

Breakthrough 4 – Breakthrough of True Life

Story by Dallas Willard:

Electricity Is “at Hand”

As a child I lived in an area of southern Missouri where electricity was available only in the form of lightning. We had more of that than we could use. But in my senior year of high school the REA (Rural Electrification Administration) extended its lines into the area where we lived, and electrical power became available to households and farms.

When those lines came by our farm, a very different way of living presented itself. Our relationships to fundamental aspects of life—daylight and dark, hot and cold, clean and dirty, work and leisure, preparing food and preserving it—could then be vastly changed for the better. But we still had to believe in the electricity and its arrangements, understand them, and take the practical steps involved in relying on it.

You may think the comparison rather crude, and in some respects it is. But it will help us to understand Jesus’ basic message about the kingdom of the heavens if we pause to reflect on those

farmers who, in effect, heard the message: “Repent, for electricity is at hand.” Repent, or turn from their kerosene lamps and lanterns, their iceboxes and cellars, their scrubboards and rug beaters, their woman-powered sewing machines and their radios with dry-cell batteries.

The power that could make their lives far better was right there near them where, by making relatively simple arrangements, they could utilize it. Strangely, a few did not accept it. They did not “enter the kingdom of electricity.” Some just didn’t want to change. Others could not afford it, or so they thought.

Jesus spent a lot of His time teaching the truth about God and His kingdom. Much of his time spent clearing up misconceptions and painting a picture of the Kingdom is like.

There were a lot of lies the devil had engrained in people and still tells them about the Kingdom and what life should be like.

John 10:10 ¹⁰***The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*** (he attacks your mind, deception is his only tool)

A battle is taking place every day for you. If he cannot deceive you into believing there is no kingdom then he will seek to misrepresent it.

Turn to Mark 8 in your Bibles.

The focus this week on our study of Mark will be chapters 8-10. Here Jesus does some

clarifying with the disciples and potential followers. To begin our understanding of life in God's Kingdom we must answer the question that is foundational to everything else we talk about. The disciple Peter was asked this very question directly by Jesus.

²⁷**Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"**

²⁸**They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."**

²⁹**"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"**

Peter answered, "You are the Christ." - Mark 8:27-29

We've got to answer personally what do I believe? Being around right people, believing with the crowd, being a Christian by association is not enough. Our faith in Christ must be something we personally believe and own, or when it is tested it will never stand.

Illustration: Teenage guy and girl in car.

Contrast the above story with this one...

Illustration: At 11:19AM on April 20, 1999—Hitler's 110th birthday—when Erik Harris and Dylan Klebold opened fire at Columbine High School near Littleton, Colorado.

Cassie Bernall and Rachael Scott both were asked if they were followers of Christ. They knew what it cost them, their lives and it did. Their stories inspired thousands of young people in their generation.

Once you've come to a place where you have decided for yourself who Jesus Christ is, you've got to examine the implications that has for your life.

- If Jesus **some made up story**, then **no implications & you keep living the same**.
- If Jesus was some **great teacher** or **philosopher** then you can take some of His teachings you like and **add** them to your existing worldview and way of living life.
- However, if Jesus IS the SON of God and His claims about the Kingdom of God are true, and you've give Him control of your life as Lord and Savior, then you must allow Him to set the course of your life. **Must allow Him to shape and mold what your life looks like. The Way of Christ is very different from the world we live in today** (and the world the disciples lived in during their time.) Let's look at a few of the implications of life in God's Kingdom .

He is not a Snuggie.

Jesus is not a supplement or additive to our existing life → He's a replacement.

1. Jesus decides everything.

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" -Mark 8:34-36

Kingdom Reality: By dying we win.

→ Video: The Stool

Misconception #1: I decide what God gives me.

The disciples were walking along discussing who was the greatest or who would have the best job in the coming earthly kingdom they were sure Jesus came to set-up.

They were still focused on themselves and their own kingdom.

Mark 9:33-35

³³They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" ³⁴But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.

³⁵Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

Kingdom Reality: God knows the purpose for my life better than me.

Misconception #2: I decide what I give God.

Mark 10:17-22

¹⁷As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁸"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. ¹⁹You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'" ²⁰"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

²¹*Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."*

²²*At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth*

Kingdom Reality: We exchange what we have for what God has.

Closing:

Pursuing God and living as citizens in His Kingdom is simple. We tend to overcomplicate life with God but you don't have to have theological training, pray five times a day, or be perfect to find the true life God intends for you to live. It's as simple as keeping Christ at the center of your life. Jesus often used children as a model to help us understand what it means to live in God's Kingdom:

Illustration: Blank contract.

What misconceptions have you had about the kingdom? What has hindered you from experiencing the kind of life God intended?