

Thy Kingdom Come: Prepared for the Kingdom

Reflect

1. What are some things you like to prepare for?
2. What can happen if we don't prepare ourselves well for something? What are some examples?
3. What comes to mind when you think of God's Kingdom? Is this something you think you can prepare for?

Read Your Bible

- 2 Chronicles 7:14
- Matthew 3:1-12

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, what does it appear that God wants us to do?
2. John the Baptist wore clothes made by camels' hair, had a leather belt and ate locusts and honey, and yet people took his words very seriously. Why do you think that is?
3. Sometimes the word '*repentance*' gets viewed negatively, but Jesus spoke very highly of *repentance*. What do you think it means to *repent*?
4. The reason Jesus told people to repent was because 'the Kingdom of God has come near.' What did Jesus mean by this statement?

5. What does it mean to produce 'good fruit?' What does it mean to produce 'bad fruit?'

6. John baptized with water to show repentance, but Jesus was going to baptize His people with the Holy Spirit and fire. Have you ever been baptized with water? What do you think it means to be baptized with the Holy Spirit?

7. Have you received God's promise of the Holy Spirit? Do you ever feel bad for sinning and desire to do things that please God instead?

Conclusion

A normal part of everyday living is our need to prepare for things to come. If you have ever taken a difficult exam, you probably needed to study. If you have ever had to lead a business meeting, you probably had to gather your thoughts ahead of time. Jesus says that in this same way, we must also prepare for God's Kingdom. We cannot just plan to wander our way through this life and accidentally come across God's Kingdom, just as we couldn't plan to watch T.V. for hours instead of studying and expect to do well on a difficult test. Jesus has given us a very simple guideline for us to be prepared: Repent and be baptized with the Holy Spirit. When we turn from our sin and receive the Holy Spirit by trusting in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we will inevitably experience a transformation that will bring us closer to the image of God, and you guessed it, prepare us for the Kingdom of God.

Pray

Heavenly Father, You have freely opened the gates of Heaven for us to enter. You not only shouted Your love from Heaven but came down to show us Your love on earth. As we live our everyday lives, we fall short of Your glory. We do things we should not do and do not do things we should do. But You have not called us to trust in our own goodness, but to trust in Your grace. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit, we pray, that we may desire to live in such a way that is pleasing to You, and turn from the things that dishonor You. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!