

How well do you reflect God's Kingdom?

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently I was preparing a sermon with the goal of helping people to see a glimpse of God's Kingdom in our lives.

There are some professing believers (including some inside the Church of God movement) who claim to have more knowledge and insights than the rest of us. While I acknowledge and appreciate any and all truth that God has given to us, I agree with the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:12.

- We see through a glass darkly.
- We know only in part.

If we (who claim to be believers) have a fuzzy picture of God, how unclear does an unbeliever see?

And, if an unbeliever has only a fuzzy picture of the Kingdom, what are we doing to reflect the Kingdom of God while we walk this earth?

Helpful book

I found material in a book titled *Kingdom Principles* by Myles Munroe to be helpful in my preparation. I thought I would share some of the information with you.

Dr. Munroe is founder, president and senior pastor of Bahamas Faith Ministries International, based in Nassau, Bahamas. He is an international motivational speaker and business consultant and has earned degrees from Oral Roberts University and the University of Tulsa.

Beginning premise

On page 11 Dr. Munroe begins the introduction with the following quote: "The greatest threat to civil society is mankind." He shows examples of why he believes that statement to be true.

Dr. Munroe quickly begins to explain his point that many people use religion as a replacement for an understanding and a commitment to the Kingdom.

On page 12 Dr. Munroe writes: "All of this is compounded by our establishment of sophisticated religions into which we retreat to escape the social chaos we have created."

On page 16 Dr. Munroe writes: "A careful and honest look at the biblical Script will reveal that the fundamental message of this greatly misunderstood Book [the Bible] is about a King and a Kingdom."

On page 18 he writes: "Jesus' first announcement was the arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven. His solution to the malnourished and bankrupt human spirit was not a religion but the Kingdom of Heaven. In other words, if you are spiritually poor, only the Kingdom will satisfy and fulfill your hunger. The Kingdom is God's priority and must become our priority if we are to overcome the confusion of religions and the threat of self-destruction.

"The power of religion lies in its ability to serve as a substitute for the Kingdom and thus hinder mankind from pursuing the genuine answer to the dilemma."

Then he lists the following conclusions.

- Religion preoccupies man until he finds the Kingdom.
- Religion is what man does until he finds the Kingdom.
- Religion prepares man to leave earth; the Kingdom empowers man to dominate earth.
- Religion focuses on heaven; the Kingdom focuses on earth.
- Religion is reaching up to God: the Kingdom of God coming down to man.
- Religion wants to escape earth; the Kingdom impacts, influences and changes earth.
- Religion seeks to take earth to heaven; the Kingdom seeks to bring heaven to earth.

Nine helpful principles

Dr. Munroe proceeds to give nine principles about the Kingdom, hence the title of the book.

Here are the nine Kingdom principles:

- The Kingdom concept of kings.
- The Kingdom concept of Lord.
- The Kingdom concept of territory.
- The Kingdom concept of constitution.
- The Kingdom concept of law.
- The Kingdom concept of keys.
- The Kingdom concept of citizenship.
- The Kingdom concept of culture.
- The Kingdom concept of giving to the king.

Begins with us

Jesus Christ gave His disciples many parables about the Kingdom during His life. They are edifying and inspiring.

Notice one of His shorter Kingdom parables.

In Matthew 13:31-32 Jesus told about the Kingdom being like a grain of mustard seed. He called it the least of all seeds.

Yet He described how that seed would grow into a huge tree to accommodate the birds.

The Kingdom of God begins with the least of all people: me and you.

Of and by ourselves we are not special. Yet God has chosen to establish His Kingdom through us.

Is our religion getting in the way of our living the principles of the Kingdom? Or do we as little ones reflect the glorious Kingdom of God?