

- ii. From 19 formative practices of the early church¹:
 - a) Eating together (at eucharistic and other meals): Christians share the table as a new family.
 - b) Giving the kiss of peace in love, as equals.
 - c) Memorizing texts (e.g. the Sermon on the Mount).
 - d) Visiting the poor, the sick, and prisoners.
 - e) Exercising hospitality: Receiving and feeding visitors.
 - f) Putting money in the collection box: Christians voluntarily contribute to the common fund.
 - g) Replenishing the stocks of food and clothing.
 - h) Feeding needy people: Christians care for outsiders and enemies.
 - i) Being willing to lose out (in business, law, and verbal arguments).

LIVE THE STORY

- In our missional priorities, what is it essential not to assume the Gospel?
- Why is the Gospel referred to at times as the gospel of the kingdom? What does the word Gospel refer to?
- How does the parable (whether we call it the parable of the provisional king, or the parable of speculating on the kingdom) provide a picture for both the gospel and the call of a disciple?
- How does Zacchaeus' life perfectly illustrate the parable?
- How do Zacchaeus' actions demonstrate a change of allegiance?
- Why might casting this parable as about profitability (like good capitalists would) lead us away from its real meaning and application?
- Looking at the list of formative practices above, can you see how these are a means of trading in the currency of Christ's kingdom?
- How is Christ calling you to trade in the currency of His kingdom? How is that risky for you? Why does is such "speculating" real faith?

Gospel Witness: Speculating on the Kingdom

Jerry Cisar — March 5, 2023

Text: Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; Luke 19:11-27

Introduction

I. The Promised Kingdom (Rom. 1:1-6)

A. The Gospel was promised beforehand (Isa. 9:6-7).

B. It is regarding God's Son.

- i. Psa. 2:1-2
- ii. Psa. 2:6-7

II. The Provisional Kingdom (Luke 19:11-27)

A. Provisional Government

¹ Alan Kreider, The Patient Ferment of the Early Church, 122-123.

B. The Parable of the Provisional King.

The time when the would-be king is traveling is a time of risk. It is a risk because everything around us promises peace, joy, and justice if we make money, self, and sex our high priorities, while the provisional (already/ not yet) king says generosity, others, and self-sacrifice are the currency of the new kingdom.

III. Speculating on the Kingdom

A. The Gospel is the proclamation of a new king.

- i. The way into this kingdom is the forgiving grace of Christ. The proof of our loyalty, or faith, is evidenced in how we live. Which system of laws are we living under?

- ii. A disciple is not...

- iii. A disciple is...

B. A disciple is someone who speculates on the new kingdom... that it will succeed.

- i. Why the coming of the Lord is important.

- ii. The first synonym suggested for *speculation* is *belief*.

- iii. The scene with Zacchaeus illustrates perfectly the claim made on would be disciples. It perfectly illustrates the point of the parable; the speculation required.

- a) There are two kings/kingdoms in that story.

- b) Zacchaeus was speculating that Christ's kingdom would outlast Caesar's. He was publicly aligning himself with this new allegiance. But more than that, he was living according to the ways of the new kingdom and not the old. The old ways had gotten him rich; he forsakes them.

- iv. What does it mean to speculate on the new kingdom?

- v. Of all the lame excuses...

C. This is why the Sermon on the Mount was one of the most significant discipleship tools of the early church.

- i. The early church understood that they were building a new culture based on the teachings of their King, Jesus.