

Thy Kingdom Come: Kingdom Against Kingdom

Reflect

1. What's an iconic building or place? What makes it stand out?
2. Can you picture a time when that building will be long gone or turned to ruin? How long do you think it will last?
3. What institutions in this world do you tend to put your confidence in as something fairly stable and reliable? Have you been surprised by the fall or failure of any such things in your lifetime?

Read Your Bible

- Hebrews 10:24-25
- Matthew 24:1-14

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. Hebrews was a letter from an unidentified apostle (perhaps Paul) to the early Jewish Christians. What difficulties do you think they faced? Why might they have been tempted to give up "meeting together" as Christ followers?
2. In Hebrews 10:24-25, what is "the Day" we see approaching? Why would this knowledge motivate Christians to continue to gather and serve in Jesus' name?
3. In Matthew 24, Jesus describes the trajectory of history after His coming. He mentions false Christs, wars, famines, natural disasters, persecutions, false prophets and an overall failure of love, all while the good news of Jesus makes its way through the whole world and to every nation. Then comes the end of this age with the return of Jesus. What do you believe about the Second Coming? How might this motivate and encourage?
4. Matthew 24 starts with the disciples pointing to the impressiveness of the temple buildings, at the center of Jerusalem's culture. Jesus tells them bluntly that soon none of it

would be left standing. If He were walking with us today through our great buildings and institutions, what might He point out in this way? Why?

5. The impressiveness of civilizations or cultural trends can tend to overshadow something as humble as a Sunday worship gathering or small group Bible study. But consider: which will last longer, the civilization or the group of believers? Explain what this means for the various relationships in your life.
6. What acts of love, good works or Christian gatherings do you want to prioritize in light of what you've read today about the trajectory of history? What other priorities might you need to change?

Conclusion

God has a sense of wonder and an active mind that engages with the world around us. We naturally elevate the importance of certain places, people, and events. We can easily live our lives entirely directed by them or in reaction against them. The irony is, you were made to last forever, while everything you see and trust in this world will someday fade. We were designed to see past this world. That is one of the reasons that God's kingdom collides with all the kingdoms we live and work in. Not only are they broken by the influences of sin and evil; they also are extremely limited! This world is on a timer and is never allowed to rule a Christian in an absolute sense. Why? Because you were made to know and be loved by the One who was before all things and will continue after all has faded. Jesus has set out to reclaim you, to make you His forever by the shedding of His own blood. So, don't be too impressed by events that will be forgotten or buildings that will crumble and fade. Be impressed by the significance of every friend and neighbor made to last forever. Be devoted to their welfare and their need for a Savior. And be ready for Him, the One who "will come again to judge the living and the dead."

Pray

Lord Jesus, all that I have and all that I am belongs to You. You made me for Yourself. You claimed every inch of my brokenness and sin at the cross. You know the plans and the future that You have for me, in this world and in all the ages to come. Break my heart from its addictions to powers and glories of this present age. They will fade, but You will not. Give me endurance to walk with You and run towards You, into the everlasting life You purchased for me with Your own blood. Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done in me. Amen.