

# Jesus' One Theme

He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing. (Luke 9.11)

In his recounting of the life and ministry of Jesus, Matthew records thirty-one instances where Jesus used the term, “the kingdom of heaven.” Luke, writing to a Greek audience, uses the synonymous term, “kingdom of God,” twenty-eight times. Jesus had one theme in everything he said and did: the kingdom.

When the disciples began following Jesus—

After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him. (Luke 8.1)

When Jesus sent out the disciples on their own—

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. (Luke 9.1-2)

When people came to find Jesus—

When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing. (Luke 9.10-11)

When someone wanted to follow him—

But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9.59-60)

Whether preaching in the synagogues or speaking to the crowds by the lake, teaching his disciples or speaking to a single potential follower, talking about eternity, heaven and hell, or speaking about little children and acquiring wealth, Jesus had one consistent, singular theme in everything: the kingdom.

# Understanding the Kingdom

Then Jesus asked, “What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to?  
(Luke 13.18)

At the heart of Jesus’ teaching about the kingdom, was his use of illustrations which we know as parables. Key to understanding and having a future in the kingdom is knowing these parables and *putting them into practice*. Fail to do this and you will miss entering the kingdom.

Ask yourself—

- ▶ How many of Jesus' parables do I know?
- ▶ How many have I studied?
- ▶ What truths from Jesus' parables have I assimilated into my thinking and practice as a follower of Jesus?