

LIVING UNDER THE RULE OF GOD  
MATTHEW 7:21-27

Introduction:

This is the sobering conclusion to the greatest sermon ever preached. Jesus did not offer false comfort to His audience and send them with false hope. Rather He confronted them with their solemn responsibility to receive what He had said, and to act upon it.

Jesus used a term we rarely hear in the pulpit, He spoke of the kingdom of God, or in Matthew's Gospel of the kingdom of heaven. We speak of coming into the church, but Jesus spoke of coming into the kingdom. The true follower of Jesus is someone that has come into the Kingdom of God. This means that they are living under the rule of God, and enjoying the benefits of kingdom life. Too often when we have heard the term kingdom of God, we have assumed that it is a reference to a territory, but is more like a reference to a relationship. It is someone whose life is under the direction and control of God. They are bent upon doing His will in the world.

The life set forth by Jesus in this wonderful sermon is a kingdom life. It is the life lived by someone who come under the rule of God, and who enjoys this blessed relationship with Him.

I. LIVING UNDER THE RULE OF GOD REQUIRES A NEW HEART.

This is the basic assumption on which the Sermon is built. In order to live this life you must have a new heart. You need a heart transplant.

1. Self-rule is our natural preference.

This is what it means to be a sinner. You prefer self rule. You want to do your will—not God’s will.

2. A preference for God’s rule comes with a new heart.

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you.” (Ezekiel 36: 25)

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.” (Jeremiah 31:33)

## II. LIVING UNDER THE RULE OF GOD REVOLUTIONIZES LIFE.

1. You have a new CENTER for life.

The center of your life is your relationship with God.

2. You have a new MOTIVE for life.

Your motive in life is to please Him—this is how Jesus lived.

3. You have a new COURSE for life.

It simplifies life. What is the will of God in this matter? Has God spoken on this subject?

## III. LIVING UNDER THE RULE OF GOD PREPARES FOR TIME AND ETERNITY.

The concluding parable moves the truth forward.

1. It prepares for the STORMS that come.

2. It prepares for ENTRANCE into the eternal Kingdom.

I think that what John Newton, the eighteenth-century father of Evangelicalism, said is perfectly true:

If I ever reach Heaven I expect to find three wonders there: first, to meet some I had not thought to see there; second, to miss some I had thought to meet there; and third, the greatest wonder of all, to find myself there.<sup>2</sup>

Jesus spoke about the narrow gate. Alexander Maclaren declared that the first two beatitudes serve as the posts for this gate. On one side is the post that says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” On the other side is the post that says, “Blessed are they that mourn.” This is what leads to the new heart that is required for kingdom living.

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<sup>2</sup>*The New Dictionary of Thoughts*, Tyron Edwards, ed. (New York: Standard Book Pub., 1936), p. 251.