

PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES

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KINGDOM PRINCIPLES

STUDY GUIDE



KINGDOM PRINCIPLES

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 6:33

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Matthew 13:31-32

Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.”

Matthew 16:19

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Mark 4:3-20

“Hearken; behold, there went out a sower to sow: and it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.” And He said unto them, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” And when He was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of Him the parable. And He said unto them, “Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.” And He said unto them, “Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root

in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.”

Mark 4:26-29

And He said, “So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.”

Luke 17:21

“Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”

John 18:36

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence.”

THEME

Knowing kingdom principles and operating in them is vital to the Body of Christ. Christians, for too long, have tried to live for God while operating under the world system. We, the children of light, must become wise in our generation, realizing that we have access to the most powerful kingdom ever known to the human race. The kingdom of God is here; consequently, we must now submit to the Lordship of Jesus and abandon the principles of the world system to follow the principles of God's kingdom.

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Jesus said, “I will give unto thee the keys **of** the kingdom;” He did not say He would give unto us the keys **to** the kingdom. We are born into the Kingdom of God

1. Keys **to** the kingdom would only allow access or entry, but we have been given the keys **of** the kingdom, which allows us to function and operate in this life with the same principles that Jesus used in His earthly ministry.
 2. A key, by definition, is an instrument, usually of metal, used for moving the bolt of a lock and thus locking or unlocking something. It is an instrument that allows entry.
 3. A key is also symbolic of power or authority.
 4. More than one key is used in the operation of kingdom principles.
 5. God expects us to govern our lives by His kingdom principles.
- B. The keys of the kingdom are not for entry into heaven; they are given to us so that God's will may be done in earth as it is in heaven.
1. We must first know the keys and then receive them in order to obtain the things we are seeking.
 2. The keys (principles) of the kingdom are found in the Word of God.
 3. Just as there are different formulas for different mathematical problems, there are also different keys to the principles of God's kingdom.
 - a. Every born-again believer has been given the keys of the kingdom, yet all the kingdom benefits are not automatic.
 - b. We must study the Word of God to gain knowledge of the keys and to learn how and when to use them.
 - c. We must use the proper key—at the proper time—at the proper place—if we expect to get good results.
- C. The kingdom of God is in the world, but it is not of the world. (John 18:36)
1. The kingdom of God is an internal kingdom which will ultimately rule externally. (Luke 17:21)

2. God must rule **in** us before He can rule **through** us.
- D. There appears to be a slight distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven.
1. “Kingdom of God” reveals to Whom the kingdom belongs; “kingdom of heaven” reveals the origin of the kingdom.
 2. We must always remember **to Whom** the rule and dominion belong, and **from where** the rule and dominion originate.

II. GOD WANTS US TO KNOW THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

- A. God is revealing, not hiding, His kingdom to the saints.
- B. God’s kingdom is revealed to the spirit-man, not the natural man. (I Corinthians 2:9-14)
- C. The kingdom principles are hidden from the world. (Mark 4:11-12)

III. THE KINGDOM OF GOD

- A. The word “kingdom” is the Greek word *basilea*, which means a rule or realm.
- B. We must receive the ruler of the kingdom before we can receive the kingdom. Jesus is the Lord of God’s kingdom.
 1. We must receive Jesus in the simplicity of a child.
 2. We must accept Jesus, we must take Him literally at His word, and we must follow Him with our whole hearts.
- C. We must realize that God’s kingdom is not **of** this world. (John 18:36)
 1. *Kosmos* is the Greek word translated “world” in this passage of scripture. *Kosmos* relates to the world systems and the principles it follows.
 2. The kingdoms and systems of the world are external; God’s kingdom is internal. (Luke 17:21)

3. God's kingdom does not come with observation or outward show. (Luke 17:20)
 - a. Although we may not see the kingdom of God with our natural eyes, we can certainly see the results of God's kingdom.
 - b. The wind cannot be seen, but it can certainly be heard and felt; so it is with the kingdom of God.
 4. God's kingdom is more than just words; it is a kingdom of power. (I Corinthians 4:20)
- D. The term "kingdom of God" reveals God as the possessor of the rule or dominion. God is all-powerful—omnipotent.
- E. The kingdom of God is actually the rule of God. God is the sovereign ruler.
- F. The only entry into the kingdom of God is through the "new birth." (John 3:3)
1. We cannot even see the kingdom of God unless we are born again.
 2. God's kingdom is not something we enter after we die; we must enter His kingdom now, or we will never enter it.
- G. Jesus spoke many parables concerning the kingdom of God. By looking at these parables we can learn much about the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven.

IV. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER (Matthew 13:3-9 & 18-23; Mark 4:2-20; Luke 8:4-15)

- A. Jesus interpreted the parable of the sower and suggested that this parable is the key to understanding all the other parables. (Mark 4:13)
1. The parable of the sower reveals a side of salvation that many overlook; it is the responsibility of the individual to **receive** salvation.
 2. The parable of the sower also reveals a principle involved in receiving anything from God; we call this principle the law of sowing and reaping.

- B. The principle or law of sowing and reaping is one of the keys of the kingdom.
1. We can look at the parable of the sower and realize how important it is to receive God's Word into our hearts.
 2. We can also see the importance of guarding our hearts and not submitting to pressures of life.
 3. Sowing spiritually is like sowing naturally—the seed sown determines the harvest; therefore, we cannot expect our hearts to compensate for errors we make when sowing. **We must say what we mean and mean what we say!**
 4. Saying is sowing; consequently, every time we speak we are sowing seed.
- C. It is extremely important that we understand the parable of the sower, since it is the key to understanding other parables.
1. The seed is the Word of God, which is referred to in I Peter 1:23 as incorruptible seed.
 - a. Although the Word is incorruptible, it can be stolen; it can be abandoned; it can be suffocated; or it can be received and nurtured.
 - b. We determine the growth of the seed by hearing, receiving, and acting on what we have heard.
 2. The soil into which the seed is sown represents the hearts of men as God's Word (the seed) is being sown therein.
 3. The four places the seed is sown reveal four conditions of the heart.
 - a. Each individual is personally responsible for preparing his heart. (Jeremiah 4:3; Hosea 10:12)
 - b. Also, each individual is personally responsible for guarding his heart and properly caring for the seed that has been sown into his heart. (Proverbs 4:23; Mark 4:24)

4. The seed sown by the **wayside** is that which is stolen by the adversary. This wayside soil represents a hard heart that would not allow the Word of God to penetrate the surface.
5. The fowls of the air are Satan and his cohorts, which are our adversaries. Satan is quick to try to convince people that God's Word is not true or that God's Word is not for them.
6. The seed sown on **stony ground** is that which has no root or life source. This stony soil represents the heart of an individual who receives the Word but fails to prepare his heart properly; consequently, when circumstances are not favorable, he loses heart and faints.
7. The seed sown among **thorns** is choked and is unfruitful. This thorny soil represents the heart in which the cares and pleasures of life take preeminence over God's Word. This comparison suggests that priorities are out of order, thereby indicating improper care of the heart.
8. The seed sown on **good ground** is that which is heard, received, and acted upon. This good soil represents the heart that has priorities in order. Still, there is negligence on the part of some; consequently, the harvest is not as good as it should be.
 - a. The return of the seed sown into the good soil varied.
 - b. Preparation of the heart is vital to the reception and production of the seed.
 - c. After the seed is sown, it must be watered and cared for in order to produce a bountiful harvest.
9. Each individual has the responsibility of both preparing and guarding his heart.

V. THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED (Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19)

- A. Spiritual laws and physical laws run parallel in operation; therefore, we can learn much about kingdom principles by giving attention to natural laws.
- B. Jesus often used natural objects to teach spiritual principles.

- C. Seed must be sown in order to produce, whether it be natural seed or spiritual seed.
- D. Matthew, Mark, and Luke each give an account of the parable of the mustard seed, but they do not use the same word when describing where the seed was sown.
 - 1. Matthew uses the word **field** as the place where the seed is sown, which may relate to the Word of God being sown into the hearts of men throughout the world.
 - 2. Mark uses the word **earth** as the place where the seed is sown, which may relate to Jesus, as recorded in John 12:24.
 - 3. Luke uses the word **garden** as the place where the seed is sown, which may relate to an individual sowing the Word into his own heart.
- E. The mustard seed is said to be the smallest of all the seeds of the garden.
 - 1. Naturally, the mustard seed is very small when it is sown into the earth.
 - 2. Spiritually, the Word of God is small when it is sown into our hearts, especially when we compare it to other seeds that have already been sown into our hearts.
 - a. When we receive God's Word into our hearts, it is the least of all the kingdoms that are within us.
 - b. As the Word germinates and begins to grow, the kingdom of God begins to manifest, thereby enabling us to control situations and circumstances that previously controlled us.
 - c. If we will take proper care of our hearts, the kingdom of God will become great within us and operate through us.
 - 3. The smallest of all seeds has the potential of becoming the largest herb of the garden.
 - a. In the parable, the mustard seed became the greatest of all the herbs of the garden.

- b. When the Word of God is sown into a person's heart, it will, if properly cared for, become the dominant kingdom in one's life and will rule over habits, appetites, pleasures, and desires.
 - c. The parable of the mustard seed reveals a very important principle that many overlook. The kingdom of God begins as a very small part of an individual's life but gains ascendancy and dominion through submission to the Word of God.
 - d. Our cooperation with the Word of God determines how active God's kingdom is within us.
 - e. We as individuals set the boundaries of God's kingdom in our personal lives; consequently, we must be mindful and not limit the growth of the seed within us.
- F. The fowls lodging under the branches illustrate the persistency of Satan. If he can't steal the seed, he will try to steal the fruit.

VI. THE PARABLE OF PROGRESSION (Mark 4:26-29)

- A. Seed does not germinate and produce overnight; it takes time to produce fruit.
- B. The kingdom of God does not take over one's life instantly; it also takes time.
- C. The progression of growth is: first the blade; then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear.
- D. We must realize that fruit comes as a result of maturity.
- E. Seed must be sown with expectation, but we must also realize the various stages of growth; otherwise, we may become discouraged and abandon our seed.
- F. The farmer goes about his daily routine of life not knowing how the seed will produce, but he is confident that it will produce; therefore, he does not constantly scrutinize the seed.
- G. We must approach God's Word with the same attitude and confidence of the farmer, realizing that the same principle applies to both natural and spiritual seed.

1. Contrary to what many believe, not everything spiritual is instantaneous.
2. Growth or progression requires patience, which is spiritual fruit.
3. In the fullness of time spiritual things will be manifested; therefore, we must not lose heart and faint. (Hebrews 6:12)

VII. THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN (Matthew 13:33)

- A. This parable speaks of the action of the leaven rather than the product itself.
- B. The kingdom of heaven works in the Body of Christ just as the leaven works in dough, persistently and progressively.

VIII. THE PARABLE OF THE TARES (Matthew 13:24-30 & 36-43)

- A. The parable of the tares must be read in light of the parable of the sower to get the full impact of the message.
- B. Jesus interpreted the parable of the tares with an easily understood explanation.
 1. The sower of the good seed is the Son of man.
 2. The field into which the seed is sown is the world.
 3. The good seed are the children of the kingdom.
 4. The tares are the children of the wicked one.
 5. The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil.
 6. The harvest is the end of the world.
 7. The reapers are the angels or messengers of God.
- C. The tares are gathered first; therefore, this parable is not referring to the rapture of the Church.
 1. The messengers gather the tares first and place them in a bundle to be burned.

2. The gathering together of the tares illustrates the purging of the Church. (I Peter 4:17-18)
 3. The true Church will be cleansed from the error of false teaching and religious facades.
- D. Tares may be described as counterfeit wheat.
1. Tares, like many church people, appear to be the real thing.
 2. Tares grow in the same field as the wheat; consequently, to the undiscerning eye, tares are often mistaken for wheat.
 3. The distinguishing factor between wheat and tares is fruit. Tares do not produce fruit.
- E. Tares and wheat may grow together, but they are separated at harvest.

IX. PARABLES CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

- A. Only Matthew recorded parables referring to the kingdom of heaven.
- B. The parable of the “wheat and tares” gives insight into the operation of the government of heaven. (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)
- C. The parable of the “mustard seed” reveals the operation of heaven’s government from another perspective. (Matthew 13:31-32)
- D. The parable of the “leaven” reveals a simple truth concerning the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 13:33)
- E. The parable of the “hidden treasure” reveals more truths about the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 13:44)
1. The treasure is hidden in a field.
 - a. The field where the treasure is hidden is the world. (Matthew 13:38)
 - b. Jesus bought the world. (John 3:16; II Peter 2:1)
 - c. The Body of Christ is a treasure hidden in the world.

2. There is another aspect to this parable. In order to be of benefit, the treasure must be found; therefore, searching is required. (Luke 19:10)
 3. We must seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness. (Matthew 6:33)
 4. To increase in the things of God, we must decrease in the things of self. God should be worth more to us than anything or anyone.
 5. The kingdom of God is not something of which we boast; instead, it is something for which we strive.
- F. The parable of the “pearl of great price” reveals an investment principle used in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 13:45-46)
1. This parable relates to the investment God made by giving Jesus so that He could gain the Church.
 2. We, too, must follow this principle and give all for Jesus.
 3. The rule and dominion of God will cost us everything, but the investment is small when compared to the return.
- G. The parable of the “fish net” illustrates the truths practiced by the kingdom of heaven; not everyone is fit for the kingdom of God, and “many are called—few are chosen.” (Matthew 13:47-50)
- H. The parable of “forgiving indebtedness” reveals a principle practiced in the kingdom of heaven; we are forgiven as we forgive others. (Matthew 18:23-35)
- I. The parable of the “laborers” reveals other truths concerning the kingdom of heaven.
1. Our labor and commitment are personal. What others do or do not do is irrelevant. (Matthew 20:1-16)
 2. Neither tenure of service nor amount of work is the criteria for being chosen.
 3. The sovereignty of God is revealed in this parable. God has the right to come to people’s rescue anytime He chooses. He is merciful.

- J. Principles of the kingdom of heaven are revealed in the parable of the “marriage.” (Matthew 22:1-14)
 - 1. Rejection of the invitation resulted in destruction. God has an agenda to which we must adhere.
 - 2. Once again, the invitation was sent out; this time the invitation was given to anyone who could be found.
 - a. Heaven’s government is persistent, and it will not accept defeat.
 - b. God desires that we be included in heaven’s activities.
 - 3. One who accepts the invitation must adhere to the rules of the wedding—proper attire (righteousness) is mandatory.
- K. The parable of the “ten virgins” is compared to the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 25:1-13)
 - 1. This parable reveals the importance of being properly prepared and equipped. We must wait for the kingdom; the kingdom will not wait for us.
 - 2. Also, we are taught to be alert and watchful; otherwise, we will miss the King of the kingdom.
- L. The parable of the “travelling man” reveals a vital truth concerning the kingdom of heaven that we must learn and practice. (Matthew 25:14-30)
 - 1. Jesus has entrusted us, His servants, with heaven’s “goods.”
 - 2. We are responsible and accountable for the gifts and abilities which have been given to us, whether great or small.
 - 3. The kingdom of heaven expects a profit on its investments.
 - 4. The kingdom of heaven expects its servants to be faithful and diligent.
- M. Jesus lived by the principles of the kingdom; consequently, He was always victorious.
- N. We must follow Jesus’ example and seek the kingdom of God with the diligence and tenacity that Jesus demonstrated.

X. KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

- A. The keys of the kingdom are spiritual principles that God has recorded in His Word for our benefit.
- B. The parables Jesus spoke and the way Jesus functioned on earth reveal these principles.
- C. Although these principles are available for us, they are not automatic; we must put forth the effort to both learn and utilize them.
- D. We must practically apply these kingdom principles.
 - 1. Practical application is doing what you know to do. It begins with these basics: read the Bible, pray, and obey.
 - 2. Increase in knowledge by exposing yourself to God. Study for understanding.
 - 3. Exercise good judgment. Think before you speak or act.
 - 4. Judge what you hear. Look for the character of God, agreement with the Word of God, and witness of the Spirit.
 - 5. Use discretion and practice good conduct.
- E. God's government does not operate by the principles of the world. Although we are in the world, we are not to follow the principles of the world. We must utilize the keys that have been given to us—spiritual principles that confound the natural mind.

XI. SUMMARY

- A. Jesus has given unto us the keys **of** the kingdom; it is up to us to receive and properly use these keys.
- B. The parables Jesus taught reveal various keys of the kingdom.
- C. The keys of the kingdom will not accomplish anything until they are used.
- D. We are the vehicle God uses to accomplish His will on earth; consequently, we need the “keys” necessary to get this vehicle moving for God.

XII. CONCLUSION

- A. Both knowing and utilizing the kingdom principles are vital to the Body of Christ.
- B. Principles, whether natural or spiritual, will not accomplish anything until they are put into practice.
- C. The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light because they know and practice natural principles, while the children of light ignore spiritual principles. (Luke 16:8)
- D. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven were organized by God; therefore, we must follow His kingdom principles if we expect to succeed in the things of God.

