Jesus said to His disciples, *“I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”* Luke 9:27

What did He mean? This has always caught my attention. We could assume Jesus is referring to the rapture; those Christians who will be mysteriously taken off the earth like Enoch and Elijah. Yet, we know those standing there with Jesus all tasted death and the rapture has not yet come. So, what is the kingdom of God that some of them saw before they died? And, have you seen it too?

*“Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.”* Luke 10:23-24

What did they see and hear that prophets and kings wanted to, but did not? They saw Jesus Christ in person; they saw and heard what the kingdom of God is all about through Jesus the Messiah, its eternal King.

After Jesus had been in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, he went into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, *“The time is fulfilled, what God has promised is here; the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the message of the gospel of the kingdom of God.”* (Mark 1:12-15)

They wanted the King to establish His kingdom right then, but that’s not what He came the first time to do. Some finally understood this as they saw Jesus hang on the cross, but most did not. Those who finally understood who Jesus was/is, went on to believe His whole message of the gospel; that Christ would come a second time and then establish His kingdom on the earth. His kingdom first comes “in me.” Then I come with Him (all His saints of glory) when He returns with the fullness of His Kingdom on the earth.

Mark 4:10-12 *“When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. 11 He told them, ‘The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’”*

The outside of what? The kingdom of God? Jesus spoke in parables outside in the open air, so the outside is not about outside a building or home. They saw the kingdom and understood the kingdom of God because Christ IS the Kingdom. To be “in Christ” means to be in His Kingdom. Wherever Jesus went He said, “The kingdom of God is at hand, near you.”

Mark 9:1 And he said to them, *“I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.*” Mark adds to this statement, that Luke did not, “with power.” The power of the kingdom is in Christ’s ability to forgive, heal and the resurrection of the dead to eternal life.

His kingdom is made of those that are “in Christ” by faith in His death and resurrection, filled with His Holy Spirit to do the Father’s work on earth. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit there is no resurrection of life in Christ Jesus. Without faith in the work of Christ on the cross, on our behalf, there is no deposit of God’s Holy Spirit. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit there is no guarantee what is to come for those “in Christ.” (Ephesians 1:11-14)

Mark 12:28-34 *“One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.’ ‘Well said, teacher,’ the man replied. ‘You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God.’”*

Knowledge of the Scriptures and understanding what they mean – brings us near, but not into the kingdom of God. Faith (repentance and obedience) to Jesus Christ brings us into His kingdom. The faithful in Christ inherit the Kingdom.

Mark 14:23-28 *“Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,’ he said to them. ‘I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.’ When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ‘You will all fall away,’ Jesus told them, ‘for it is written: “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.” ‘But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.’”*

After the resurrection of the Lord He appeared to many of His disciples. Thus, again fulfilling what He had said that “some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the kingdom of God.” Jesus IS the Kingdom of God. Our nation chooses a president that the majority wants because of what the man stands for that they agree with or believe in. But, in the kingdom of God, the “man” is already in place as ruler, and we each must agree with Him and stand with Him, or we are put outside His Kingdom forever on the Day He judges us. There is no “majority rule” in the Kingdom of God. It’s His rule only, and under Him are those who will rule in His Kingdom.

Luke 11:20 *“If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.”*

Did He drive out demons? What has He driven out of you and your way of life? Because if He has not driven out of us demons and demonic strongholds, and driven out the power of sin in order to live the righteous life of Christ - then the kingdom of God has not come to us, no matter what we have to say about Jesus Christ. The two go together so that the kingdom is seen and not only heard.

Luke 22:14-18 *“When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.’ After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, ‘Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.’”*

We will drink the fruit of the vine with our King, just as the Lord’s first disciples did with Him, only this time we won’t be recognizing His blood and body, in His death on the cross. We will be cheering the promise of His resurrection; the fulfillment of His return to reign and make all things new, just as He said.

John 3:5-8 *“I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’”*

Again, it is the Holy Spirit living in me that qualifies me to be “in Christ,” and to enter the kingdom of God upon my death or at the rapture, whichever comes first. Many people will be turned away because even though they have been born of water (mother’s womb) they have not been re-born of the Holy Spirit. They may know the written Word of God, but they do not have God’s indwelling Spirit. To be “in Christ,” means His Holy Spirit lives “in me.” The Holy Spirit brings the kingdom of God into me where it takes ‘ME’ over, first and foremost.

1 Corinthians 4:20 *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.”*

The Holy Spirit teaches me about the things to come, and reminds me of everything the Lord has said. He guides me in the truth so that I can live for the Lord in word and deed. The Holy Spirit is the gift and proof of the new heart I’ve been given.

Ezekiel 36:25-28 *“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”*

Romans 14:17-18 *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.”*

This is the outcome of God’s kingdom in me as well as its fulfillment on the earth – when the Lord returns. The earth and world has yet to see the fulfillment of God’s righteousness, peace and joy. And, the earth groans for the true sons and daughters of God to dominate as they were supposed to from the beginning, according to God’s own command and freedom to do so.

*“****Therefore, my dear brothers (and sisters), stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”*** Luke 15:58

1 Corinthians 1:4-11 *“I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way — in all your speaking and in all your knowledge—because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful. I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.”*

What we need to see with the Church today is “unity.” As it is, there are just too many divisions with believers, in their groups (denominations) doing pretty much their own thing, and doing it as they tack on the Name of Christ. There’s lots of activity, but very little kingdom work getting done. Oh Lord, forgive us and rescue us from ourselves!

1 Corinthians 15:19 *“If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.”* Most of us live for “this life” more than we live “for the kingdom of God.” I believe that if we live for the kingdom of God, as we should, then we would not be so weak, sick and enslaved to all kinds of things, which truly profits us nothing whether now or later.

Jesus taught that not all those who called Him Lord, and call Him Lord now, will enter the kingdom of God, but rather, only those who do the will of the Father. The cross of Jesus is where my will surrenders to God’s will for the sake of His Kingdom in me and coming with all fullness to the earth! It’s not what I believe about God’s Word, but rather what I will obey.

Philippians 3:7-14 *“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God* ***has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus****.”*