

10 Connections Between Jesus and the Kingdom of God

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The kingdom of God is, in essence, God's redemptive reign. Yet it can be easy to overlook this prominent theme in the life of Jesus, and tempting to assume rather than investigate the importance of the kingdom for Jesus. When we miss the significance of the kingdom to Jesus, however, we can miss the significance of the kingdom for biblical theology and ethics.

So how important was the kingdom of God to Jesus? What was his relationship to the in-breaking of the eschatological kingdom? Let's examine ten ways Jesus related to the kingdom.

1. Jesus inaugurates the kingdom. With the coming of Christ, the kingdom begins not in the coronation of a mighty king but in the birth of a crying baby. Yet as Jesus' ministry begins in Mark, he announces, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" ([Mark 1:15](#)). What Israel had long awaited, Christ had now inaugurated.

2. Jesus is the kingdom. Where the king is, there is the kingdom. This is precisely why Jesus says to the Pharisees, "The kingdom of God is in the midst of you" ([Luke 17:21](#)). As Graeme Goldsworthy teaches, Jesus embodies the kingdom motif of God's people in God's place under God's rule. Jesus is both the faithful ruler and the righteous citizen of the kingdom.

3. Jesus purposes the kingdom. Jesus reveals that his purpose is to proclaim the kingdom. Jesus described his mission saying that he "must preach the good news of the kingdom of God" ([Luke 4:43](#)).

4. Jesus declares the kingdom. Through his words, Jesus explains the kingdom and invites people to enter into it. Luke summarizes Jesus' ministry as "proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God" ([Luke 8:1](#)). The declaration of the kingdom often came through the parables of Jesus that illustrated what it was and how it worked.

5. Jesus demonstrates the kingdom. Through his works, Jesus shows the power of the kingdom and his authority over the prince of darkness. As Jesus explains, "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" ([Luke 11:20](#)). Jesus not only declares the kingdom in his words but also demonstrates the kingdom in his works.

6. Jesus deploys the kingdom. Jesus sends his followers out as ambassadors of the kingdom to herald its arrival. This deployment happens in Luke 10 as Jesus sends out the 72, instructing them to say, "The kingdom of God has come near to you" ([Luke 10:9](#)). In the great commission, king Jesus issues his discipleship battle plan to the church because he possesses "all authority in heaven and on earth" ([Matt 28:18](#)). Jesus sends his soldiers to the front lines to engage the kingdom of darkness.

7. Jesus transforms the kingdom. Israel's messianic hopes focused on the coming of a military conqueror who would rescue them from their geo-political enemies. That is why they sought to make Jesus king ([John 6:15](#)). But Jesus reorients their vision by declaring, "My kingdom is not of this world" ([John 18:36](#)). Jesus transforms the kingdom, showing it is holistic in its nature, redemptive in its mission, and cosmic in its scope.

8. Jesus purchases the kingdom. Through his victorious death and resurrection, Jesus redeems the kingdom. As he satisfies the wrath of God poured out for those who rebel against his rule, Jesus defeats Satan, sin, and death (Col 2:14-15). He overcomes the world, the flesh, and the Devil by destroying the power of the kingdom of darkness. By purchasing a kingdom people at the cross, Jesus proves himself to be the rightful ruler of the restored kingdom.

9. Jesus concludes with the kingdom. In his final words to his people, Jesus concludes his earthly ministry by clarifying the kingdom. Just before his ascension, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). Even at the conclusion of his earthly ministry, Jesus resolved confusion about the kingdom. So the kingdom was key to the start of Jesus' earthly ministry and its culmination.

10. Jesus returns the kingdom. In the second coming of Christ, Jesus returns as a triumphant warrior king. As he returns to achieve final victory, the name scribed on his body is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev 19:16). At last, he places all his enemies under his feet as he launches a new creation kingdom that fully reflects his righteous reign. He consummates the conquest that began with his birth.

If the kingdom of God was central to Jesus' life and ministry, then it remains crucial to our theology and ethics today.

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