

The kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 4:17

Most people would like to think that when they die they would go to a place the Scriptures called heaven. Heaven is one those topics we need the Bible to redefine our theology and misconceptions we have regarding this place everyone wants to go; we know so little about heaven because we let our ideas, presuppositions form our beliefs, rather than Scripture. **What is the kingdom of heaven?** *"Your kingdom come and your will be done.." Matt.6:10*

The last prophet of the Old Testament John the Baptist appeared in the desert preaching a message of repentance. **Matt.3:1-2** *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."* At the time of John's arrest, Jesus went to Galilee and began his public ministry, he began preaching. **Matt.4:17** *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."* (Has come near, is at hand). Jesus gave the same message to his disciples (**Matt.10:5-8**) *"As you go, preach this message: The kingdom of heaven is near."* (v.7)

It's been two thousand years since that message was heard in the shore of the Galilean Sea. **What is the kingdom of heaven?**

The gospel of Matthew sheds lots of light regarding the kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God. Heaven calls people to repent, to change their ways or the way they think. People are called to repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

A kingdom: (webster's) *a country whose ruler is a king or queen. The realm in which God's will is fulfilled.*

God is the ruler of this kingdom; he has the supreme authority and power. In this kingdom there is no democracy or voting or rights. No body deserves to enter this kingdom; God decides the conditions in this place and the rules. Remember this is a monarchy in which Jesus Christ is the Sovereign King forever and ever. *In this kingdom repentance is necessary for one to enter.*

Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of heaven.

*Jesus said many things about the kingdom of heaven. Jesus said the heaven belongs to people **who are poor in Spirit**.* (Those are the ones who realize their need to be supplied and their dependence is on someone else) **Matt.5:3**. These are those who are spiritually bankrupt and realized their need for grace. To be poor in spirit is to realize that nothing we have is worth more than the kingdom of God.

This is why later on Jesus said that it is so hard to a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt.19:23) why? Because they hold on to their riches more than God. No time for them to think about the coming kingdom.

The kingdom of heaven contains rewards for those who belong to God. (Matt.5:11-12) even through persecution and accusations those who belong to the kingdom of heaven are to rejoice because their reward in heaven.

In our prayer Jesus taught us to long for this kingdom. Your kingdom come and your will be done. **Matt.6:10 The kingdom of heaven is both Spiritual and physical.** Right now heaven where God dwells is in a different dimension hidden from us, in order for us to see it,

we have to die and see the Spiritual aspect of heaven. When God's people die they go to heaven, the spirit goes to the presence of God. This is a spiritual reality; but one day God's kingdom will come; heaven will come down to earth in a physical reality where Jesus will be the Sovereign king. This is what we long to see even when we pray" *your kingdom come.*" In this kingdom, Jesus will live physically with his renewed people at the end of the age, at his coming. **Revelation 21:3-4** (God will live with his people forever and ever)

Conditions to enter the kingdom of heaven.

It's time to make a change, *repentance is necessary*, for the kingdom of God is at hand. Jesus called people to repent, to change the way they think and turn to God.

People must do God's will. **Matt.7:21** They must do exactly what God says.

God's will is to give eternal life to those who believe in Jesus. (**John 6:40**)

People must believe in Jesus in order to enter. Jesus is the door and way to heaven. This is what God has determined. God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life. (**John 3:16**) **John 3:33** *whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.*

Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of heaven during his time on earth. He sent his people to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations so that others may come and be part of his coming kingdom. (*Luke 24:46-47 This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem.*)

When he comes back he will establish his kingdom. Every knee will bow down and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This is what we are looking forward to. Your kingdom come, Come Lord Jesus. Amen.