

# **Pr Mark Turner: Communion & The Kingdom (1/12/18)**

## **Introduction:**

A few months ago we did a series of messages talking about the Sermon on the Mount - the central focus of which is the Kingdom of God.

Today we're going to talk about Communion and the Kingdom of God.

The message today, drawn from Luke 22:14-20; 24-27, will be addressing the anticipation that Jesus had for the coming Kingdom and will also demonstrate how he used the communion service as a teaching tool to prepare us to become a part of that Kingdom.

The way that we will do this is by using the following three part structure:

1. The Coming of the Kingdom
2. The Cost of the Kingdom
3. The Character of the Kingdom

## **Anticipating the Kingdom/Reunion:**

### **1. The Coming of the Kingdom**

Jesus' anticipation of the coming of the Kingdom is evident in this passage (Luke 22:16,18,30). He knows that separation is eminent, but He also knows that the reunion is coming! He is excited for the coming of the Kingdom, and wants his disciples to remember that he is coming soon by participating in this service as a reminder of His joy - reunion.

The question that remains for us to answer is: are we anticipating Jesus' coming Kingdom with the same joy as He is?

Illustration: When Mark was younger he used to be into a genre of music called Thrash Metal. Because he lived in New Zealand and the bands didn't do live performances there Mark had never seen his idols live. Then one day he and some of his friends found out that Megadeth (one their favourite bands) were coming to New Zealand. Because of the one off nature of that event Mark and his friends lived and breathed the anticipation of it! Reflecting back on that now he feels embarrassed about how little anticipation he has for the coming of Jesus' Kingdom. Shouldn't we ought to be just this excited about Jesus' coming?

### **2. The Cost of the Kingdom**

In this passage Jesus recognises, and is trying to help His disciples to recognise, that the kingdom comes at a cost (Luke 22:19,20). The disciples were not just spectators in the drama of the cross; Jesus invited them to partake in it with Him! Suffer as He suffers. That, Jesus says, is what the Kingdom of God is worth.

Luke 14:25-28 - The cost of the Kingdom is simply about identifying with Jesus - doing whatever it takes to become a partaker of the Kingdom. For this, it is not enough for the bread to be broken and left on the table. It is necessary to partake of it! In the same way we must partake of the cost of the Kingdom in order for us to properly anticipate and appreciate it.

Matthew 13:43-46 - The value of eternity is so much greater than we often appreciate.

### **3. The Character of the Kingdom**

The Disciples were not yet aware of the character of the Kingdom of God. Jesus was aware of this, and, through the communion experience He desired to teach them this character (Luke 22:24-27). 'I have set an example of service/humility,' Jesus seems to be saying, 'what you see me doing is precisely the character of the Kingdom!'

Matthew 18:1-4 - Childlikeness/humility is the greatest of assets in God's kingdom.

Illustration: The Megadeath concert that Mark spoke of was the kind of event that you dressed accordingly for. If he had come dressed like he now dresses for church the bouncers would have asked him if he knew where he was because he wouldn't have fit in at all. So Mark attended the concert dressed in the same kinds of clothes the performers wore so as to identify with those that he was there to watch. We should do the same in preparation for meeting Jesus! We should put on the character of Christ.

#### **Conclusion:**

The communion service was designed as a reminder of the coming Kingdom - and the need to be ready for that kingdom!

Are you living in anticipation of that kingdom today?