

# Thy Kingdom Come

by Stuart Briscoe

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of praying for the kingdom of God to come, rather than being naively optimistic or pessimistic about the future.*

**Duration:** 42:16

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 11:1-13, Psalm 72, Matthew 6:33, Galatians 6:7, Revelation 11:15

**Topics:** "Kingdom Of God"

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## Description

The sermon transcript discusses an experiment conducted with mice to illustrate the consequences of overpopulation. The mice initially thrived in ideal living conditions but as their population grew, social patterns disintegrated, sterility developed, and eventually, they all died. The sermon draws a parallel between this experiment and the potential fate of humanity, highlighting the pessimism surrounding war and the population crisis. The speaker urges people to be aware of the world's problems and not be blindly optimistic.

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## Transcript

I want you to turn in your Bibles, if you have them with you, to Psalm 72, and I want to share with you from this passage of Scripture something that I believe God would have us consider at this particular time. You'll notice, of course, that the very last verse of Psalm 72, verse 20, says, The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended. We have spent about, I think, 30 Sunday mornings looking into different psalms.

Not all of them were written by David, but probably the vast majority of them were. But at this particular point, we come to the conclusion of the collection of the Psalms of David. Others were written by other authors, whose names in some instances we know, and who in other instances are completely anonymous.

This particular psalm is a very poignant one, because it is written at the conclusion of David's reign, introducing the reign of his son Solomon. Now, there's a little disagreement as to who wrote the psalm. There's some people who say, well, because it says at the end of verse 20, the psalms of David are ended, obviously David wrote it, but it was the last one that he wrote, and he wrote it concerning his son Solomon.

Students of the grammar and of the usage of language disagree with this, and they say, no, there's no question at all that it was actually written by Solomon himself. And it would appear that this is probably

more accurate. Some people try to compromise the situation and say, well, of course, what happened was that as David was dying, he dictated this psalm, which Solomon took from him and put in his own language.

But whatever the position is, it's not really very important as to who wrote it. The content, the thrust of the psalm is quite clear. It is speaking of the fact that Solomon is about to reign, and it is a prayer for Solomon, either by Solomon himself or by his father David, and it is concerning his coming kingdom.

Solomon was about to begin a reign that started off remarkably well. It disintegrated towards the end, but in the early part of it, it was a glorious picture of what the reign of God can be through a man down here on earth. Solomon, of course, as time went on, became disobedient.

He did things that God had said quite categorically he should not do, and of course he paid the price. There is, we must always remember, the inviolable principle of divine action. Whatsoever a man sows, that will he also reap.

We live as if this is not a principle, we live as if this is not true. It is true, it is a principle, and we must always reckon with it operating. And of course the result was that as Solomon sowed those things which God had told him not to sow, he inevitably, towards the end of his reign, reaped the things that God, by no means, wanted him to have.

But in the early part of his reign, his feats as an administrator, he set up, I know you'll be glad to know about this, he set up a remarkable tax system. He also organized a navy. He was a remarkable administrator.

If you check on the things that Solomon was able to produce in this area, there's much we can learn from him. He was also an outstanding author. We know, of course, that some of the Psalms were written by him.

We are familiar with the Song of Solomon, where in all probability, Ecclesiastes was written by him, at the time of his great discontent and disillusionment. And all these books are of tremendous value and tremendous help. And of course he was possibly best known as an architect, for he it was who designed the beautiful temple, and he it was who organized everything and got the whole thing built.

And when you go out there and see the sort of place where he built it, and the type of thing that it was that was built, there's no question about it that this man Solomon was unbelievably magnificent, as an author, as an administrator, as an architect. But of course the real value of Solomon is this, that he speaks constantly to us of one whom the New Testament calls a greater than Solomon. The greater than Solomon, of course, is the son of David, not Solomon himself, but the great son, as the Scriptures call him, David's greater son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And I think perhaps the great value of Solomon to us in many instances is to see him in his early days as a tremendous picture of the one who would soon come, Jesus Christ, our Lord. I want us to look at Psalm 72 in this light, not purely in the light of the fact that here is a prayer for the kingdom of Solomon to be established and to flourish, but here is a prayer that perfectly legitimate we can pray that the kingdom of David's greater son might come, and that the prayer would be that the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ might come and be established, and that this reign will surpass all other reigns. This, of course, is exactly what Psalm 72 is talking about.

Now, I have been spending a bit of time recently doing quite a bit of reading, and as I've been reading, I've just during these last few days been writing, reading some things that have to do with man's projection of what is going to happen in the future. And a lot of people are spending a tremendous amount of time trying to project as to what is going to happen in the future. There are some people who are unbelievably optimistic.

There are some philosophers who are firmly convinced of this, that man is so absolutely remarkable, and man has absolutely everything at his fingertips, and man is so totally self-sufficient and capable that whilst many, many things appear to be difficult at his present time, there is no question in their mind that man has the ultimate, final answer to all man's problems. Now, these people, we'll call them basically optimistic humanists, they were in great vogue a few decades ago. They were the people who really were coming out with the great things.

Their sacred cow was science. They were totally convinced of man's ability. They looked at all the problems that were coming on the horizon, and they laughed at them and scorned them and said, but of course, there is absolutely nothing that man cannot do.

And therefore, they were optimistic. They are a dying race. And there are fewer and fewer optimistic humanists on the scene today.

Their place has been taken by people who are just about the opposite, totally pessimistic people. And I would say that if you really talk to the man in the street today, and I hope you do, I hope you spend lots of time talking to the man in the street, I hope you don't spend all your time with people who agree with you. That's how the best way I know to get your thinking process is solidified.

Spend a lot of time with people who totally disagree with you, and find out exactly what they're thinking and find out exactly what they're saying. And I think if you get alongside the man in the street and find out what he is saying, you will come to a very interesting conclusion, that there is overriding society today a basic attitude of pessimism. The old, naive optimism has gone.

There are a number of reasons for this. I think perhaps the world wars have knocked the head of optimistic humanism. For having been told that man was improving, and that man was evolving, and that man was the master of his own destiny, we suddenly were confronted on our own very doorstep of what man was really capable of doing, and we had portrayed in unbelievable terms man's unbelievable inhumanity to man.

And if that was a picture of improving man, a lot of people hoped that he would not improve any further. It was this that really knocked in the head all concepts of an optimistic philosophy of man. But then of course as time went on, people began to look into a number of other things.

And you remember the specter of that great cloud that appeared one day over Hiroshima in Japan. You remember that a few days later there was another one came over Nagasaki, and the whole thinking of the world was changed. For suddenly it was thrust unbelievably clearly upon man's consciousness that for the very first time in human history, man had the war capability of totally destroying man.

Now of course a long time ago, since 1945. What is it? 28 years ago? Since 1945. 28 years have long gone by, and in these 28 years I would suggest to you that there has been in our world an increasing philosophy of pessimism.

For people are very, very edgy. They know that there is an unbelievable capacity for war locked up in the major powers of the world, and whilst there are all kinds of treaties and there are all kinds of agreements, it could just be that as in the past people have forgotten about agreements when they wanted to, this could be done again. Or it could just be that it would only take one clown to make one mistake to make unbelievable holocaust burst out in our world.

And I believe that it's because of this consciousness that many people are becoming increasingly pessimistic about man's chances of survival. But it's not only the threat of war that makes people pessimistic. It's the tremendous threat of famine.

Now it's a hard thing for us who live in America today even to seriously consider the subject of famine. But I think those of us who do watch the news and those of us who do read the news, and those of us who look at the frightening pictures that Time magazine and Newsweek and these others delight to portray before us, and personally I'm glad they do. I think if we look at these pictures we have been confronted with the fact that famine is not a rather naive thought that the well-fed think about and tut-tut about.

That famine is an appalling reality and that at this very present time two-thirds of the world population go to bed hungry every night. We have seen what can happen when unbelievable war breaks out in Bangladesh and famine comes right behind it and disease comes right behind it and hundreds of thousands of people are swept away. We've seen it in these last 12 months.

Now the simple fact of the matter is this, that simple people who are thinking project this into the future and say there is no question about it. If war and disease and famine get on the rampage there is nothing that man can do to stop it. And it could well be that their pessimism is founded purely upon the fact that man has within his hands the ability to exterminate himself.

Don't be naively optimistic. Don't stick your head in the sand. Don't put your head in the clouds.

Open your big eyes and look at the big world and see what's going on. But not only are many people today pessimistic about man's future because of war and famine, they're also desperately pessimistic because of the population situation. The population situation as we're all perfectly well aware is getting out of hand.

Perhaps getting is the wrong word. Get is the word. Whilst it is relatively simple for us to go along happily having our families and deciding how many children we can afford and how many children we want to have and be concerned about feeding them and be concerned about clothing them and be concerned about educating them, one thing we've got to understand is this, if the world's population goes on expanding at its present rate there is no way that the world can go on supporting it.

Now of course we can be locked into our very pleasant, very convenient, happy little environment, be thrilled with our comfortable society and if we wish close our eyes to our world. But our world is a world that has a war potential, a famine potential, a disease potential and a population potential that is unbelievably frightening and there are real grounds for unbelievable pessimism among thinking people today. You've probably read in recent days of the experiments that have been conducted with mice.

Somebody built ideal living conditions for four mice. And having built ideal living conditions for four mice, the mice did what you'd ideally expect them to do. They had a great time and they began to multiply.

And they went along and had a wonderful time and continued to multiply and continued to multiply and continued to multiply and continued to multiply with ideal conditions that were suddenly less than ideal.

Not because the conditions had changed but because the population was greater than the conditions. And as they went on a very interesting thing began to happen.

There was total alienation in various areas of the mice population. There was total disintegration of social patterns among the mice. There was sterility developed among the mice.

There was lack of family concern among the mice. But things went on and on and on and then they began to die. They stopped burying their mice as they normally do.

And the sad moment came when eventually having bred and bred and bred till there were thousands of them in this confined space, the last mouse died. And that whole population came to a point of total entropy. This is an experiment that has been given quite a lot of publicity in recent days.

And the people who conducted the experiment are saying quite categorically that's exactly the way we're going. Now you see there are good grounds for pessimism as you look around. But there's something else that I think we need to be aware of and it is this.

That man is the one factor who disturbs the balance of the ecological system of our world. Our world made by God, I firmly believe, made by God with a magnificent balance, which I firmly believe, producing what it needs, interdependent, totally related to him, has one factor in it that is not prepared to relate to all other factors. And do you know what that factor is? That one factor, that one thorn in the flesh of the world, the universe and society today is, believe it or not, man himself.

There is, as far as I know, only one factor that can disturb the whole balance of our structure. And that one factor is man. And that man has done exactly what he should not have done.

He has disturbed the whole factor. Now unfortunately it wasn't the Christians who began to notice this first. It wasn't those of us who studied theology who noticed this first.

It was many people who way out, we called them in the avant-garde. And of course that's what we should call them because they're way ahead of us most of the time. Those people who are way ahead of us began thinking and they began to see what we were beginning to do by fouling up our ecological system.

And we know perfectly well that unless something serious is not done about it pretty quick, and some people would even go further than that and say, it doesn't matter what you do now, we have passed the point of no return. Something drastic is going to happen. You see, there are good grounds for pessimism among thinking people.

Now I could go on and on and on, give you more instances, talking about the whole, the whole, the thinking of many, many people who have come to a totally pessimistic conclusion about the future. Now what is the position of a Christian? Does a Christian look into the world ahead of him, the universe ahead of him, and have a naive optimism? And as he has this naive optimism, does he say, well that's okay, everything's going to work out okay in the end and I'm going to heaven anyway, so that's just fine. Is that the Christian position? One would get that impression from many books that have been written at the present time, and from many songs that are sung by Christians at the present time, and from many attitudes of careless and concerned Christians at the present time.

I believe it is totally wrong. You say, you mean a Christian should be totally pessimistic? You mean a Christian should look at the war and the famine and the disease and the despair and the hatred and the

bloodshed and the ecology and the pollution and all this thing, and throw up his hands in horror and say, oh we're finished, we're through, oh God come and rescue me, I am living in total despair? No, I don't. Do you know what I believe the Christian should do? I believe the Christian should be alive in this world and he should be looking at his world, fully understanding his world, and be neither naively optimistic nor undoubtedly pessimistic.

He should be a person who knows where history is going and knows what God is doing and is praying something constantly, which is the title of my talk this morning. He should be praying constantly, thy kingdom come. Whose kingdom? The kingdom of the optimistic humanist? By no means.

The kingdom of the pessimist who says there's nothing we can do? By no means. The Christian is a person who's straddling the situation and standing in the midst of the potential holocaust that is around us, looks at the situation and is living in the heavenlies with his feet in the earthlies and praying, God bring your kingdom to pass. And I believe that it's in this life that Psalm 72 is tremendously helpful to us.

For here is a prayer for Solomon and here's a prayer for the greater than Solomon, who is going to come and establish his kingdom. Now to put it in words of one syllable, I believe that the Christian is a person who believes that Jesus Christ is the answer to the world's problems and that Jesus Christ is the one who can establish a kingdom and that when Jesus Christ establishes a kingdom in response to his movement in the affairs of men, this world of ours is going to change. And that's where the Christian is.

That's where the Christian stands. That's where the Christian exists, to be the bringer in of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ among the naive optimism and the unbelievable pessimism of our world today. Would you think that I was being purely rhetorical if I said that I'm firmly convinced of this, there is one hope and one hope only for our world.

And that one hope and that only one hope for our world is locked up in the coming kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I believe it with all my heart and I want to live as if I believe it with all my heart. Now having said that the basic answer is in the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, you then get into theological niceties.

Because you see, you will find thoroughly, totally convinced and equally committed Christians who flatly disagree on how the kingdom is going to come. And I personally don't get hooked up too much in all the disagreements because I'm sure that once we get down into the basics we don't need to worry too much about the areas of disagreement. Let me quickly map them out for you.

There are those who say that there will come a time when there will be a literal reign of 1,000 years from Jerusalem itself when Jesus Christ himself will reign on earth and establish a kingdom wherein everything that man has ever longed for will come about because he will break all opposition in pieces like a potter's vessel, he will rule with a rod of iron, he will be king of kings and lord of lords and everything will be absolutely fantastic down here on the world. This will take place after the Lord Jesus Christ has come to take his saints to be with him. This is what we call the pre-millennial theory.

There's another theory among equally committed, equally convinced Christians. It's quite different. That theory is what we call the post-millennial theory.

And the post-millennial theory says this, that Jesus Christ will not come before this millennial reign, before this thousand years. On the contrary, Jesus Christ will come at the end of it to conclude it. That saying

does not teach that Jesus Christ's second coming will be in two parts, one part for his saints and one part to conclude the world's events.

It says there will be one second coming of Jesus Christ and that will come after his kingdom has been established on earth. There is going to be a gradual progression, a gradual development into this thing. There are many, many convinced Christians who hold this view, although this view is falling somewhat into disrepute.

It is called the post-millennial view. There's a third view which is called the amillennial view. Those of you who have been coming along will remember that when you come across the word with A at the beginning of it, of Greek origin, it means a negative.

And an amillennial view is held by many convinced Christians, many committed Christians today, and they do not believe that there will be a literal thousand years reign on earth, but that right now this reign is being worked out figuratively in the New Jerusalem, the church of Jesus Christ, and that the kingdom of God is operative in the lives of individuals who committed to Jesus Christ as seeing his kingship and his lordship at this present time operative in the world. Well, you know something? I know people who've got all these views. I respect people who've got all these views.

And I have great fellowship with people who've got all these views. And you know, I can kneel with every one of them and say, Oh God, thy kingdom come. And you know, the beautiful thing about it is this, that people with all these views are people with whom I can honestly find myself totally committed to the bringing in of his kingdom.

There is a sense in which those who are believers today should be living in the midst of naive optimism and in the midst of unbelievable pessimism and bringing in the reign of Jesus Christ in people's lives. There is a sense in which people today should be speaking out a message and saying history will find its glorious climax in the reign of Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And whichever way it works out, I want you to know something.

The real true Christian position is to be alive in the midst of the optimism and the pessimism, bringing the message of Jesus Christ and bringing in the kingdom today. Whether he comes at the beginning or the end of the millennium, you can do not a thing about it. That he comes today in individual lives, you can do everything about that, and that's where the tension is.

And I would say that every person here this morning ought to be checking on his world and finding out if he's really praying Psalm 72. Oh Lord, I want to see your kingdom come. Oh Lord, I want you to bless this world.

Oh Lord, I want to pour out from the riches of your glory down to the dregs of this world, all that this world is really looking for. Because I know of no higher calling, no more exciting thing, than to be a person living in this world, in this mess, and being the means of Jesus Christ being released in people's hearts. Now that must be the longest introduction that there's ever been to a talk.

Fortunately the talk will not be as long as the introduction. We need therefore to look at this psalm quite quickly and say just one or two things about his reign, his kingdom. First of all, the basis of this reign, the basis of this kingdom, the basis of the revolution that Jesus Christ brings.

There was a revolution in America almost 200 years ago, of which we will not speak in detail. And this revolution that took place in America 200 years ago has flourished. I don't think anybody's going to disagree with that.

I think it was based on independence. I think this was a key word. I wasn't around at the time, but I've read a little about it.

This seemed to be the key word. There was a revolution in Russia just over 50 years ago. That has had unbelievable impact.

When you think that just over 50 years ago no one had really ever heard of Marxist philosophy. And now you see the tremendous power of Marxist philosophy and the way it has been interpreted in terms of communism, different parts of the world. You see it operating.

You know, it's unbelievable what has happened. I think that key word was equality, which is right, independence or equality. Well, don't let's get into that one right now.

The French had a revolution. And my French accent is such that I wouldn't dare to try to quote those three words that were blazoned all over the place. When the French Revolution was taking place.

You know, there's a key word, there's a key slogan when a revolution comes. When a new reign is established, there is a guiding basic principle. And you know, the thing that intrigues me about the reign of Jesus Christ is that his word is not independence, and his word is not equality.

Do you know what his word is? The basic word of the reign of Jesus Christ is a very beautiful word. It is the word righteousness. And the basis of the reign of Jesus Christ, whenever he reigns, however he reigns, in whomsoever he reigns, the operative word and the basic principle will always be righteousness.

If you don't believe me, just look at how the Psalms 72 starts. Give the king thy judgment so good and thy righteousness to the king set. He shall judge thy people with righteousness.

The mountain shall bring forth peace to the people and the little hills by righteousness. You see? And it begins off on this very, very basic tenet. Righteousness is the basis upon which he reigns.

Now just let's take a couple of minutes to develop this thought of righteousness. The first thing that we need to notice, of course, is this, that when Jesus Christ came down into this world, as he did 1900 years ago, strode amongst men, the keynote of his life was righteousness. For the first time in human history, since the fall, there was a man who was living in total righteousness.

And as Jesus Christ strode this world, he was a living illustration of what righteousness is intended to be. Thank God he came, because otherwise we'd still have been fooling around, trying to figure out what on earth is right and what on earth is wrong and what on earth is good and what on earth is evil. We have still got ourselves sunk in the mire of relativism as it is.

Those who have ignored the basic projection of righteousness of God as it is in Jesus Christ, have got themselves totally sunk up to the eyeballs. They don't know the difference between right and wrong, good and evil. Morality and ethics have gone overboard many, many years ago.

But if there is ever to be that kind of living condition in which man can be man as God intended him to be, there's got to be re-established a principle of righteousness as it was portrayed in the person of Jesus

Christ. We've got to get back to him. And I believe that perhaps one of the great things that the Church of Jesus Christ needs to do in these days, is to find out the basic righteousness of our Founder and General Director.

For one of the sad things to say is this, that very, very often a Christian is moulded more by his national culture than he is by his Living Lord. And in many, many instances our national cultures have little to do with the righteous principles of our Living Lord Jesus. So here we check first of all.

We check on the basis of his reign which is righteousness as it was portrayed in him when he lived here 1,900 years ago. You know the first thing that happens as soon as you project the righteousness of Jesus Christ as portrayed 1,900 years ago, is you get yourself thoroughly and totally condemned. Listen to his teachings on marriage and we will find all of us totally condemned.

Listen to his teachings on neighbourly social relations and we find ourselves all of us totally condemned. Listen to his teachings as far as our relationship to nature and the universe is concerned, we find ourselves totally condemned. Listen to his principles of business operation, we find ourselves utterly and totally condemned.

There is no point at which I can touch the righteousness of Jesus Christ and not find myself condemned. No point. And so here I find the possibility of a new reign, a new righteousness, a new being, a new kingdom on earth and I am condemned by its basic tenet.

The righteousness of Jesus Christ is his basis and the more I look at his righteousness the more I discover my own unrighteousness. Which of course leads us to the second aspect of the ministry of the righteousness of Jesus Christ and that was that he not only came to portray righteousness, he came to procure righteousness. We know the story of Jesus Christ that having lived to portray it, he then died to procure it.

The glorious message of the kingdom of Jesus Christ is this, that those who enter into a relationship with him wherein dwells righteousness, are those who having been condemned by his righteousness, are repentant and have come to God for forgiveness through the substitutionary death of his son on the cross. The glorious act of Jesus Christ as he died on the cross was not a noble gesture to humanity. It was not the lovely plans of a well-meaning philosopher coming unstuck.

The glorious message of the cross of Jesus Christ is this, there is the righteous one being made unrighteous for me that I might be made righteous in him. Here's the establishment of the kingdom. We've got to look very, very simply at our world and understand this, this world can never be any different until righteousness is its basis.

And righteousness for unrighteous people comes about purely and simply through repentance and faith and commitment to the one who procured it for us by his death. Or to put it another way, this world will never be different until the church of Jesus Christ gets on the job and brings the message of Jesus Christ to those who need it most. But not only did he portray it and procure it, he then provides it.

The beautiful thing about the message of Jesus Christ is this, that having condemned me by his life and procured salvation for me by his death, he now lives in the power of his resurrection to provide to me righteousness. How does he do that? When I commit my life to him, God reckons me to be righteous. God forgives me and makes me clean and utterly justified.

And on top of that, he gives me the possibility of having this glorious King move into my life to live and to move and to have his being and to begin to produce his righteousness through me. Will the world ever be different? Yes, the world will be different. When will the world be different? The world will be different when the Son of Righteousness rises in people's lives and establishes a new kingdom, not based on independence, not based on equality, but based on righteousness.

When will that basis of righteousness come? It will come when people respond to the glorious message of Jesus Christ in repentance and faith and allow him to move into their lives, establish his kingdom and totally transform them by the might of his righteous power within. You see, that's where we come in again. That's where we stand right in the middle of the naive optimism and the unbelievable pessimism.

We have a down-to-earth spiritual realism which simply says this, nothing will be different until righteousness is established. Now, you may have different views as to when this righteousness is going to cover the earth like the waters cover the sea. You might be looking for a thousand years, literally, after Jesus Christ has come for his saints.

You might be looking for a time when this is gradually going to come in and then he will come for his saints. Or you may be saying it is a figurative position and it is a picture of Jesus Christ operating in his church. Listen, debate your own position on this, but understand the basic thing that really matters is that right now this kind of kingdom should be established in my life.

And this kind of righteousness should be changing my little corner of the world. Are you praying for the king that his righteousness might be the basis of a new kingdom that he is establishing? And are you saying, start it with me? This is the basis of his reign. Secondly, the boundaries of his reign.

Verse 8-11, He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, from the river and to the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall bring presents, the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him, for he shall deliver the needy, etc., etc. Now, this, of course, was literally fulfilled in Solomon. This was a prayer for Solomon, this was a prayer that was answered for Solomon, and his kingdom stretched unbelievably at that particular time, from sea to sea.

But, of course, in the familiar hymn that we love to sing concerning the reign of Jesus Christ, we talk about his kingdom stretched from sea to sea, from shore to shore, till kingdoms wax and wane no more. And, of course, it's from this particular psalm that we get this concept of the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Now, I'm not worried how you interpret this right now.

Let's understand this. When the kingdom of Jesus Christ really is alive, when Jesus Christ is establishing his basis of righteousness in people's lives, the beautiful thing about it is this, he trans- every conceivable geographical boundary. There are, at this present time in our world, over 100 countries competing.

Now, let's face it, that is the basis of operation, they're competing. We have uneasy alliances. We have downright hostility, and we have special arrangements.

I don't know if you realize this, but England and America have what is sometimes euphemistically called a, quote, special relationship, end quote. But let me make it quite clear to you, everybody is competing, and you can have a- you can have a special relationship, and the competition is white-hot between them. And

one of the frightening things that is developing in our world among our competing nations today is an upsurge of nationalism, and underneath that, an upsurge of tribalism.

And always remember, nationalism is simply sophisticated tribalism. And if our world is going to go on being our world, you can be certain of this, there has got to be an introduction of internationalism in the place of nationalism and tribalism. Do you know that the lid could blow off Africa any minute now? And that when the lid blows off Africa, and the tribalism really starts, it is unthinkable what's going to happen.

Everything we've known so far will be like a Saturday afternoon picnic in comparison. The tribalism that is just underneath the surface of the whole of the vast continent is so frightening, you feel it as you step off the plane. But the beautiful thing about the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is this, He transcends every conceivable geographical boundary.

And if there is ever going to be a binding factor that can get across various curtains, bamboo, iron, and otherwise, if there is going to be something that can be a binding influence in humanity today, I want to tell you what it is. It is the establishment of the righteous Kingdom of Jesus Christ transcending every conceivable geographical boundary. That's why Elmbrook Church needs to look to her laurels about her interest in foreign nations.

Don't let's fool ourselves. Things are improving, though we haven't even began to put a scratch on a scratch. The Kingdom that will change the world is the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and it must transcend every conceivable boundary.

Some of you wonder why I bother going on radio. The reason I go on radio is this, that radio is one of the very simple ways, right now, of getting across all kinds of boundaries. Now when we've got the opportunity, we'll get across the Iron Curtain boundary.

When we have the means, we're going to get across every conceivable boundary, and we right now have the facilities of preaching in such a way that we can get through the Bamboo Curtain. You see, the glorious thing about it is this, when the transforming message of the righteousness of Jesus Christ is beamed out through every conceivable geographical barrier, and every political barrier, and every other kind of barrier, there is transformation, and there lies your hope of a unifying factor. What an exciting thing it is to begin to understand that locked in the Church of Jesus Christ is the potential of the establishment of a new Kingdom, wherein dwells righteousness.

In the Church of Jesus Christ, what's she doing about it? Is it true to say that she is transcending all geographical barriers? She is transcending all spiritual boundaries, and she is getting right across all political differences? Because if she isn't, she's failing, because that's where the message goes. But the third thing I wanted to notice about the Kingdom of this greater-than-Solomon is the blessings of his reign. The blessings of his reign, I've divided them, perhaps inaccurately, into what we'll call material and spiritual.

I prepared this on Thursday morning and jumped on an aeroplane to Baltimore. If I hadn't jumped on the aeroplane to Baltimore, I would have stayed and worked a bit more on it and done this differently. But let's just take it this way, as it is now.

The material blessings of his Kingdom, verse 12 and 13. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also in him that has no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the

needy.

He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight. I want you to understand something. That when Jesus Christ establishes his Kingdom on this earth, however, whenever he establishes his Kingdom on earth, do you know what he's going to do? He is going to restore a sense of compassion for the poor and needy.

You know, I have heard people who say they're Christians, quote, totally out of context, a verse, and they say, the poor you have with you always. And that is their thinking that allows them to go along with an abundance and live cheek by jowl with people in utter abject poverty. I want you to understand something.

When the righteous Kingdom of Jesus Christ is established in his Church and is established in his world, one of the first things he does is produce compassion for the needy and a reach out to the poor. One of the second things that he will do in a material way will be he will redress the powers of violence, verse 14. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

The things that we have witnessed in recent months and recent years concerning violence and bloodshed on our world are unthinkable. But I tell you what's even more unthinkable, the cold, callous indifference of the Church of Jesus Christ of violence and bloodshed is even more unthinkable. One of the things we've got to be alert to is this, that when the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is established in our hearts and in a Church and in a country and in a nation and in a world, then there's a concern about the violence and there's a concern about the needy and there's a concern about the poor, and something is done by those Christ-motivated people to do something about it.

And I would say that in many instances we have been as a Church of Jesus Christ in this earth, singularly inconspicuous by our absence in these areas. But not only do we see the material blessings that he brings, we see the spiritual blessings that he brings as well. There's going to be a renewal of prayer through him, verse 15.

He shall live and to him shall be given the gold of Sheba. Prayer also shall be made through him continually and daily shall he be praised. What's going to be praised when his Kingdom is established? The state? No.

The system of government? No. A certain dream? No. He shall be praised.

That's going to be quite a difference, isn't it? And I believe that one of the things to which the Church of Jesus Christ should constantly be looking is the establishment of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ on this earth, when prayer will be made through him continually and praise will be constantly pouring out to him daily. You can see this on the individual basis. You can pick out the praying person and you can pick out the praising person among the idealistic optimists and the despairing pessimists, you can pick him out.

He's one in whom the Kingdom of Righteousness has been established. He's making his impact on his little corner of society. Those are the blessings.

And finally, very quickly, the builders of this Kingdom. Who are they? I would suggest to you, first of all, that the builders, the bringers-in of this Kingdom are those who, first of all, profess the Kingdom. Those who say, I yield my allegiance, I bow my knee, I commit my life to the one who is greater than Solomon.

Those who profess the Kingdom are those who have the potential for bringing in the Kingdom. But not only those who profess the Kingdom, those who pray for the Kingdom as well. Somebody asked me not long ago, why don't you pray the Lord's Prayer every Sunday morning? I said, frankly, because it's too hot for me.

Because when I get around to praying the Lord's Prayer, and if I do it every Sunday morning, the same thing, then of course there's just a possibility I might lose its impact, lose its thrust. But when I begin to pray, what I say is this, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come. And there's no way that I can pray, thy kingdom come, without being a person totally sold on the bringing in of the Kingdom.

And the way it's going to be done is in the next phrase, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. And I find that a little bit hot for me, because, you see, to pray that constantly would be to say, I want your will to be as perfectly expressed in me daily as it is perfectly expressed in heaven eternally. I'm not going to pray that lightly, because I know as soon as His good and perfect and acceptable will is being worked out in terms of my life daily, it's going to mean such a difference to my approach to this world.

It's going to mean such a total transformation in my outlook to this world. It's going to make me a member of a kingdom that touches every other area of other kingdoms that I know, and is almost constantly in opposition to them. It means that as I begin to pray for His kingdom, I'm going to be a person sold out to eternal purposes, and a person who begins to reject purely finite considerations.

And who are the people who are going to build the kingdom? Those who profess it, and those who pray for it. And thirdly, those who preach it. Oh, I don't just mean the professional preachers in whose happy band I am glad to be.

I don't just mean the professional preachers, I mean those who by life and by lip preach a living message. His kingdom has come in my life. And finally, those who practice the kingdom.

And if you want to know how to practice the kingdom, then do what I haven't done this morning. Get into an in-depth study of Psalm 72. You'll find out how to practice the kingdom.

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