
**"The Gospel According to Jesus"
(Matthew 4:23)
Pastor Peter Yi
December 27th, 2009**

Introduction:

(Mat 4:23 NIV)

²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

How's the year been for you? For me, for our family, it's been amazing. Linda and I both turned 40. I heard the voice of God so clearly this year, clearer than I've heard in years. God told us to move to the city, so we moved. You don't know how awesome it's been living less than five minutes from church. The kids have transitioned to their new schools way beyond our expectations. I finished a Christian leadership development program called Arrow Leadership. My brother and I have reconnected with our estranged parents. It's really been a good year.

How about for you? I wish I could sit down with every one of you to hear your stories. For some of you it might have been a year of transition. Getting married, growing your family, beginning a new relationship, beginning a new job, losing a job, kids heading off for school for the first time, the loss of a loved one. For some of you, this is your first year with Young Nak. Changing churches is not an easy thing. And a whole bunch of you became official members. Welcome aboard.

For some of you it was a year to take a break, for others it's been a year of deepening your involvement. You joined your first Life Group. I hope that's been a good experience. Aren't Life Groups just great? I love mine and the people in them. Perhaps some of you started serving again and with more passion than ever, maybe you went off on your first mission trip. It's been a great year for our church as well. Today's we're going to get a bit reflective and look back on this year.

The year has been about expanding God's Kingdom, but it hasn't just been this past year that we've been trying to become a Kingdom building church. The seeds were planted years ago by our former leaders, that we would become a church that would build the Kingdom of God. Years ago we began to explore God's word and He revealed to us our mandate to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. And so we began doing missions, not just because this is what churches are supposed to do, but because missions was at the very heart of God. From the very beginning, God was, and always has been a missionary God. And once we caught that vision the wheels were set in motion and what I see happening is that every year, we are growing more and more as a Kingdom building, Kingdom expanding, Kingdom focused church. And I truly believe this pleases God.

I think God is pleased when a church begins to change from being overly self-centered to becoming Kingdom centered or when a church is in it just to build their own empire to becoming a church that strives to build God's empire. And I really believe we're on the right track. Just to give all of us some perspective, it was just a decade ago, we were very singular in our missions vision. Kyrgyzstan was the only missions focus of the English Ministry. Now ten or more years

later, God has allowed us to continue our ministry in Kyrgyzstan, expand into Cambodia, commission Jeong Ah to SE Asia, and partner in the slums of Guadalajara, Mexico.

You and I have been witnesses to the growth in our short-term missions over the years from one trip a year to 7-8 trips a year and more and more people heading out for extended short term mission trips like Deacon Hakyung to Kyrgyzstan.

And perhaps the most exciting thing has been the growth of our church's vision for our city. It was just a few years ago where we were doing very little, almost a negligible work in our city. Even when you compared local and global budgets it was around 1 local dollar spent for every 16 global dollars spent. The disproportion was huge. Things are different now. Our global giving has grown beyond our expectations and our local budget has also seen tremendous growth with our ministry expanding in St. James Town.

We looked at a verse from Romans 1 yesterday in prayer meeting. It goes like this.

⁸First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.

I want our church to live out our faith and our responsibility in such a way that the community, the city, the country and the world begins to take notice that God is moving and working, not for our sake, or for our glory, but for the glory of God.

People of God, let's collectively and in solidarity, give thanks to God for moving our hearts to be responsive and obedient to all that he has called us. Join me a quick prayer.

"God, thanks for 2009—for good and bad. Thank you that Romans 8:28 is true that "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you because you've been working in the lives of every person here. Thank you because you've been working in our church. Amen."

Why have we been doing what we've been doing? Some of you who are new to church altogether or new to our church, might be wondering, where does my offering dollar go? Or why is this church so nuts amount missions and ministry and evangelism and church planting? Why does 35% of our church's budget go to some sort of missionary or outreach activity? Perhaps up to 40% in 2010. Why do some of our people give very generously to missions with their finances, in vacation time to go on trips, to pray both privately, in small groups, and in our Saturday prayer meetings? Why are the sermons always talking about Kingdom and missions and sacrifice? Why has a small group of folks been praying every Saturday morning from 8:15 to 9:15 for friends and family who are not yet Christians?

The reason is the gospel, the good news. And the gospel is the message of the kingdom. And the kingdom is about rule, a reign and dominion. And the rule and reign is that of a just and merciful King—Jesus Christ. The gospel is this: Jesus Christ, who is God and man, is the rightful king of all the universe and of every person on this planet. He owns that right because he's the creator. He made each one of us. He owns that right because he's the savior. He died on a wooden cross to bear the sins of the world. He reigns now in heaven and over all the earth and invites people in every generation, in every nation to turn from their rebellion repent of their sins and embrace Jesus in their hearts and savior and king. That's the gospel.

Jesus taught us and showed us what a gospel life looks like as well. He taught us that there is word and deed component of the gospel. Look once again at today's verse.

(Mat 4:23 NIV)

²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

And a couple more references.

³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. (Mat 9:35 NIV)

⁷ As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'

⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

(Mat 10:7-8 NIV)

So there is a word and deed component to a gospel life or a kingdom life. Some say actions speak louder than words. Biblically speaking, I don't think the statement is true. The bible and God for that matter, places an incredibly high importance on words. Words are not just words to God. To God words are the means of creation. Words are the means of destruction and judgment. Of blessing and restoration. It's through words that peoples hearts will be changed. It's through words and truth, that the power of the lies of the enemy will be broken. Jesus himself, is THE Word. The word that became flesh and made his dwelling among us. Words are terribly important to God. And so they should be very important to us. The gospel is a message of words. The greatest message a person could ever hear. So you and I are called heralds, teachers, preachers, evangelists, communicators, sharers of the word, the message of the gospel.

But there is also a deed component to the gospel. Listen to the words again.

(Mat 4:23 NIV)

²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Our gospel life, begins with words but cannot end with them. There has to be deeds. There has to be action too. We lend an ear. We pray. We give. We build. We visit. We encourage.

It is not either or. It is both and. It is both word and deed.

So you and I, our church, we are doing what we are doing, because we believe in the gospel. We believe that the gospel is true even more than the sky is blue or gravity keeps us on the ground. That's why we're doing what we are doing.

So throughout this past year we planted ourselves within the book of Matthew, a gospel on the kingdom of God, and looked at a whole bunch of themes related to the Kingdom. We learn first that the Kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God. In a world where everything and everyone but God reigns, the coming of the Kingdom is the ushering in of the reign of Jesus Christ.

We also discovered that the Kingdom of God is a reality that can be described as an 'already-not yet' experience. The coming of Jesus to this world has set the wheels of the kingdom in motion, but it has yet to reach its top speed. So we get glimpses and foretastes of Kingdom life and until the second coming of Christ. And we continue to partner with God in establishing his rule and reign on this earth.

In Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount, we discovered the ethic of the Kingdom. What type of people are blessed? The peacemakers, the meek, those who mourn, those who are poor in spirit, and so on. And then within those chapters we talked about prayer, fasting, trust, anger, marriage, the golden rule, just to name a few.

Jesus taught us this ethic because this is the ethic of his Kingdom. His Kingdom is unlike any other Kingdom found on this earth. And he wants us to begin living out that Kingdom ethic. Sure it won't be perfectly lived out, not yet, but we must begin, and try and get a glimpse and taste of what the Kingdom is going to be like.

After looking at the ethic of the Kingdom, we moved to the parables of the Kingdom. The parables were stories based on familiar human experiences. They were stories that were told not just to be clever and cute and have some moral. They were told to generate faith. They were stories that send out faith feelers. Any faith here? Or over there? Let's toss out this parable and see.

There was the parable of the sower, the soils and seeds. It was a story about listening.
The parable of the weeds. Judgment.
The parable of the treasure hidden in a field and the pearl.
There was the parable of the unmerciful servant. Forgiveness
Parable of the workers in the vineyard. Grace and generosity
Parable of the two sons. Responsibility
Parable of the ten virgins. Vigilance
Parable of the talents. Accountability
Parable of the sheep and the goats. Judgment.

We also spent a month looking at the indispensable quality of unity. We spent another month looking at vocation and work and the kingdom impact we are to have in that important area of our lives. And then we capped it off with a few more lessons on the Kingdom from the book of Matthew. That was our year from the pulpit.

If I were to focus on just a few things it would be this.

1. Christ is King. He is the King over all the earth. He is the King over our lives. Let's ask ourselves. Is Christ more King in my life today than he was a year ago? And how can I allow Christ to become more my King a year from now, than it is today.
2. Am I living as a citizen of the Kingdom of God? What is the ethic by which I'm living by? My own or is it the ethic and morals of Christ? To whom do I give my allegiance?
3. Am I living a life that is building and expanding the kingdom of God? Parenting. Relationships. Career. Church. Community. City. World.

Expanding the Kingdom of God doesn't end today. It continues as long as evil is in the world. It goes on as long as there are people who've never heard the gospel. Until we die or until Christ comes back, this is our calling, our ministry, our lives.

