

Sermon Text: Luke 17:20-18:8 Enjoying and Desiring the Kingdom of Christ

Jesus calls you to enjoy His kingdom while you desire its consummation.

1) You can enjoy the Kingdom of God now through faith (17:20-21).

- a) The Pharisees' misguided question:
 - i) Misunderstands the nature of the kingdom
 - ii) Misunderstands the signs of its arrival
- b) Jesus' three-part answer:
 - i) Not the kind of signs you're looking for (17:20b).
 - ii) Not localized in human power-centers, whether elitist or popular (17:21a). The reign of God is universal and transcendent.
 - iii) It is in the midst of you (17:21b). You could see it, if you had eyes to see (faith).
- c) **Application:**
 - i) Do not judge God's reign by superficial appearances. Listen to His Word to learn His ways, and then take another look at the world.
 - ii) There is much at which to marvel and rejoice when you see the Kingdom through faith in Christ.

2) You can desire the consummation of the Kingdom of God through hope.

a) The Christian's Hope the Soul's Desire (17:22):

- i) The Revelation of the Glory of Christ (17:30)
- ii) The Just Judgment of the Wicked (17:22, 26-30)
 - (1) Days of Noah—wicked generation
 - (2) Days of Lot (Sodom)—wicked city
 - (3) They seem to sin without any penalty. Life carries on as usual: "eating and drinking, marrying and . . . buying and selling, planting and building"
 - (4) They were deluded: "and the flood came and destroyed them all" (17:27) and "fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all" (17:29; 2 Pet. 3:1-10).
- iii) The Vindication of the Saints (17:33-35)
 - (1) Saints will be vindicated from the shame of persecutors and naysayers, just as Noah and Lot were vindicated in the judgment of the wicked in their generation.
 - (2) Judgment brings new meaning to "life" (17:33)
 - (3) Judgment distinguishes saints from wicked (17:34-35)
- iv) Is this judgment the destruction of Jerusalem or the final judgment at Christ's return?
Both/and not either/or

b) Application: You can stir that desire by guarding your hope:

- i) Enjoy the presence of the King now.
- ii) Meditate on the glory of Christ to be revealed then.
- iii) Expect hardship now (17:22; 17:25).
- iv) Resist false hopes (17:23).
- v) Resist inordinate desires for fading things (17:31-33).
 - (1) Keep running to Christ when judgment comes (17:31).

- (2) Keep looking to Christ once you're free (17:32).
- (3) Lose "life" to secure LIFE.
- (4) "Remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles" (2 Peter 3:2). The world will be judged (17:37; Rev. 18:4).
- vi) Always pray that God will vindicate His elect (18:1-8).
 - (1) This parable urges us to prayer and courage (18:1).
 - (2) Argument from lesser to greater:
 - (a) If this unjust judge . . . then surely God will . . .
 - (b) If this widow . . . then surely you should . . .
 - (3) Whose time table (18:7-8 "delay long?" "speedily")?
- vii) "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?" (18:8b).