

Escape or Return?

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Courageous Wisdom or Cowardly Treason?

An Application of Matthew 5-7 to the Current American Experience

What's wise and what's foolish in light of our current direction in America? ...to escape with our families in a Noah type way

OR to return and minister among the population in a Jeremiah type way

OR just don't worry about it and pursue the American dream?

Preparation is good...

Proverbs 30:24 Four things are small on the earth, But they are exceedingly wise:

²⁵ The ants are not a strong folk, But they prepare their food in the summer;

²⁶ The badgers are not mighty folk, Yet they make their houses in the rocks;

...as long as it does not hinder the kingdom mindset and lifestyle of ministry and missions.

Our Goal: Develop an individual and corporate kingdom mindset and lifestyle

The kingdom mindset in the Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5:10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when *men* cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.

¹² "Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty *again*? It is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ "Nor do *men* light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house.

¹⁶ "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'

³⁹ "But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰ "And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.

⁴¹ "And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two.

⁴² "Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.'

⁴⁴ "But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you

⁴⁵ in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.

⁴⁶ "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?"

⁴⁷ "And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?"

⁴⁸ "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰ "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

²¹ for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

²² "The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

²³ "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

²⁵ "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, *as to* what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?"

²⁶ "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"

²⁷ "And which of you by being anxious can add a *single* cubit to his life's span?"

²⁸ "And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin,

²⁹ yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these.

³⁰ "But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *do so for* you, O men of little faith?"

³¹ "Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?'"

³² "For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

³³ "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

³⁴ "Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. *Each* day has enough trouble of its own."

The Kingdom mindset = a focus on ministry and missions at all cost

John 17:18 "As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."

Philippians 2:4 do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth,

¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing;

¹⁵ that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

But aren't we in the end of the end times?

The kingdom mindset in the Olivet Discourse

Luke 21:1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury.

² And He saw a certain poor widow putting in two small copper coins.

³ And He said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all *of them*;

⁴ for they all out of their surplus put into the offering; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on."

⁵ And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said,

⁶ "As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down."

⁷ And they questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, when therefore will these things be? And what *will be* the sign when these things are about to take place?"

⁸ And He said, "See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am *He*,' and, 'The time is at hand'; do not go after them.

⁹ "And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end *does not follow* immediately."

¹⁰ Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,

¹¹ and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

¹² "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake.

¹³ "It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.

¹⁴ "So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves;

¹⁵ for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

¹⁶ "But you will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put *some* of you to death,

¹⁷ and you will be hated by all on account of My name.

¹⁸ "Yet not a hair of your head will perish.

¹⁹ "By your endurance you will gain your lives.

²⁰ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand.

²¹ "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city;

²² because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

²³ "Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people,

²⁴ and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

²⁵ "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves,

²⁶ men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

²⁷ "And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

²⁸ "But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

The Kingdom mindset in the early church

Acts 1:6 And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

⁸ but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 2:40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!"

⁴¹ So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

⁴² And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

⁴³ And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

⁴⁴ And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common;

⁴⁵ and they *began* selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

⁴⁶ And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

⁴⁷ praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 4:23 And when they had been released, they went to their own *companions*, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

²⁴ And when they heard *this*, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is Thou who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them,

²⁵ who by the Holy Spirit, *through* the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, And the peoples devise futile things?

²⁶ 'The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord, and against His Christ.'

²⁷ "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

²⁸ to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.

²⁹ "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence,

³⁰ while Thou dost extend Thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Thy holy servant Jesus."

³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and *began* to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 5:40 And they took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and *then* released them.

⁴¹ So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for *His* name.

⁴² And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Acts 8:1 And Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

² And *some* devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him.

³ But Saul *began* ravaging the church, entering house after house; and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.

⁴ Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.

Acts 11:27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

²⁸ And one of them named Agabus stood up and *began* to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the *reign* of Claudius.

²⁹ And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a *contribution* for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.

³⁰ And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

Acts 14:21 And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

²³ And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

What about:

Noah and the building of an ark (Genesis 6)?

Equivalent today = Luke 21:20-21 (see Scripture above) = Matthew 24:15-16

Joseph and the seven years of preparation (Genesis 41)?

Equivalent today = Acts 11:27-30 (see Scripture above)

Nehemiah and the building of a wall?

Equivalent today = ?

Jesus' parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13)?

Equivalent today = wise preparedness is living in light of what matters when He comes (a lifestyle in line with saving faith (Matthew 7:21-23)