

The Drama of Scripture: Redemption (Part 2)

Today, we continue looking at the third act in the Drama of Scripture: Redemption. The New Testament uses a number of themes to describe the redemption that Jesus accomplished. In this study we are going to focus on one of those: the kingdom of God. The New Testament declares that Jesus is the King who is establishing an eternal kingdom. Through this kingdom the effects of Act Two, the fall, will ultimately be undone.

Read Luke 1:31-33

1. How did the angel describe the baby that was to be born to Mary?

Read Mark 1:14-15

2. Mark calls the message that Jesus began to proclaim at the start of his public ministry the "gospel of God." What exactly was the gospel (i.e. good news) that Jesus proclaimed?
3. As you think about the Drama of Scripture how is the kingdom of God good news?

Read Luke 7:18-23

4. What kinds of things did Jesus do that confirmed that he was the Expected One and that the kingdom of God had come?
5. How do such acts demonstrate a reversal of the effects of Act 2 (The Fall) in the Drama of Scripture?

Read John 18:36-37

6. What does Jesus reveal about his kingdom here? How is it different than an earthly kingdom?

Steve said:

We believe in a crucified King. A King who said, "No servant is greater than his master. If they mistreated me, they will also mistreat you." We need to make peace with the reality that the kingdom STILL advances through suffering, weakness, and humility. We don't need political power for the kingdom to advance; we don't need to be outraged over every perceived offense - either inside or outside of the church. The first disciples of Jesus were "untrained and unlearned" people, a persecuted minority; but they were accused of "turning the world upside down" because they knew how to seek first God's kingdom and righteousness; they considered it a privilege to suffer shame for the name of Jesus. The same should be true for us because our King was crucified.

7. Jesus' kingdom "advances through suffering, weakness and humility" rather than power. What are some of the implications of this truth for you?

Read Matthew 28:18-20

8. Last week we looked at the promise God made to Abraham in Gen. 12:3 that in him "all of the families of the earth shall be blessed"? How does the command in Matthew 28 relate to that promise?

9. How would you evaluate your current heart to participate in the advancement of Jesus' kingdom (i.e. Act 3) by "seeing people from every group of people become apprenticed to Jesus"?

10. What is the main point of application for you from this week's study?