

The Way of the Kingdom Kingdom of God Pt 7

1) Summary of Parts 1–6

a) Part 1 — The Reign of the King (The Meaning of the Kingdom)

i) Main Idea:

(1) The Kingdom of God is God's sovereign rule over all creation, now revealed through Christ and His people. It is not merely future or political but the present, spiritual reign of God in the hearts of those who submit to His authority (Luke 17:20–21; Psalm 103:19).

b) Part 2 — The King's Gospel (The Message of the Kingdom)

i) Main Idea:

(1) Jesus came proclaiming the good news that God's reign has broken into the world. The gospel of the Kingdom is the call to repentance, allegiance, and new birth under the authority of the King (Mark 1:14–15; John 3:3–5).

c) Part 3 — The Clash of Kingdoms (The Kingdom at War)

i) Main Idea:

(1) The Kingdom of God advances in conflict with the kingdom of darkness. Through Christ's victory on the cross and the believer's spiritual warfare, Satan's dominion is being dismantled and the rule of God established (Colossians 1:13; Matthew 12:28).

d) Part 4 — The Growing Empire (The Progress and Triumph of the Kingdom)

i) Main Idea:

(1) God's Kingdom expands like a growing seed, a spreading tree, and leaven permeating dough — gradually transforming the world through the gospel and the Church until every knee bows to Christ (Daniel 2:35; Matthew 13:31–33).

e) Part 5 — Priests of the King (A Kingdom of Priests)

i) Main Idea:

(1) Believers are a royal priesthood — mediators of God's reign — who represent His presence, declare His truth, intercede for the world, and live out His righteousness, extending His Kingdom through both word and deed (Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 5:10).

f) Part 6 — The Treasure Beyond Price (The Cost and Value of the Kingdom)

i) Main Idea:

(1) The Kingdom of God is of surpassing worth, demanding total surrender and devotion. Those who truly see its value joyfully forsake all else to gain the eternal treasure of God's rule and fellowship (Matthew 13:44–46; Philippians 3:7–8).

g) Transition:

i) Now we ask the essential question: **How does one enter this Kingdom?** What is *The Way of the Kingdom*?

h) Part 7 — The Way Into the Kingdom (Entering the Kingdom)

i) Main Idea:

(1) Entrance into the Kingdom is by new birth and repentance — a transformation of heart that brings one under God's reign. It is not by lineage, law, or works, but by faith and obedience to the King (John 3:3–7; Acts 14:22).

2) Introduction:

a) Jesus did not call people merely to *believe things about Him* — **He called them to follow Him**. The Kingdom is not entered by accident, tradition, or association. It is entered by **new birth, repentance, faith, and obedience** — a whole-life reorientation under the King.

3) Entrance into the Kingdom is not simply accepting a message; it is submitting to a King.

a) **God's prevenient grace awakens the heart.**

i) Revelation of God and His Nature

- (1) **Acts 17:26–28 (ESV)** ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we are indeed his offspring.”
 - (a) Paul addresses the Athenians, pointing out that God is **not far from anyone** and that He **provides Himself to all**.
- (2) **Romans 1:18–20 (ESV)** ¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.
 - (a) God’s creation clearly reveals His eternal power and divine nature.
- (3) Everyone has access to **natural revelation**, which makes humanity aware of God’s moral and spiritual authority, preparing hearts to recognize the need for repentance.

ii) Moral awareness

- (1) **Romans 2:14–15 (ESV)** ¹⁴ For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵ They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them
 - (a) Even before hearing the gospel explicitly, humans have **conscience-driven awareness** of sin and accountability.
 - (b) This internal moral compass is a provision from God that **enables understanding of the command to repent**. People can recognize that their actions and hearts fall short of God’s standard.

iii) God’s Spirit Convicts the World

John 16:8–11 (ESV) ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

- (1) The Holy Spirit is the **divine agent of conviction**, preparing hearts for Kingdom entry.
- (2) Conviction is not irresistible; it **provokes awareness and moral responsibility**.
- (3) God’s call is **genuinely open** — everyone is given the opportunity to respond.
- (4) The Holy Spirit **convicts in three complementary ways**:
 - (a) **Sin**: Reveals our need for Christ (dependence on God’s provision).
 - (b) **Righteousness**: Points to Christ’s perfect obedience as our substitute (God’s covenantal gift).
 - (c) **Judgment**: Confirms Satan’s defeat and God’s sovereignty (providential justice in God’s plan).
- (5) The Spirit’s work is relational and persuasive, **always pointing to the covenantal provision God has made in Jesus**.
- (6) **The Holy Spirit awakens understanding and moral awareness** in every hearer, enabling them to **recognize their need for Christ**.
- (7) The key is that the Spirit **draws attention to God’s provision**—the forgiveness, righteousness, and victory made available in Christ—without overriding human will.
- (8) Every person is given the capacity to **see the need** and **consider God’s provision**, even if they ultimately reject it.

- (a) **The Effect:** This relational work awakens understanding and moral awareness, creating the **capacity to believe**. Without this illumination, humans could not recognize their need for God or see Christ as the provision.
- iv) **Transition:** Conviction, grace, and preparation awaken the human heart, but God **does not enter uninvited**. The heart must **turn** from rebellion and self-rule. Thus, **repentance is the first active step a person takes**, not the result of regeneration. It is the **response to God's preventer grace** that allows regeneration to follow.
 - (1) Preventer grace prepares the heart; repentance moves the will; faith opens the hand; and then God regenerates, bringing new life to those who respond.

b) The Kingdom Is Entered Through Repentance (A Change of Allegiance)

Matthew 4:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

- i) **Repentance Is a Reversal of Direction**
 - (1) **Isaiah 55:7 (ESV)** ⁷ let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
 - (a) The Hebrew *shuv* (turn) emphasizes **change of direction**. Kingdom entry requires turning from the old way of life toward God.
 - (b) Forsake your way.
 - (i) **Intellectual:** Recognition of sin and rebellion.
 - (ii) **Emotional:** Godly sorrow that leads to desire for change.
 - (iii) **Volitional:** Choosing to forsake sin and embrace God's rule.
 - (c) Repentance is *turning toward* the King.
- ii) **Repentance Is a Transfer of Allegiance**
 - (1) **Colossians 1:13 (ESV)** ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
 - (a) From the domain of darkness to the Kingdom of the Son.
 - (b) The rival kingdom is dethroned.
 - (i) Repentance is a **re-alignment of loyalty**: dethroning self and enthroning Christ.
 - (c) Evidence of repentance includes:
 - (i) **Prioritizing God's Kingdom** over self-interest.
 - (ii) **Recognition of Christ's authority** as Lord.
 - (iii) **Abandonment of competing loyalties** (sin, idols, worldly desires).
 - (d) Repentance is both an internal and external act. The heart turns, and life begins to reflect new allegiance.
- iii) **Repentance Produces Visible Fruit**
 - (1) **Matthew 3:8 (ESV)** ⁸ Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.
 - (2) **Luke 3:8 (ESV)** ⁸ Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.
 - (3) **Acts 26:20 (ESV)** ²⁰ but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.
 - (a) Trees are known by their fruit.
 - (b) Repentance reshapes habits, desires, and relationships.
 - (i) **Lifestyle changes** — forsaking sin and embracing righteousness.
 - (ii) **Reconciliation** — restoring relationships damaged by sin.

(iii) **Kingdom service** — joining in God's mission as evidence of new allegiance.

iv) **Key Idea:**

(1) Repentance is not merely sorrow — it is the **realignment of life under God's reign**.

v) **Transition**

(1) Repentance changes the *direction of the heart*; now faith changes the *focus of the heart*.

(a) If repentance is turning **from** self and sin, faith is turning **to** the King.

(b) Through repentance, the heart is ready to **trust Christ fully**.

(c) God responds to repentant hearts with **regeneration**, giving new life and the indwelling Spirit.

vi) "Repentance opens the door of the heart; faith grasps the hand of the King; God then regenerates, bringing new life for obedience and Kingdom participation."

c) **The Kingdom Is Received by Faith (Trusting the King Himself)**

Mark 1:15 (ESV) ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

i) **Faith is Trust in the King's Character**

(1) **Psalm 9:10 (ESV)** ¹⁰ And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.

(a) Those who know His name trust Him.

(i) In Scripture, *faith* (Greek: **pistis**) conveys *trust, fidelity, and loyalty*. It is relational, not merely rational.

(2) **Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)** ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

(a) Israel struggled with unbelief not because they lacked religion, but because they did not **trust the heart of their King** (Heb 3:19).

(i) **Hebrews 3:17–19 (ESV)** ¹⁷ And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

(3) **Romans 10:9–10 (ESV)** ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

(a) Saving faith thus begins when we **see the King rightly** — as worthy of trust, even when His commands are costly.

(b) Faith is not "believing hard enough" but **relaxing the weight of your life into the trustworthiness of Christ**.

(i) Faith trusts:

1. The King's righteousness — He reigns justly.

2. The King's mercy — He saves and forgives.

3. The King's promises — He is faithful to His Word.

(c) The Kingdom opens its doors not to the self-sufficient, but to those who **rest in His rule**.

ii) **Faith Is Following, Not Just Agreeing**

(1) **Matthew 4:19 (ESV)** ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

(a) "Follow me."

(b) Belief becomes discipleship.

(2) **Luke 6:46 (ESV)** ⁴⁶ "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?

(a) In Jesus' teaching, believing and following are inseparable.

(b) His first disciples responded to the call to **follow** before fully understanding who He was.

- (i) Their obedience *was* their belief in action.
- (3) **James 2:17 (ESV)**¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.
 - (a) Words without action are just words.
 - (i) The test of real faith is not enthusiasm at conversion but **perseverance in obedience**.
 - (ii) To “believe” the gospel means to **embrace a new way of life** shaped by Jesus’ words, values, and mission.
 - (iii) This is why the early Christians were called “*followers of the Way*” (Acts 9:2).
 - 1. **Acts 9:2 (ESV)**² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

iii) Faith Continues — It Does Not End at Conversion

- (1) **Colossians 2:6–7 (ESV)**⁶ Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
 - (a) “As you received Christ... walk in Him.”
 - (b) Faith *lives* under the King’s rule.
- (2) **Galatians 2:20 (ESV)**²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
 - (a) Paul contrasts **faith-living** with **law-living** — the former depends on the Spirit’s power and the King’s guidance.
- (3) **Hebrews 10:38 (ESV)**³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.”
 - (a) The Kingdom life is **sustained by faith**, not merely initiated by it.
 - (i) Entrance by faith is the door; endurance by faith is the journey.

iv) Key Idea:

- (1) Faith is not simply believing **about** Jesus — it is **entrusting yourself to Him**.
- (2) **Faith is not merely the doorway to salvation; it is the posture of Kingdom citizenship.** It is:
 - (a) **Trusting the King’s heart,**
 - (b) **Following the King’s steps,** and
 - (c) **Continuing in the King’s reign.**
- (3) The Kingdom belongs to those who **trust the King enough to obey Him and obey Him enough to keep trusting.**

v) Transition

- (1) Faith is not the finish line — it is the starting gate. When we receive the Kingdom by faith, we are not simply *entering a belief system*; we are *entering a new reign*.
- (2) Faith brings us under the authority of the King — but obedience keeps us walking in step with Him. True faith is never idle; it moves, it follows, it bears fruit. As James says, “Faith without works is dead,” not because obedience earns the Kingdom, but because **faith and obedience breathe the same air** — both flow from trusting the King.
- (3) So then, the question is not just “*Have you believed?*” but “*Are you walking in what you believe?*”
If faith opens the door, obedience is how we live inside the house. And this is where we turn next — to what Jesus called “*doing the will of My Father who is in heaven.*”

d) The Kingdom Requires a New Birth (A Spiritual Transformation)

John 3:3–7 (ESV)³ Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second

time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

i) Regeneration (new birth) is **God's response to repentance and faith**, giving believers the spiritual life and capacity to live in the Kingdom.

ii) **You must be born again.** -

(1) **The Nature of the New Birth**

(a) **John 3:3 (ESV)** ³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

(i) Jesus makes a categorical statement: "Unless one is born again (Greek: *anōthen* — from above), he cannot see the Kingdom."

(ii) The value of the Kingdom is not discernable to the natural man it is revealed through regeneration.

(b) **2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)** ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

(c) **Titus 3:5 (ESV)** ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

(i) This is not moral improvement, but a new creation.

(2) **The Spirit Produces a New Creation**

(a) **Ezekiel 36:26–27 (ESV)** ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

(i) God replaces the heart of stone.

(b) **John 3:6 (ESV)** ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

(i) Flesh gives birth to flesh.

(ii) God regenerates those who respond, giving **new capacity** for obedience and Kingdom living.

(3) **New Birth Gives New Sight and New Desires**

(a) **1 Peter 2:2 (ESV)** ² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—

(i) A new nature leads to a new appetite — we begin to crave righteousness and truth.

(ii) The one born of the Spirit walks differently, loves differently, and sees differently.

(iii) Regeneration changes what we *want*, not just what we *know*.

(b) **Psalm 34:8 (ESV)** ⁸ Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

(i) "Taste and see."

(ii) The value of the Kingdom is only clear after the heart is made new.

(4) **Key Idea:**

(a) The Kingdom is not entered by improvement — it is entered by being born again.

(5) **Transition**

(a) Faith and repentance allow the believer to receive the Kingdom.

(b) Regeneration gives new life and capacity.

(c) But the Kingdom is not merely **received**; it is **lived**.

(i) The new birth provides the power; obedience demonstrates the reign of Christ in every area of life. Our allegiance to the King must now become visible in our daily walk.

e) The Kingdom Is Walked Out in Obedience (Living the Way of the King)

Matthew 7:21 (ESV) ²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

i) Obedience is the outflow of repentance, faith, and new birth — the **visible evidence of Kingdom citizenship**.

ii) Obedience Confirms Lordship

(1) **Luke 6:46 (ESV)** ⁴⁶ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?

(2) **Philippians 2:9–11 (ESV)** ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- (a) Every knee bows to Him.
- (b) The Kingdom is not democracy; it is monarchy.
- (c) Confession without action is hollow.
- (d) Obedience proves genuine allegiance.

iii) Obedience Is the Evidence of Love

(1) **John 14:15 (ESV)** ¹⁵ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

(2) **1 John 5:3 (ESV)** ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

- (a) “If you love me, keep my commandments.”
- (b) Love leads to loyalty.
- (c) True obedience is motivated by love, not legalism.
- (d) The Spirit empowers joyful adherence to God’s commands.

iv) Obedience Demonstrates Kingdom Presence

(1) **Matthew 5:14–15 (ESV)** ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.

(2) **James 1:22 (ESV)** ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

- (a) Kingdom life is visible to the world through good works.
- (b) Obedience makes the invisible reign of Christ tangible.

v) Key Idea:

(1) True entrance into the Kingdom expresses itself in **joyful obedience**.

4) Conclusion: Tying It All Together

a) The Kingdom of God is not entered automatically or accidentally.

i) It is entered when:

- (1) **Prevenient grace** awakens the heart.
- (2) **Repentance** turns the will.
- (3) **Faith** trusts the King.
- (4) **New birth** grants life and empowerment.
- (5) **Obedience** expresses Kingdom life in the world.

b) This is **The Way of the Kingdom**. Not merely *a belief*, Not merely *an emotion*, But a **whole-life surrender to the good reign of Jesus**.

c) The Kingdom is not just the treasure we value — **it is the King we follow**.

d) Brothers and sisters — Jesus is not only offering you *forgiveness* today.

i) He is offering you, **His Kingdom**.

ii) His reign.

iii) His life.

- iv) His joy.
- e) So the question is not:
 - i) *Have you believed in Jesus?*
 - (1) The question is:
 - (a) **Have you entered His Kingdom?**
 - (b) **And if not — will you respond to the King today?**