

# Entering into the Kingdom of God

by John Edmiston

## Walking In the Spirit – Series 15 (A Ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

Over the next few weeks we will be looking at the whole area of communication with God. This involves receiving direct personal communication from God through our spiritual senses (our spiritual ears and spiritual eyes) and receiving communication from God via other Christians e.g. through prophecy and through words of wisdom and knowledge. Of course any such communication must be tested against Scripture to make sure that it is both sound and biblical.

The framework for this discussion on heavenly communication is the biblical idea of the Kingdom of God, also known as the Kingdom of Heaven in the gospel of Matthew. The Kingdom of God is not a place such as a city, nation or island, nor is it an exclusive club such as a golf club that you can get a membership in if you are wealthy enough or sufficiently respectable. It is definitely not a physical kingdom. It is a spiritual kingdom:

**1 Corinthians 15:50 MKJV** *(50) And I say this, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption.*

**John 3:3 MKJV** *Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

The Kingdom is entered into through repentance, humility and obedience:

**Matthew 4:17 MKJV** *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent! For the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*

In the above verse Jesus tells us that repentance from known sin is an essential prerequisite. This is because the Kingdom of God is where God reigns in righteousness and truth and if we want to enter in we must be prepared to dwell in righteousness and truth. In fact a repentant person who obeys is better than a respectable person who pays only lip-service to obedience and does not actually go out and do the Father's will:

**Matthew 21:28-31 MKJV** *But what do you think? A man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son, go work in my vineyard today. (29) He answered and said, I will not. But afterwards he repented and went. (30) And he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and did not go. (31) Which of the two did the will of his father? They said to Him, The first. Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that the tax-collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.*

**Matthew 7:21 MKJV** *Not everyone who says to Me, Lord! Lord! shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in Heaven.*

This obedience involves a certain lowliness and humility of spirit:

**Matthew 18:2-5 MKJV** *And Jesus called a little child to Him and set him in their midst, (3) and said, Truly I say to you, Unless you are converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. (4) Therefore whoever shall humble himself like this little child, this one is the greater in the kingdom of Heaven.*

**Matthew 5:3 MKJV** *Blessed are the poor in spirit! For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.*

The kingdom is often opened to those who in this life have the least or suffer the most:

**James 2:5 MKJV** *Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to those who love Him?*

**Matthew 5:10 MKJV** *Blessed are they who have been persecuted for righteousness sake! For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.*

On the other hand pride, riches and an independent spirit can be a real obstacle to entering the Kingdom of God:

**Matthew 19:23-24 MKJV** *Then Jesus said to His disciples, Truly I say to you that a rich man will with great difficulty enter into the kingdom of Heaven. (24) And again I say to you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.*

The rich can become so satisfied with this world that they do not eagerly seek the Kingdom. Some end up trusting in their riches rather than God. Others even go so far as seeing themselves as 'little gods' in their own small kingdoms and fiefdoms. They do not need a god because they see themselves as demi-gods. It is hard for them to admit that without God they actually have nothing:

**Revelation 3:17-20 MKJV** *(17) Because you say, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, (18) I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire, so that you may be rich; and white clothing, so that you may be clothed, and so that the shame of your nakedness does not appear. And anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see. (19) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; therefore be zealous and repent. (20) Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him and he with Me.*

One of the problems with the church in Laodicea (above verses) was a lack of spiritual perception – they needed healing of their spiritual eyes so they could see their situation and they needed to open their spiritual ears so they could hear the voice of Christ at the door! Their physical eyes only saw worldly goods: *I am increased with goods and have need of nothing*, however if they had possessed any spiritual perception they would have realized that they were in fact: *wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked*.

In fact Jesus deliberately limited entrance to the Kingdom of God to those who had some sort of basic spiritual perception:

**Matthew 13:10-13 MKJV** *And the disciples said to Him, Why do You speak to them in parables? (11) He answered and said to them, Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but it is not given to them. (12) For whoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance. But whoever does not have, from him shall be taken away even that which he has. (13) Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not; nor do they understand.*

If Jesus had spoken in the normal terms of human philosophy then anyone with sufficient intelligence would have been able to enter the Kingdom of God. However by using parables and analogies Jesus mystified those who were wise in their own estimation while opening up the Kingdom to those who truly had some God-given ability to understand spiritual truth.

We need to grasp the principles of spiritual communication because we belong to a Kingdom that is spiritual in nature; and when it comes to spiritual realities the normal physical senses and normal human wisdom and the wealth and power of this world are of little or no use at all.

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