

Chapter Number: One

Chapter Title: An Overview of the Kingdom Model

Introduction

NOTE: The purpose of this book is fourfold. As you read and study each chapter, we will encourage you to focus on these four things:

1. Cognitive- Being a Kingdom disciple requires knowing certain things.
2. Behavioral- Being a Kingdom disciple is a total way of life. What we think and believe, impacts how we live or how we live is the result of what we think and believe.
3. Affective- Experience the excitement and challenge which will come from an attitudinal (inner) conformity to God's will.
4. Dispositional- Being a Kingdom disciple results from knowing that we are a person of the Kingdom and what that requires.

CHAPTER ONE—AN OVERVIEW OF THE KINGDOM MODEL

1. **COGNITIVE**—As we begin this book, we do so with certain assumptions. I know that assumptions can be dangerous but here are some key things that we do not deal with that are essential to being a kingdom disciple. In this case it is a topic that the late Francis Schaeffer spoke to when he said that his fourth book, True Spirituality, should have been his first. There have been times when talking about truth, worldview or epistemology (why we know what we know and believe which we deal with in chapter two) when the reaction has hinted at or directly stated that, you are making Christianity an intellectual religion. It has an answer for everything and those who do not understand are intellectually inferior.

Christianity is a religion of truth which is to be experienced but it is also a religion that requires knowing and understanding. Keeping faith, experience, and understanding in their proper place plus demonstrating a humility and loving spirit, even with those with whom we disagree, is a Kingdom beatitude that must be present in our lives. In chapter two we expand this necessity of personally being transformed by what we know.

In this first chapter as we work through the overview of the Kingdom, we want to understand what that involves. “Love the Lord your God with all your mind, heart, body, and soul,” is not merely pious advice. God requires that of us.

2. **BEHAVIORAL**- Growing out of who we are, as kingdom disciples, there are certain behavioral or lifestyle attitudes that must be present. In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, Jesus highlights those behavioral traits which the entire Scripture elaborates on from Genesis to Revelation. If we only think and do not do or know and do not apply or practice, then we do not really believe and know. (See chapter two.)
3. **AFFECTIVE**- A kingdom disciple is not made merely by information nor formation but transformation. The Christian must experience a total way of life that is inclusive in belief, knowledge, experience and relationships. Christ the King is Lord of all. Kingdom minded Christians are constantly reminded that reality and life are about the Triune God and not so much about ourselves, at least as a focus or starting point.
4. **DISPOSITIONAL**- In a real sense, a Christian is crucified with Christ (see Galatians 2:20), he or she has died to self. Our life is hidden with God in Christ hence it is not about ourselves and our wills, but about him and his will. Our highest aim in all of life, including relationships, is to be like Jesus and seek first his kingdom. There must be a consistency with what we say we believe and how we live. That will produce the integrity and authenticity that God expects from his kingdom disciples.

Specific Goals

1. To work through the three models set forth in this book and to understand their strengths and weaknesses and why the kingdom framework is so vital in the disciple making process.
2. To understand how to keep the disciple making process centered on God and not the individual or group.
3. To understand specific ways that being a kingdom disciple is in fact, life-changing.

Teacher Preparation

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will quickly give you and your class a kingdom perspective by realizing what that means. What we know and do must produce life change or we do not know it in our heart of hearts.
2. Encourage the class to have read this chapter before the class.
3. Follow the flow of the powerpoint presentation on this chapter. Remember to print out the presentation from the powerpoint as suggestion in the introductory study.
4. Use the chart to summarize what is meant by the transformation process.

Procedures

1. Open the class with prayer, asking God to help you understand more clearly what it means to be a kingdom disciple and that he make us willing to learn and to examine our hearts and minds.
2. Look at the definition of a kingdom disciple, generally and specifically and suggested in the book and have the class to discuss how their understanding of being a disciple relates to that definition.
3. Using the stair steps illustration, be certain that it is understood from the beginning that being a Christian from the kingdom perspective is all inclusive.
4. While the aim is transformation of life, keep before the group that place of information and formation.
5. Though it may be a bit soon in the process to do this, have the class begin to think about and discuss how they see kingdom framework being applied or not applied and what the results of either looks like.
6. Challenge the class to think about this: while we may have some general knowledge about something, to really know something impacts our lives. This will also set the stage for the next study, chapter two.
7. Be sure to call to their attention the suggested reading at the end of each chapter.

Assignment

1. Uphold the class and its study in prayer.
2. Read the chapter two before next class and do not be concerned that chapter two is probably the heaviest chapter on the book but hopefully not that difficult to understand. Do not let the terminology sidetrack you but read carefully how they are used and defined. Remember: there is a glossary of terms at the end of the book.