

Boundaries of the Kingdom 05-28-17 AM

Borders are an important way that we define countries. But borders are just a representation of a line where the jurisdiction, or authority, of a particular government begins and ends. The Kingdom of Heaven has a sense of those who are citizens and those who are not. All men are under the authority of the Kingdom, but not all are citizens of the kingdom. What does this mean?

In the Old Testament the prophets spoke often about the messianic kingdom. They said a kingdom was coming which would rule the whole earth, and which was headed by the Messiah of God.

Psalm 89:27 - I also shall make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.

Jeremiah 23:5 - "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.

Daniel 2:44 - In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

We know Jesus established this Kingdom. He told Pilate that He had come to be a king and establish a kingdom in John 18:36-37 (1 Tim. 6:13). We also have the testimony of His disciples that He accomplished this (Colossians 1:13, Hebrews 12:28). Indeed, the Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom (as identified 53 times in Matthew). This is the idea that the Gospel is the AUTHORITY Of the kingdom; it is the boundary of the kingdom. If we consider this to be the case, then we can see how the Kingdom conquered the world.

In Mark 16:15 Jesus said "***Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.***". In Colossians 1:3 Paul said that "***the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.***" John said that our faith had conquered the world (1 John 5:3). The Gospel is the authority of the Kingdom. Since the Gospel has been preached to the whole world, its authority exists everywhere. There is no authority above or beside it (consider Jesus saying that all authority on heaven and on earth were His).

But not everyone is part of the kingdom, or more specifically, is a citizen of the kingdom (Ephesian 2:19, Philippians 3:20, Hebrews 8:11). However, everyone IS under Christ's authority, and all will be judged by Christ and by the law of Christ (Acts 17:31, etc.).

How do we enter the kingdom? Jesus said in Matthew 7:21 that we enter the Kingdom only by doing the will of God the Father. He told Nicodemus in John 3:5 that one must be born again to enter the kingdom. Finally, we are told by the apostles that entry comes through endurance in Acts 14:22.

We remain good citizens of the kingdom by our conduct, which is to say, abiding in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9). In 1 John 1:6-7 we are told that our citizenship is the same thing as fellowship. It is not something we create, offer, reject or remove, but it is the condition of being citizens of the kingdom with other saints. Finally, we know that when we reject the law of Christ, our citizenship is revoked. If we sin willfully (Hebrews 10:26-29) we are lost. If we walk in the darkness (1 John 1:6) we are lost.

Boundaries for nations matter. It is the measure of their authority. All men live within the authority of the Kingdom of heaven, but not all men are citizens of the kingdom. We need to know how to enter the kingdom and how to be proper citizens of the kingdom.