

The Mind of Christ

This Is My Beloved Son, Hear Him! – Part 3

INTRODUCTION:

- I. Recently, we have been looking at the significance of the statement God made concerning Jesus, on the mount of transfiguration
 - A. It was here that God, in **Luke 9:35**, declared, *“This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!”*
 1. We said at the beginning of our study of those SPECIFIC events that there is a GOOD REASON for taking time to deal with this subject in greater detail.
 2. The REASON is because of certain false teachings that are finding their way into the Lord’s church today.
 - a. This false doctrine essentially claims that the teachings of Jesus – during His earthly ministry – have no bearing on Christians today because THOSE teachings were supposedly SPECIFICALLY directed to the Jews of HIS DAY ONLY, and in NO WAY are commandments for US to follow.
 - b. The brother who is advocating this teaching has published a book entitled “The Teaching of Jesus,” in which he writes, *“the vast majority of the teaching of Jesus Christ in the gospels is not New Covenant teaching at all. Rather, it is*

that of a faithful Jewish rabbi correctly interpreting the Mosaic Law to his brethren, and urgently warning them of imminent national judgment on their nation if they don't repent.” (Sam Dawson, The Teaching of Jesus, Introduction)

- c. In a flyer that advertises his book, this brother writes, *“The Sermon on the Mount is viewed, not as a contrast between the Mosaic Law and the Teaching of Christ, but as Jesus correctly interpreting Moses to the Jews of his day. Thus, **every syllable of that sermon is Old Testament teaching.**”*

(Sam Dawson, Gospel Themes Press 2005 Catalog, page 1)

3. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. We looked at all those passages in The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 5 where Jesus said, *“You have heard that it has been said by them of old... But I say unto you.”* And in EVERY INSTANCE, we saw that Jesus WAS contrasting the Mosaic Law with His own teachings.
 - a. Therefore, MANY, if not MOST, of the teachings of Jesus **ARE** SPECIFICALLY directed to those who WILL BE the citizens of the kingdom of God, the Lord's church – in other words, they are SPECIFICALLY directed to US!

II. But perhaps the TWO most convincing passages (passages that this brother doesn't deal with in his book), are the statements of Jesus in **Luke 4:43-44**; **Luke 16:16**.

A. These two passages of Scripture are KEY verses in helping us to understand the MESSAGE Jesus was preaching to His disciples.

1. In **Luke 4:43-44**, the Lord addresses a group of people who had followed Him. *"But He said to them, 'I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.' And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee."*

a. To say that Jesus came SOLELY as *"a faithful Jewish rabbi correctly interpreting the Mosaic Law to his brethren,"* and that NONE of the teachings of Jesus apply to us today is just the OPPOSITE of what Jesus said His purpose was.

b. JESUS said, *"I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for THIS PURPOSE I have been sent!"*

(Luke 4:43)

c. Jesus came preaching about the coming *"KINGDOM OF GOD!"*—the spiritual kingdom of God we know as the Lord's church. That's what JESUS said.

d. However, this brother claims that the purpose of Jesus/ preaching was as a faithful Jewish rabbi correctly interpreting the Mosaic Law to His brethren!

2. In **Luke 16:16**, Jesus was in the middle of teaching some parables, when He specifically addressed a group of Pharisees who were ridiculing Him. Jesus said, *“The law and the prophets were **until John**. **Since that time** the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.” (Luke 16:16)*
 - a. Jesus made it ABUNDENTLY CLEAR that the Law of Moses and the prophets were preached UNTIL JOHN came, but SINCE THAT TIME, both JOHN **AND** JESUS preached the message of the kingdom of God.
 - b. Therefore, even JESUS HIMSELF said He had NOT come to preach the Law of Moses and the prophets, even though the Law of Moses and the prophets were STILL IN EFFECT!
 - c. RATHER, Jesus came to deliver a NEW and DIFFERENT message – He came preaching the KINGDOM OF GOD, *“and everyone is pressing into it”* – In other words, people were in the process of turning their hearts to Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God!

III. Therefore, in the time remaining this morning, I want to deal with two key questions.

- A. These should help us clarify the REAL intent and purpose of the teachings of Jesus.

1. First, we want to ask what was Jesus preaching when He came preaching the KINGDOM OF GOD?
2. And second, I want to look at just a FEW of the teachings of Jesus and ask, “Do ANY of the teachings of Jesus apply to US today, and IF SO, then which ones?”

BODY:

- I. So, let’s begin by asking what Jesus was preaching when He preached “*the kingdom of God*” or when He spoke about, “*the kingdom of heaven.*”
 - A. Before we answer that question, I believe it’s important for us to understand that the terms “*kingdom of heaven*” and “*kingdom of God*” are used interchangeably in the Scriptures. In other words, these phrases refer to the same thing.
 1. There’s a reason for this.
 - a. Matthew uses the term “***kingdom of heaven***” exclusively because he is writing to a Jewish audience. His readers needed to understand the NATURE of the kingdom – a SPIRITUAL kingdom, not an earthly one (Jews in the day of Jesus were expecting an earthly kingdom because they misunderstood the NATURE of the kingdom of promise and prophecy).

- b. Mark and Luke use the term “**kingdom of God**” because they are primarily writing to a Gentile audience that needed to understand the ORIGIN of the kingdom – a spiritual kingdom that is of GOD and not man (a kingdom whose King – Jesus Christ – was ALSO deity).
- B. Let’s look at several examples of how these two phrases are used interchangeably.
2. First, lets compare two parallel passages – one from Matthew’s account and the other from Mark. Notice that they use DIFFERENT WORDS, but they are describing the SAME KINGDOM.
 - a. **Matthew 4:17** - *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*
 - b. **Mark 1:14-15** - *Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."*
 3. Let’s compare two more parallel passages.
 - a. **Matthew 5:3** - *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*
 - b. **Luke 6:20** - *"Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God."*

4. Finally, compare these two parallel passages.
 - a. **Matthew 13:31-32** – “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field...”
 - b. **Mark 4:30-32** - Then He said, “To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth...”
5. So, to put it simply, when Jesus preached “the kingdom of HEAVEN,” He was also preaching “the kingdom of GOD.” And when He preached “the kingdom of GOD,” He was also preaching “the kingdom of HEAVEN.”
6. They’re one and the same.

II. But the question WE want to consider now is this: What did Jesus PREACH when He preached the kingdom of God? Was Jesus, as our brother claims, merely “a faithful Jewish rabbi correctly interpreting **the Mosaic Law** to his brethren,” or was Jesus preaching about something ENTIRELY DIFFERENT. Let’s consider the following passages of Scripture from the book of Acts.

- A. **Acts 1:1-3** – (The opening remarks of Luke as he writes this account of the acts of the apostles to his friend Theophilus) “The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until

*the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the **kingdom of God.***

1. So, Jesus NOT ONLY preached the “**kingdom of God**” DURING His earthly ministry, He ALSO spoke to His disciples about “*things pertaining to the **kingdom of God***” AFTER His resurrection from the dead.
 2. But, what was Jesus preaching when He was “*speaking of things pertaining to the **kingdom of God?***”
 - a. Was He speaking ONLY to the Jews of His day, trying to correct their misunderstanding of the LAW OF MOSES?
 - b. OR was He preaching about things that pertained to the COMING KINGDOM – things that ALSO apply to US today?
 3. To answer this question, we need to see what OTHERS were preaching about when THEY preached things pertaining to the “**kingdom of God.**”
- B. **Acts 8:12** – (Concerning the preaching of Philip in Samaria) “*But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the **kingdom of God** and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.*”

1. Let me ask you this. When Philip preached “*things concerning the **kingdom of God**,*” was he trying to correct their misunderstanding of the Law of Moses OR was Philip preaching the gospel of Christ?
 2. The answer is – He was preaching the gospel of Christ!
- C. **Acts 19:8-9** – (Concerning the preaching of the apostle Paul at Corinth) “*And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the **kingdom of God**. But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.”*
1. When Paul preached things concerning the **kingdom of God**, was he preaching the Law of Moses or the Gospel of Christ?
 - a. If Paul was preaching the Law of Moses when he preached things of the **kingdom of God**, then why did those in the Jewish synagogue in Corinth become hardened of heart, and would NOT believe?
 2. Paul was obviously preaching the gospel of CHRIST, NOT the Law of Moses!
- D. **Acts 28:23** – (After Paul had been placed under house arrest in Rome) “*So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the **kingdom***

*of God, persuading them concerning Jesus **FROM** both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening.*

1. When Paul preached things concerning the **kingdom of God**, was he PREACHING the Law of Moses or was he persuading them concerning Jesus and the **kingdom of God** FROM the Law and the Prophets?
 - a. Paul USED the Law and the Prophets to show these Jewish leaders in Rome that Jesus was the FULFILLMENT of the Law and the Prophets.

2. Paul was preaching the GOSPEL OF CHRIST!

E. **Acts 28:30-31** – *“Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the **kingdom of God** and teaching the things **which concern the Lord Jesus Christ** with all confidence, no one forbidding him.”*

F. So, to answer our first question: What was Jesus preaching when He was preaching “the kingdom of God” or “the kingdom of heaven”, consider this:

1. First, we know that JESUS went about all Galilee preaching the *“gospel of the kingdom of heaven.”* He said that was the PURPOSE why He had been sent. And furthermore, He said, *“The law and the prophets were until John. **Since that time** the kingdom of God has been preached.”*

2. Second, the terms “*kingdom of heaven*” and the “*kingdom of God*” are used interchangeably.
 3. Third, when Jesus was preaching “*the kingdom of God*”, He was preaching the fundamental truths contained in HIS GOSPEL – the SAME fundamental truths preached by PHILIP AT SAMARIA, and the SAME fundamental truths preached by THE APOSTLE PAUL!
 4. And finally, Philip and Paul did NOT come as “*faithful Jewish rabbis correctly interpreting the Mosaic Law to their brethren,*” and NEITHER DID JESUS! Philip and Paul did NOT go around preaching Law of Moses when they preached the “*kingdom of God,*” and NEITHER DID JESUS!
- G. So, for ANYONE to say Jesus came to earth as “*faithful Jewish rabbi correctly interpreting the Mosaic Law to His brethren,*” is SIMPLY FALSE!
1. The preaching of Jesus was PREPARING HIS HEARERS FOR THE COMING KINGDOM!
 2. His purpose was to preach KINGDOM PRINCIPLES – NOT the Old Testament Law of Moses.
- III. Finally, let’s answer our second question and look at some of the teachings of Jesus that clearly DO APPLY TO US TODAY – teachings that are

SPECIFICALLY and DIRECTLY pointed at those who would be His disciples.

A. First, it's important to remember that Christ began His ministry by preaching, "*REPENT, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (**Matthew 4:17**), and "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.*

REPENT, and believe the GOSPEL." (**Mark 1:15**)

1. It's VITALLY IMPORTANT to notice that Jesus did NOT say, "Repent and believe the Law of Moses." Rather, He said, "*Repent, and believe the GOSPEL.*"
2. Jesus was preaching the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM, and in doing so, He was commanding people to REPENT.
3. Jesus commanded REPENTANCE because the KINGDOM WAS NEAR - NOT because the Law of Moses commanded it.
4. Now, was this REPENTANCE required ONLY of those Jews in His day, or is this REPENTANCE required of ALL who would enter the KINGDOM OF GOD?
5. Therefore, REPENTING and BELIEVING IN THE GOSPEL is required of US TODAY just as much as it was required of those in the days of Jesus.
6. The reason the APOSTLES commanded repentance of those who would become CHRISTIANS is NOT because it was some NEW command they had received by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It's

because JESUS PREACHED repentance as a requirement for those who would enter the kingdom of heaven. The APOSTLES were simply preaching what JESUS had preached!

- a. Why? Because this is a TIMELESS KINGDOM PRINCIPLE! IT'S ALWAYS been true that we must repent and believe the gospel to enter the kingdom of God – THEN AS WELL AS NOW!

7. Let's look at another example.

B. In **John 8:24**, Jesus said, *"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not BELIEVE that I am He, you will die in your sins."* (**John 8:24**) Jesus made this statement to a group of Jews who refused to recognize Him as the Messiah.

1. Now, were these words of Jesus directed ONLY to the Jews who refused to recognize Him as the Messiah, or are they directed to EVERYONE, including US TODAY?

- a. Believing in the Messiahship and Lordship of Jesus Christ was NOT ONLY required of those who did not want to die in their sins in JESUS' DAY, it's ALSO required of US TODAY to keep from dying in OUR sins. This is JUST AS TRUE TODAY as it was for the people in the days of Jesus!

2. When the APOSTLES during NEW TESTAMENT times required FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST as a condition of salvation, they weren't

preaching something NEW they had received by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They were preaching EXACTLY what JESUS had taught during HIS earthly ministry, and they were preaching it BECAUSE Jesus preached it!

- a. Once again, this is a timeless KINGDOM PRINCIPLE! It's ALWAYS been true that we must believe in the deity and Messiahship of Jesus or die in our sins.

3. Let's look at another example.

C. In **Matthew 10:32-33**, Jesus said, *"Therefore whoever CONFESSES Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."*

1. This passage is part of the statement that Jesus made to His twelve disciples when He sent them out on a limited commission to the Jews only.

- a. But the SPECIFIC CONTENT of the message His disciples were to preach is found in verse seven, *"And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"*

(Matthew 10:7) – the twelve disciples were to preach the SAME MESSAGE about the kingdom of heaven as Jesus had been preaching all along.

- b. And part of that message concerned the need to CONFESS Jesus before men! In other words, Jesus required ALL who believe in Him to ALSO CONFESS HIM BEFORE MEN.
 2. Years later, the apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the saints in Rome, *“if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”* **(Romans 10:9)**
 3. Was Paul teaching some NEW truth that had suddenly been given to Him by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? NOT AT ALL!
 - a. Paul was teaching the SAME TRUTH that JESUS had taught when JESUS preached the GOSPLE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.
 4. Jesus has ALWAYS required those who believe in Him to be willing to CONFESS HIM BEFORE MEN. Once again, this is a TIMELESS KINGDOM PRINCIPLE!
 5. Let’s look at another example.
- D. In **John 3:3-5**, Jesus told Nicodemus, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he CANNOT enter the kingdom of God.”*
1. Jesus made it ABUDENTLY CLEAR that entrance into the kingdom of God would require being BORN AGAIN – born again of WATER and the SPIRIT.

- a. This new birth into the kingdom occurs when one obeys the Word of the SPIRIT, and is BAPTIZED into Christ.
(Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Peter 1:21-23; Ephesians 5:26-27; Titus 3:5)
2. Being born again by water and the Spirit is a command Jesus gave while He was STILL LIVING UNDER LAW OF MOSES, but it's one that APPLIES SPECIFICALLY and DIRECTLY to US TODAY!
 - a. In fact, THIS command was NOT required at the time Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, but WOULD BE required of EVERYONE who would enter the kingdom of God – the Lord's church.
 - b. In other words, Jesus was preaching about being born of water and the Spirit BEFORE the cross. And Jesus commanded baptism ONCE AGAIN AFTER His death, burial and resurrection. **(Mark 16:16)**
3. That's why Peter and the other apostles required those believing Jews on the day of Pentecost to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins. **(Acts 2:38)**
4. And that's why we require it TODAY! Because JESUS said *"unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he CANNOT enter the kingdom of God."*

a. Once again, this is a TIMELESS KINGDOM PRINCIPLE!

5. Let's look at one last example.

E. In **Matthew 18:15-17**, Jesus taught His disciples how to address sin within the assembly (within the ekklesia, or "church). He said, *"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.'* *And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector."* (**Matthew 18:15-17**)

1. Is it really necessary for me to say that this is the ONLY COMMAND we have in the ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT regarding the PROCEDURE we need to follow when dealing with a sinning brother?

a. Other New Testament passages teach us to WITHDRAW from a sinning brother, but the teaching of Jesus HERE is the ONLY place where that procedure is outlined STEP BY STEP!

2. This is the procedure the FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIANS followed when dealing with church discipline, and it's the SAME

procedure WE used TODAY! Why? Because Jesus told His disciples this is the procedure to follow.

3. From the day Jesus gave this commandment to His disciples, it's NEVER been ANY OTHER WAY!

CONCLUSION:

- I. There are literally DOZENS of other examples of where the teachings of Jesus apply to us today – ESPECIALLY, the Lord's teachings on marriage, divorce and remarriage found in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9.
 - A. But let me conclude with this question. Why would someone come up with a doctrine like this in the first place? Why would someone say the teachings of Jesus were given ONLY to the Jews of His day, and do NOT apply to us today?
 1. When I hear about someone coming up with some NEWLY DISCOVERED TRUTH like this, I always get a little suspicious as to the MOTIVE behind their NEW DOCTRINE.
 - a. There's ALWAYS a motive!
 - b. Allow me to pause here and say this as a word of caution.
When we try to judge another person's motive, we're treading on dangerous ground. No one can know the motive of another unless that motive or that intent is somehow revealed. I believe this brother's motive or intent is clearly

revealed by his own writing in his own book. His motive or intent is written on virtually every page.

- c. So, what's the MOTIVE for saying the teachings of Jesus do NOT apply to us today?

B. About two years ago, the brother whose teaching we've been examining published another book, entitled "Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage – The Uniform Teaching of Moses, Jesus and Paul" (Copyright 2002)

1. In fact, VAST portions of THAT book appear in his most RECENT book titled "The Teaching of Jesus."
 - a. So, in essence, there is very little difference between the two books – he teaches the same thing in both.
2. But here's what this brother wrote a couple of years ago about the teachings of Jesus on marriage, divorce and remarriage in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9:
 - a. In this quote, keep in mind that the author is referring to the teachings of Jesus in Matthew that say, "*Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.*" **(Matthew 19:9)**

3. Here's what the author of this book writes about these verses:

"When Jesus said 'whosoever,' he spoke only to whom the

teaching was addressed. As we've noticed, Jesus was a Jew, his audience was Jewish, and the passage they discussed was the Mosaic Law in Dt. 24:1-4. There isn't a Christian or a Gentile in the account. To apply these passages outside the Jewish context is to apply them falsely."

4. Here's another quote: *"We should no more apply these passages to anyone OTHER than Jews than we would apply the Sabbath commandment to anyone other than Jews."*
5. Here's another: *"We see that Mt. 5:31-32 and Mt. 19:9 apply to Jews, NOT Christians."*

C. THERE'S THE MOTIVE, as I see it, from his OWN WRITINGS! This false teaching REFUSES to accept the TRUTH that Jesus taught on marriage, divorce and remarriage, so it simply says those teachings don't apply. NOW... HOW CONVENIENT IS THAT?

1. If you don't like what Jesus said, all you have to do is just say it doesn't apply to YOU!
2. But the problem with this doctrine is that Jesus WAS talking to US AS WELL AS TO THE JEWS OF HIS DAY!
3. When Jesus taught on marriage, divorce and remarriage He was teaching the SAME PRINCIPLES that would govern the KINGDOM OF GOD – the SAME PRINCIPLES that would be applicable in the LORD'S CHURCH.

- a. It's the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM!
 - b. It's the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD!
 - c. It's the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!
 - d. And it's the GOSPEL OF CHRIST! Because IT'S A
TIMELESS KINGDOM PRINCIPLE!
4. And yet THIS brother says, "Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 apply to Jews, NOT to Christians."
- D. For well over FIVE DECADES brethren have been trying to find a way around the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9.
1. Some have tried to redefine the word "adultery" and are promoting the "adulteration of the marriage" theory.
 2. Others are suggesting the teachings of Jesus don't apply to the alien sinner, and that people can come to Christ in the state in which they were called.
 3. Although I completely disagree with those views, at least I can dialogue with those brethren on the subject of divorce and remarriage because we both believe the teachings of Jesus apply TODAY as much as they did THEN.
 4. The only difference BETWEEN us is over how we INTERPRET those teachings of Jesus.
- E. But THIS doctrine wins the prize for INGENUITY! This false doctrine simply says you don't need to waste your time worrying about trying to

explain Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 – they DON'T APPLY TO THE CHRISTIAN!

1. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH! The teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 DO apply to us today, and the ETERNAL DESTINY of your soul depends on whether or not you OBEY what Jesus taught.

F. Let me leave you with this final statement of Jesus.

1. **John 12:47-50** – *"And if ANYONE hears MY words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive MY WORDS, has that which judges him — the WORD THAT I HAVE SPOKEN will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."*
2. To put it simply, Jesus said: *"He who rejects Me, and does not receive MY WORDS, has that which judges him — the WORD THAT I HAVE SPOKEN will judge him in the last day."* (v. 48)

II. You can either ACCEPT the teachings of Jesus, or you can REJECT them.

- A. But no matter how hard you try, you can't say they don't apply to us.

1. They are just as applicable to US TODAY as they were to the Lord's disciples in the first century.
 2. Since we will be JUDGED by those words in the last day, how can ANYONE say the teachings of Jesus don't apply to us?
- B. So the question is simply this: Have you ACCEPTED the teachings of Jesus, or have you REJECTED them?