

The Kingdom Of God

*Turning the world upside down by making
a commitment to the kingdom of God*

Acts 17:6

Introduction

- 1. Many of us have heard and read about how successful the early church was in furthering the kingdom of God.**
- 2. While most of us long to see that type of growth in the church today, few will make the commitment that is necessary for such increase.**
- 3. Our lesson today will look at how to make a true “kingdom commitment”**

I. Kingdom Commitments In General

A. When someone becomes a citizen of any organized country, they agree to abide by certain laws governing it.

- 1. The kingdom of God is no different**
- 2. Let’s take the United States for an example and read the oath that new citizens have to make when they arrive from a foreign place to reside here:**

The Oath of the United States reads,

“I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God”

B. The United States will not allow its citizens to be half-hearted about commitment.

- 1. You cannot claim allegiance to and belong to the United States and then retain loyalty to some foreign government.**
- 2. The Lord requires even more commitment from those who become a part of the kingdom of God.**

II. Commitment In God’s Kingdom

A. Consider the following passages:

- 1. “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” (Matthew 12:30)**

2. *“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.”* (Matt. 10:37-38)
 3. *“So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.”* (Luke 14:33)
- B. Some of you may be thinking, “Well, the United States doesn’t require us to renounce all things...” You’re correct!**
1. We are called to the greatest commitment of all when we decide to follow Jesus and be a part of the kingdom of God.
 2. We need to count the cost (Luke 14:28-32; 9:62)
- C. Consider the following passages:**
1. *“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”* (Matt. 13:44)
 2. *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”* (Matt. 13:45-46)
- D. Just like most kingdom’s, God’s kingdom requires its citizens to be prepared to go to war.** (Matt. 10:34-36; See Eph. 6:12)
1. We need to be willing to die for the cause of the kingdom and live for eternal life (John 12:25; Rev. 2:10)
 2. The time has come for the people of God to rededicate themselves to the kingdom.
 3. Are we being true patriots in the kingdom of God or are we being traitors?
 4. Jesus has issued laws or commands that must be followed by those claiming to be a part of God’s kingdom
 5. Many preachers say: *“We no longer have law; that was under Moses. We are under grace, not law.”*
- E. Consider the following passages:**
1. *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”* (John 14:15)
 2. *“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”* (John 14:21)
 3. *“Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.’”* (John 14:23-24)
 4. *“If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”* (John 15:10)
 5. *“You are my friends if you do what I command you.”* (John 15:14)
- F. “We have no commandments?”** Not according to King Jesus

1. When you have no law, you have no kingdom; where there is no kingdom there is no Jesus...no salvation
 2. Any group with a religious belief system that nullifies the plain words of Jesus is not a part of God's kingdom.
 3. Jesus forewarned us about the judgment and those who practice lawlessness (Matt. 7:21-23)
 4. Lawlessness is defined as *"not regulated by the authority of law"*
 5. Jesus told us the only way to make sure that we stand is to build according to His words. (Matt. 7:24-27)
 6. How many of you have heard of the "American way" from the 1950's? This referred to a specific set of values that each American was to follow in contrast with Communism
 7. Similarly we have a "kingdom way" and we have a set of values that must be upheld in contrast with the world.
- G. Kingdom values are always rooted and focused in eternity.
1. In the kingdom, eternity is not the main thing, it's the only thing. Everything else is ultimately irrelevant
 2. We can expect then that the laws of the kingdom would be revolutionary. These are eternal values.
- H. Most people have been misled into thinking that the kingdom is some future entity
1. The kingdom of God is here. (Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:4-7; Mk. 9:1)
 2. The Lord does not bring us into His kingdom when we die, but rather when we are born again and renewed by the Spirit of God and added to the church by the Lord.
 3. Jesus' teaching was not just *"nice thoughts for the day"* as some would say.
 4. Most of us have heard the teachings of Jesus so many times that we have become calloused to their real meaning
 5. We talk about the *"Beatitudes"* (*Being everything that God wants you to be*), the *"Golden Rule"* (*Helps us deal with our fellow man*) and *"going the extra mile"* (*what a sweet thought*)
 6. Jesus was not trying to give us some trite sayings or clichés etc.
 7. In some Bibles Matt. 5:1-10 is printed in poetic format as though Jesus was giving some poetic speech to an audience (*Picture Jesus at a public arena with a dim candle light glimmering off of His face as his audience shares a common table beverage feeling good about themselves and admiring the Lord's way with words.*)
 8. Jesus never wanted the crowd to go home speaking of the beautiful words that He shared that day.
 9. The Lord was challenging His followers to the core of the soul (Matt 5:3, 8, 10).
 10. He was trying to prepare them for the kingdom that would require a higher standard of living.

11. Jesus wanted to give them a new set of values and laws together with a new life.

I. The Oath of God's Kingdom:

- 1. "I hereby declare , on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Lord, Savior, kingdom or King, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the values and laws of the kingdom of God against all enemies, satanic and demonic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear God's armor on behalf of the kingdom of God when required by the law; that I will perform work of global importance under His direction when required by the law and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God"**
- 2. God help us to be more dedicated and committed to His kingdom!**

Conclusion

- 1. If you want to be a part of the kingdom of God, count the cost and make that choice today.**
- 2. If you are in the kingdom, but you need to rededicate yourself to the Lord do it right now.**