

CHAPTER 13: A SOCIETY OF TRANSFORMATION

GOSPEL READINGS: Matthew 6:10; 11:28–30; Luke 17:20–21; Mark 3:31–35

Jesus came to preach the good news of the kingdom of God.

In his introduction on this new section, Scot McKnight describes Jesus' message as a compass needle that directs us towards a transformed life. The *Jesus Creed* is leading us to see the values of Jesus' kingdom alive and flourishing in our world. For that to happen, we (re)orient ourselves to see *his and our world* through *his eyes*.

1. McKnight says, "If we want to reshape our image of Jesus by turning to the real Jesus to see what he was all about, then we will have to make this term *kingdom* a close friend." When you hear the word "Kingdom" – what comes to mind?
2. Imagine talking to someone who has never heard Jesus' words on the kingdom. How would you explain it to them?
 - a. Is the language of "society" helpful?
 - b. How might the context of Kingdoms and Kings help us understand what Jesus was introducing to his followers?
3. In what ways do you see Jesus' Church living into his image of a new kingdom? In what ways are you *not* seeing it?
4. **Read Luke 17:20-21.** When Jesus said that we cannot observe the Kingdom of God, what do you think he meant?
 - a. If we are not going to witness the Kingdom with "signs", how can we recognize it?
 - b. If Jesus' ministry demonstrates a Kingdom *in action*, how might the *Jesus Creed* help you daily experience God's kingdom?
5. The Lord's prayer begins (*and ends*) with a request for *God's kingdom* to come and our submission to his rulership over all. What makes this a good prayer for Jesus' followers to pray? Or for you specifically? (Matthew 6:10)
6. In **Mark 3:31-35** Jesus seems to redefine our notion of *family* by including his followers – his Kingdom society. This new understanding was radical in a Jewish world where lineage and blood relationships defined your identity...and where rejecting it was *costly*.
 - a. How is having a Kingdom-family helpful to you?
 - b. In what ways are you seeing this family/society grow around you?

Greek: *Basileia tou Theou*

- There is king; he has a kingdom (domain/empire)
- Used over 100x in NT
- Almost exclusively described through *parables*

Where we're going in this section: "Those committed to the kingdom form a society, which we now call the church. The kingdom's values are **transformation, a mustard seed, justice, restoration, joy, and an eternal perspective.**" – Scot McKnight

Next week: Chapter 14: A Society of Mustard Seeds