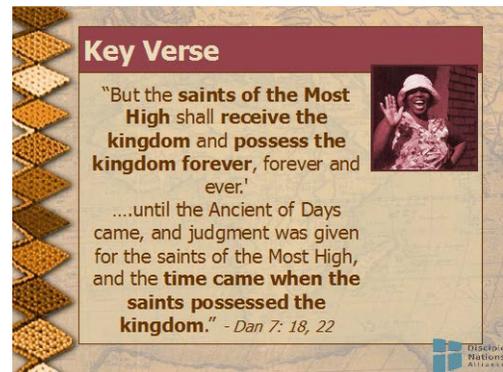
My own journey in seeking the kingdom was a very challenging one. For my wife and I God placed in our hearts some years ago to seek the kingdom. I had no idea what that meant. I thought I had it. I thought I understood what the kingdom is, just to find out later I had no idea what it is.

For every part of Christian life and Bible teaching and every part of the church I had a file; a file for missions, a file for church planting, and a file for faith and love. And every bit of information I gather about that topic, I put in my file.

Now, I was creating this file called "The Kingdom of God." Every part of information that I was gathering through books and sermons, I tried to place in this file. But, it was such an awkward feeling because it did not seem to fit in.

Then I saw that God was putting on my heart that the Kingdom of God is not a file in a filing system. The Kingdom of God is the filing system. And from that moment, I understood missions differently. In the light of the Kingdom, I understood church planting, and faith and love, and the role of the church differently. Because the Kingdom of God brought a total new perspective.

I would like us to go Daniel, chapter 7, and use this as a key passage for the session. (Daniel 7 is just before Daniel 8. If that's not the case in your Bible, you have the wrong Bible.) Verse 18 and verse 22 says, "But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever and ever. Until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High; and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom."



Now you will recognize the word "possess" and I would like to zoom into that a bit, but there's also some context that we need to create to understand the word "possess." Daniel 7 is a prophecy that spans the conflict that happened between the first coming and the second coming of Christ. There's two words used in this chapter that are important for us to understand about the Kingdom of God.

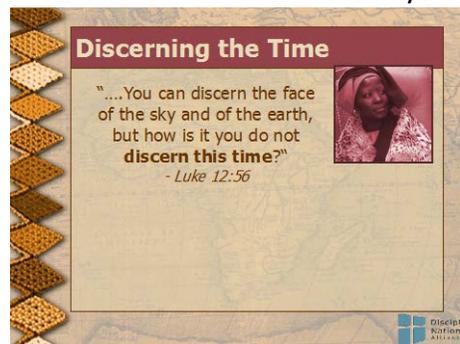
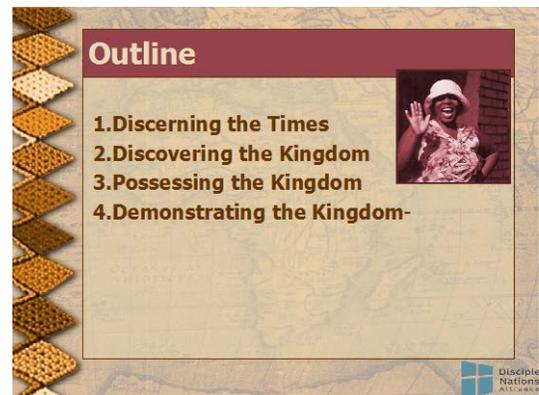
The first word is the word "dominion." This word is not in these specific verses that we have read but you will find them in Chapter 7. The word "dominion" means dominate, prevail, or govern. It is in the hands of worldly powers and that power to govern will be in the hands of worldly powers until Christ is ultimately seated as the King of Kings and his government is being established forever and ever.

The second word we could use is the word "possess." This word "possess" means to take hold of, to hold on, or to occupy. So, we are called here in this struggle between these two comings of the Lord Jesus to occupy, to hold on to the kingdom. This prophecy also speaks about, not only the future nature of the kingdom, but also the present nature of the kingdom. For the kingdom is now and the kingdom is not yet. It is time for the saints of God, the redeemed of God, the church of God, to possess what we perceive, to hold on to what was given to us.

There was a court case. There was judgment given in favor of the saints and we were given a kingdom. And, it is now time to receive, to possess, to occupy, and to hold on (to this kingdom). I can be given something but if I don't take hold of it or possess it, it's not mine. This prophecy also speaks about this radical tension between God's sovereignty and man's free will. It refers to the victory that Christ established on the cross. He accomplished this victory when he cried out "It is finished." It refers to God's sovereignty. But then also it's my responsibility to take hold of what I receive, to apply the principles, and start to move forward in the light of this victory. We will experience victories but we will also experience defeats. We are not to lose heart because ultimately the evil one has been conquered and will ultimately be conquered. We need to press forward and press (into) the judgment that was given in our favor. Our walk needs to be in accordance to our sitting in the right hand of Christ.

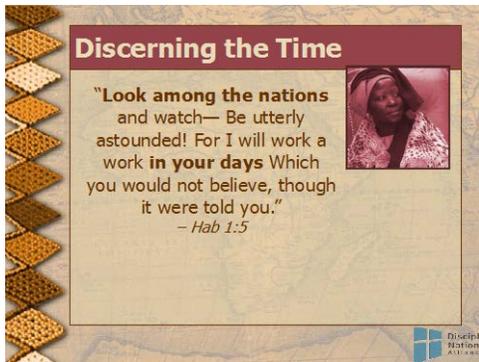
I would like to share with you four things. Daniel 7 is talking about the time. It talks about possessing the kingdom, but in order for us to do that we need to know something about that kingdom. We need to discover it and then we need to demonstrate it. (The four things): Discern the times, discover the kingdom, possess the kingdom, demonstrate the kingdom.

Let's start with the times. Times always refer to position. Jesus said to his disciples, "You can forecast the weather but how is it that you do not discern this



time?" Because we as the church, we are positioned for a time as this. It's like the farmer. Every cultivator very much is depending on understanding the times. When it is time to sow, you need to sow. When it is time for harvest, you need to harvest. If you get the seasons wrong, you will not be able to harvest when it is time to sow. So, this is "season". We need to know what (season) it is because our performance, our action, will depend on this positioning (in time).

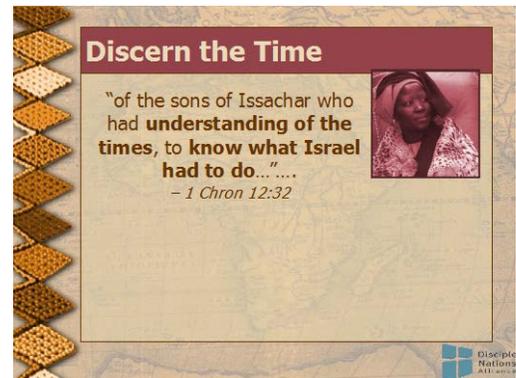
I have seen that mobilization (of the church) is more about positioning people than to get them to perform or do something. If there is one book in the Bible that is about transformation it is the book Habakkuk. We don't have the time to go through the book of Habakkuk. But, even when Habakkuk came to the Lord and starts to complain and paint this negative picture about



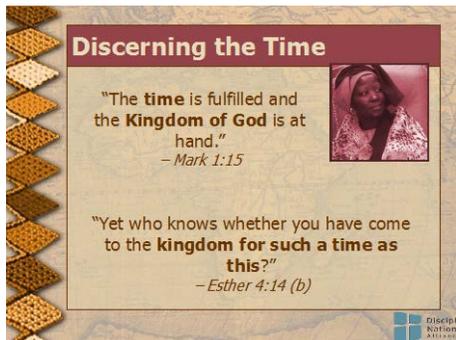
his circumstances, God points him to the nations. He says , "Habakkuk, look at the nations because I'm busy doing something in your days."

What a great privilege for us as DNA that we are positioned in such a place that we can look at the nations. Because in the next couple of days nations will come and share stories, which is significant because God is doing something in our days. It's part of our positioning.

In 1 Chronicles 12:32, it speaks of the tribe of Issachar. The tribe of Issachar knew two things. Of everything that could have been said about this tribe, the Bible mentioned two things. They knew the times. They knew the seasons. They were positioned and they knew what is required of them. That's exactly where we need to be. What is God saying to his church. In Mark 1:15 it says that Jesus came to establish the kingdom because the time is fulfilled.



It amazes me how many times you read about the



kingdom within the context of a specific time. Time can be chronos which is calendar time or time can be kairos. Kairos means God's time, the appointed time. There was a kairos moment 2,000 years ago when the chronos and the kairos came together. I'm quite convinced that we are again in that season with the kairos and the chronos coming together.

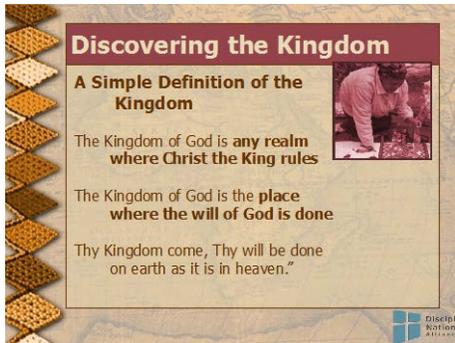
Then Mordecai told Esther this. You know the story of Esther, a Jewish girl that became queen of pagan empire.

Mordecai, her cousin, said to her, "Esther, yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this." That is what I would like to say to you this morning. It is for time as this that we have come to the kingdom. We were born for this moment. This is our time. This is our season. God has something in store for us.

Time becomes important because it is about positioning. Because we have come to the kingdom for such a time as this, we need to know what the kingdom is. Yesterday, we had a day of prayer and fasting and Bob¹ started us off with this scripture, Matthew 6, where Jesus taught his disciples to pray. And (Jesus) said, "This is how you should pray. Let your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." In Brazil as it is in heaven; in Africa as it is in heaven; and the Kingdom of God is coming as His will is being done.

¹ Bob Moffitt, co-founder of Disciple Nations Alliance, President of Harvest

A simple definition of the kingdom is the lordship of Christ. It is where the king rules. The kingdom is the dome of the king where his people are doing his will. The Bible is the constitution of the dome of the king. If



we are ambassadors of this kingdom, surely we need to know what the constitution is saying. Because that is what the ambassador does, he upholds the constitution of the country he is representing. (Our constitution) is the preeminence of Christ, Christ to be the all in all. That is God's desire.



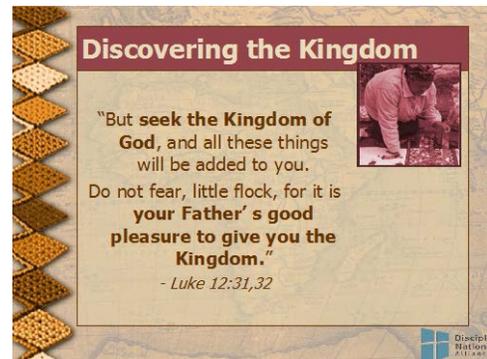
In Matthew 13 it says, "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field; which a man found and hid. And, for joy over it, he goes and sells all that he has and he buys that field. The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant, seeking beautiful pearls. When he found one pearl of great price he went and sold all that he had, and he went back and he bought it."



Out of the 40 parables that Jesus taught his disciples or the people at the time (and half of his sermons were in the form of parables), of these 40 parables, 18 were specifically about the kingdom. In the four gospels, the words the *kingdom of heaven* or the *kingdom of God* are referred to 97 times. Because here is something of importance. It must be sought. It must



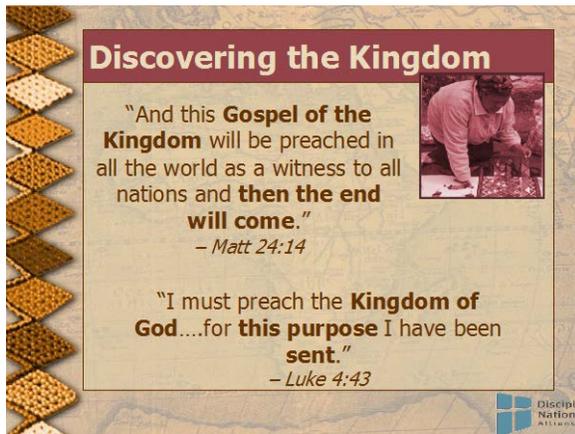
be found. It is a mystery. It's hidden. It doesn't make sense to the natural mind. Jesus said this should be your first priority - that we seek it, the kingdom. And that we will not stop until we have found it. It is to be found and you will know (when you have found it). Luke 12² refers to the same scripture.



Look at what Luke is saying, not only to seek the kingdom, he says, "Do not fear little flock because it's the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

² Luke 12:32

It's not only that we are to seek the kingdom; the kingdom is also seeking us. The kingdom is in hard pursuit of us. It's not only for us to possess it; the kingdom also wants to possess us.



One day Jesus was asked this question by his disciples, "What is the sign of the end?" Sign in the singular - the one thing that will point to the end. Then in verse 14 of Matthew 24 it says, "In this gospel of the kingdom, the good news of the Lordship of Christ must be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come."

It is interesting, just as a side note, to unpack the scripture. Look at the original language because the word in all *the world* is the word in the Greek *oikoumene*. It means *household*. It's also where we get our word *economy* from. The root of this word *oikoumene* is the word *oikos* which means *house*. This good news of the Lordship of Christ must be communicated to every house, to every administration, to every economy, and then the end will come.

But, the word *end* is not the end of the world. The word *end* is the word *telos* which means the fulfillment of the vision. So, this gospel of the Lordship of Christ must go to every dwelling, every household, every administration, and this will be the fulfillment of the vision.

Jesus said in Luke 4, "I must preach the kingdom for this purpose I have come." As the Father has sent him, he is sending us. Luke 9:2, "And he sent them to preach the kingdom and heal the sick." Same scripture, in a different translation, "Heal the sick in the town and say to the people there that the Kingdom of God has come near you."



The *Missio Dei*, the mission of God, is to establish the kingdom. And we can only understand our mission in the light of God's mission. If his mission is the establishment of his rule and reign, it should be our mission as well. The great commission is not only just the command to go, but it's a co-mission. We are on a mission with him and his mission is to establish his rule.

John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for Christ. He came to prepare the way for this kingdom message. When John the Baptist came his first sermon was repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent means change your mind, change your thinking. Often we refer to the word *repent* as to turn around and do not do the things that we have been doing. But it's difficult to change my ways if I do not change my mind.

Discovering the Kingdom

"...**Repent**, for the **Kingdom of God** is at hand!"
- Matt 3:2

"From the days of John the Baptist until **now**, the **kingdom of heaven** has been **forcefully advancing**, and forceful men lay hold of it."
- Matt. 11:12

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So, John the Baptist was saying change your mind. There is a message that is about to come that is so profound, so different, that if you don't change your mind, you will not understand it. This message is saying that if you want to live, you need to die. This message is saying if you want to have, you need to give. This message is saying that if you want to be in front, then go to the back. This message is saying if you want to be great, serve. This message is saying if somebody forces you to walk one mile, you walk two. This message is saying if somebody slapped you on the one cheek, you

turn the other. This message, that is about to come, is saying if somebody takes your shirt, you give your trousers as well.

It's so different. It's foolishness to the world. How can you be great by serving? That's why we need to change our mind. Because we will not understand the kingdom unless we take captive our thoughts and make them obedient to Christ.

If we want to possess the kingdom, we need to know what we have received. Since that time, since the day of John the Baptist's first sermon, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing and forceful men lay hold of it. They are possessing it.

If you go to Luke 16:16, it's the same scripture. "The law and the prophets were until John; but since that time God has been preached and every man is pressing into it." And we need to do the same.

Discovering the Kingdom

"The law and the prophets were until John: **since that time the kingdom of God has been preached**, and every man is **pressing into it.**"
- Luk 16:16

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