

Luke 11:14-23; I John 4:1-6; Discerning the Kingdom of Christ I. A Unified Kingdom II. A Revealing Kingdom III. A Powerful Kingdom

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, what kind of a king is Jesus- and what kind of Kingdom is He bringing? How do we know which kingdom Jesus was a part of? Did Jesus represent God's kingdom or Satan's? Although the answer may seem obvious to you, this was the very issue that the crowds were asking in today's passage. In many ways, the kind of King you have determines the kind of Kingdom he will usher in. Today we see that Jesus Christ brings the Kingdom of God to men.

### **I. A Unified Kingdom**

And the first aspect of this kingdom is that the Kingdom of Christ is a unified Kingdom. When we think of the kingdoms of this world, we know that they are divided and filled with factions. In the US we have the Republicans and the Democrat and the Independents. Each party with their platform, trying to gain control. Each wanting their own ideas to be implemented- at the cost of the others. Others must lose in order for me to win. And it is becoming more evident in the US that the pendulum is swinging harder back and forth to the extremes. There is no unifying ideology in this nation. No party will have lasting victory. And no politician is pure and consistent in their practices. But this is not true in the spiritual realm. In the spiritual realm there is complete unity of purpose. Upon casting out a demon Jesus is accused in v. 15; that He casts out demons only by the power of prince of demons. In referring to Baalzebub- the Jewish listeners were using a play on words. The god of Ekron in II Kings 1 was called Baalzebub- meaning the lord of the house. But the Jews called him Baalzebub- meaning the lord of the flies or the god of the dung heap. In aligning Jesus with Baalzebub they were accusing Jesus of casting out demons by the power of the chief demon. They thought Jesus was using Satan to cast out a less powerful demon. But Jesus reveals the impossibility of this by pointing to the unity necessary for a kingdom to stand. Satan is consistent with himself- and Jesus has been consistent with himself. What sort of things does Satan bring? Well, Satan is known as the father of lies- the murderer in John 8:44. Satan accuses and brings bondage and death- he enjoys darkness and plays in the shadows. That is what the kingdom of Satan is like. But what has Jesus been doing? Well- Jesus has been preaching the good news of salvation from sins- bringing light and life! It was Satan that possessed this man and made him mute in v. 14- but it was Jesus who cast out

the demon and set the man free so that he could speak again. In other words- there is no overlap or consistency between these two kingdoms. No good can come from Satan- but no evil can come from Jesus. Both Jesus and Satan are committed to their own purposes. It stands to reason then that any- thing good, holy, just; anything that brings freedom and light- must come from the Kingdom that is opposed to Satan. Jesus continues in v. 17- every Kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. The word used here is Eremoo- meaning desolation and destruction- it is brought to nothing! If a people do not stand together, they will not endure! So this truth is evident- a kingdom divided cannot stand if it has no united purpose. And the Kingdom that Jesus represented has a complete unity- thus His kingdom will stand! The logic is sound- you cannot both build and tear down at the same time! No, a divided house will surely fall. Without a certain purpose and direction, any organization will ultimately fail! But what do we know about the mission of Jesus? Well- we know that His work and teaching has nothing in common with Satan. This truth extends to the church as well- the church must know its mission in order for it to have success! If our purpose on earth as an extension of the Kingdom of Jesus- is to make disciples of all nations; if our goal is to bring light and life to this world- it is only when we are clear in our purpose and united in our vision that we will in fact stand and endure! Because Christ is united in His mission and goal- His Kingdom is unified and thus it will stand!

## **II. A Revealing Kingdom**

The next aspect of this kingdom is that its essence is revealed by Jesus Christ. In other words, whose Kingdom did Jesus represent? By His very actions, Jesus was making clear that He represented the holy, Father in heaven. As Jesus says in v. 20, if I perform these acts by the finger of God, than the Kingdom of God has come upon you. Basically, when Jesus performed His mighty acts and wonders, He was revealing whose side He represented. Since He was casting out demons, feeding the hungry and preaching the gospel to the poor, it should have been evident that He was the fulfilling Messiah sent by the Father. As James 1 says, every good and perfect gift if from above- coming from the Father of lights. So when Jesus did good and gave light- let it be known that He was distributing the Father's gifts. Jesus began His earthly ministry by reading from the scroll of Isaiah in Luke 4- quoting from Isaiah 61- Jesus said that He had come to proclaim liberty to the captives- that the year of the Lord's favor had come because the Spirit was

upon Him. Now, with the healing of this demon possessed man Jesus was again revealing who He was sent by. His works proving that God's King was at hand. It is interesting that some people said in v. 16- show us a sign from heaven. These people wanted more signs- when the casting out of a demon should have been sign enough! Prove that you are from the Father! But Jesus was already effectively transferring citizens from the Kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of Light! Taking those enslaved by Satan and setting them free. His work was not only a fulfillment of prophecy, but His fruit proves that He is bringing mercy and light! Truly His actions revealed the Kingdom of God! So how do you know if someone represents the Kingdom of God? Well- look at their fruits! When you hear the gospel truthfully proclaimed, holy living and sanctified speech, then you know that Jesus is present! When people walking in darkness see the light- when addictions are broken and wall broken down- the Kingdom of God is at hand! Those who are in the Kingdom of God will be known. Living in fellowship with Christ has an affect on us as well! Not only does Jesus reveal the Kingdom by His works- we should reveal the Kingdom by our words and works! We define conversion as the putting to death of sins and the coming to life in the image of Christ! Christian will both cast away that which is old and sinful- and put on that which is new and good! Our lives are a proof of the continued good work of Jesus Christ- proving that His Kingdom has come! This calls for our allegiance- as we read in v. 23. If you are not with Jesus you are against Him. There is no neutrality! When it comes to citizenship in a spiritual kingdom- either you are following Satan or you are following Jesus! If you do not side with Jesus in this battle against sin and the Evil One, then you are aligned with Satan. The Prince of this fallen world or the King of Creation. There are only two spiritual kingdoms and no middle ground. How we live and act reveals which king we follow! How do you know which kingdom a person is committed too? Consider their words and works. As we read in I John 4- test the spirits to see if they are from God. By this discernment you will know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

### **III. A Powerful Kingdom**

So Jesus reveals the unity of his Kingdom- and the purity of His Kingdom because He is ushering in the Kingdom of God. In our final point, Jesus proves the power of this Kingdom. In v. 21 Jesus illustrates what has happened to Satan and his dominion. Satan is a strong man- more powerful than any other mere creature in fact- and as a strong man he

leads a kingdom united in rebellion against God. However, Jesus has come- being stronger than Satan- and He has tied Satan up and set many of those under Satan's dominion free! Jesus overcame Satan by resisting his temptations in Luke 4- so that Jesus could say that Satan fell like lightning in Luke 10:18. Or as Rev. 20 says, Satan has been bound and he cannot deceive the nations anymore! The fact is, Jesus overcame the Devil and disrupted his kingdom. Jesus now leads captives in his train- taking those who were once enslaved and upon setting them free He transfers them into the Kingdom of God! As the Gospel goes forth, Satan's armies continue to retreat until we have a church established in every nation of this world! Jesus has plundered Satan- not by bowing down to Satan as the temptation went- but by His perfect obedience and death on the cross! So that now Jesus has received all power and authority as Mt. 28 says. He continues to take the slaves of Satan and turn them into Sons of God! Satan's kingdom has fallen- his possessions are being taken away as plunder! All because of the mighty man- this powerful King who has conquered even crushed the head of his foe! Yes, Satan is powerful. He is roaring lion- seeking to destroy and consume and I Peter 5:8. But His head has been wounded. He is like a chained lion- fierce and yet restricted. Unable to stop Jesus from plundering his house and saving lost mankind! Jesus has conquered- "Nicao" in the Greek- He Overcame and got the victory! To cast out this demon by uttering a word proves His claim! The spoils of war are His! Jesus ushers in the Kingdom of God with power and might over darkness and every foe falls before Him- being crushed as Ps. 2 says!

To conclude, the contrast between these two kingdoms is as stark as the difference between night and day! There are no shades of gray- no in-between! Either you are with Jesus gathering the lost and working to build His kingdom- or you are trying to scatter and destroy! Satan is losing ground. He may rage and wage war- but in the end His defeat and doom are sure! At the close of the LP we pray- deliver us from the Evil One. That is what Jesus did and is doing! And as I John 4 reassures, He who is in us is greater/ stronger than he who is in this world! Even Rom. 16 :20 promises, the God of peace will soon crush Satan under our feet! Because Jesus has bound him- one kingdom will fall as the Kingdom of Light is established! Jesus brings the Kingdom of God to man!