

Living in the Kingdom: In Recognition and Redemption

Living in the Kingdom begins with recognition of who Jesus Christ is. Acknowledging the existence of God is a necessary first step ("first faith"), but not an entrance to the Kingdom of God.

In Recognition -of Christ as King (mind)

Think: I may recognize that Queen Elizabeth has authority, but not over ME, because I do not belong to her kingdom.

Heb. 11:6 – "Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."

I Tim. 6:15-16 –

So, how do we enter the Kingdom of Heaven, coming under the rule of King Jesus?

In Redemption – brought into the Kingdom (heart)

We are not "native born" into the Kingdom; Christ by His sacrifice has saved us and we are born again into His Kingdom if we believe in Him

John 3:3, 16 – Jesus to Nicodemus:(a very religious man) "No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again... For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

Guilty: Ps. 139: 1-4

Forgiven: I Jh. 1:9

Welcomed: Heb. 4:16 – "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Our guilt meets His mercy – Our shame meets His grace

Col 1:13 – "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

"We must banish from our minds forever any thought that God admits us begrudgingly into his Kingdom, as though Christ found a loophole in the law, did some fancy plea-bargaining and squeaked us by the Judge. No way! God himself, the Judge, put Christ forward as our substitutionary sacrifice, and when we trust him God welcomes us with bells on. He puts a ring on our finger, kills the fatted calf, throws a party, shouts a shout that shakes the ends of creation and leads in the festal dance....But does it belittle God to have him rejoicing over us?....Does it belittle Michelangelo to rejoice with tears as he looks at the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel? Nor does it belittle God when the divine work of your redemption is done and all the millions are gathered before his throne, the humble and lowly, that God should break forth in singing and rejoice over you with all his heart and with all his soul?" John Piper

