

## The Kingdom and Its Ethic, Part 1

### **Theirs Is the Kingdom of Heaven Matthew 5:1-12**

- I. What Is the Kingdom of Heaven?
  - A. This is a great question, one having significant ramifications on how we do “spiritual life” in the world we live in
  - B. Some various views
    1. The kingdom is only a future reality, tied to the second coming of Jesus and not meaningfully present today
    2. The kingdom is the church: they are one and the same
    3. The kingdom is the rule of God over those believing on Jesus as Lord
      - a. Third view: Berkof, Grudem, Ladd, others...
  - C. Essentially, there are two kingdoms, two cities: one presently ruled by God and the transformative power of the gospel and the second standing in opposition to the way of God and the work of Jesus as the Christ
- II. Considering The Two Cities and Spiritual Blessing
  - A. What does it mean to be “blessed?”
    1. Essentially, the word used means to be happy, or delighted
    2. However, it carries implicit with it the idea of high favor because of divine grace – not just a passing personal delight
  - B. The true, lasting joy of the participant in the kingdom is found in embracing of worldview of humility and self-denial
  - C. Consider the nine examples provided
    1. Those recognizing their spiritual poverty receive the rule of God and the benefits of being under His loving dominion
    2. Those who genuinely acknowledge the seriousness of their condition, and the condition of this present city, receive true, lasting comfort
    3. Only the humble are able to take true, inherited possession of the earth
    4. Only those longing for the way of God will ever find genuine contentment in this life
    5. Only those exercising mercy are able to be recipients of the same
    6. Only those whose internal longings are made pure and clean are able to see God and live
    7. Only those who strive to suppress humanity’s natural tendency toward violence and hate will be identified as children of God
    8. Those whose righteousness becomes so counter to the existing reality that it leads to suffering will receive the benefits of the kingdom
    9. Those who suffer because of Jesus and His gospel, will be rewarded for their submission to the will of God

- III. The Kingdom of Heaven Is Not Like the Kingdom of Man
  - A. The kingdom of this world strives for personal security, self-fulfillment, and self-advancement
  - B. The kingdom of heaven strives for the rule of God, self-denial, and a humble spirit
  - C. We will never find true contentment or lasting joy by embracing the lifestyle and perspective of the kingdom of this world.