Keys to the Kingdom

Introduction. (Recap)

1. Every Kingdom needs a Monarch his name is Jesus. Every Monarch needs a realm over which they preside - Jesus' realm is not economic, geographic, political, ethnic - is our hearts, minds and decisions, in real time, which can be defined as

   The Kingdom is '*the Rule of God*' in action.

2. Violent (passionate) people take hold of the Kingdom.

   We're at war with demonic spirits of religion, control and 'niceness.'

3. The Kingdom of God is relational. God is interested in people not programs nor protocols. Relationships not rules.

The Now and the Not Yet of the Kingdom.

The "Now & the Not Yet" of the Kingdom.

1. To become a Christian, I '...declare with my mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10 : 9)

   In other words, we are pledging our commitment to live under the reign & rule of benevolent King Jesus. 'The rule of God in action.'

   We are born again. (Charismatic.) We are regenerated. (Reformed Evangelicals & Dr. Who fans.) We 'come to faith.' (Baptist.) We are 'washed in the blood.' (Pentecostals.)

   When we become Christians, we are transferred into the Kingdom of God. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves (Col 1 : 13)

(We are ‘new creations’ [2 Cor 5 : 17; Gal 2 : 20])

Has the Kingdom Come? Yes.

2. **But are we fully ‘sorted out?’** Completely holy? Perfect? No.

   So has the Kingdom come or has the Kingdom not come? Yes.

   We can say the Kingdom has both come and is yet to come...it is both now and not yet.

   We are adopted sons who still think like orphans. (Orphans have to hustle to be accepted, performance based acceptance.)

   No : we have some attitudes that need adjusting. Some values that need redefining. Some thinking that needs reprogramming. (And this is an ongoing process - called ‘Sanctification’ or ‘growing up’ or maturing.)

   What’s the point? The Kingdom has come, but there are areas of my life which still need to come under the rule & reign of Jesus.

   So the Kingdom is now but also, not yet.

   In fact we can say,

   the Kingdom has come, the Kingdom is coming,
   and the Kingdom will come.

   I’ve been saved, I’m being saved, and I will be saved.

   We are no longer sinners saved by grace? Brand new nature. BUT I still wrestle with old mindsets, habits, and an ongoing battle with the flesh. (Explains why Christians can sometimes do the most horrible things!)

   But I am **NOT** a victim. I am **NOT** a slave to sin. I am a slave to r’ness. So we pray ‘Lord, Let your Kingdom come!

Evidences of the Kingdom

Learning to recognise what you're dealing with. Eg. Ben (dentist) diagnosed my tooth issue in about 8 seconds! (After 8 months of worry!)

...or just recognising that the A470 is going to be clogged in a certain way...

Eg. Meeting with the church treasurer and just feeling confused…

The KoD perpetuates confusion but the KoG always brings clarity.

...and when I 'sense' confusion...I know what I'm dealing with! Helps us know how to pray. Which friends to choose. Which relationships to invest in. Which sermons to ignore. Which ideologies to reject. Which ministries to avoid. What kind of boss you are dealing with. What kind of builder you are considering employing.

Evidences of the Kingdom

1. Righteousness, peace & joy ; **INSTEAD** of do's/don'ts. (Rms 14 : 17)
2. Simplicity **INSTEAD** of complication and confusion.
3. Grace and mercy **INSTEAD** of punishment and judgement.
4. Clarity **INSTEAD** of confusion.
5. Release & empowerment **INSTEAD** of control.
6. Servant Hearted **INSTEAD** of selfishness. (Serve Others **NOT** self)
7. Drawing of people **INSTEAD** of driving people.
8. Submission to authority **INSTEAD** of chafing against authority.

9. Joy **INSTEAD** of fear (FotS #2)

10. Peace **INSTEAD** of panic, anxiety and intensity. (FotS #3)

11. Generosity **INSTEAD** of stinginess.

12. Gratitude **INSTEAD** of complaining.

13. Contentment **INSTEAD** of striving.

14. Choosing to consistently act for someone's good (LOVE) **INSTEAD** of only acting for good when we 'feel like it.' (FotS #1, 6)

15. Patience **INSTEAD** of intolerance. (FotS #4)

16. Kindness **INSTEAD** of harshness, cruelty, indifference. (FotS #5)

17. Faithfulness **INSTEAD** of faithlessness. (FotS #7)

18. Gentleness **INSTEAD** of harshness. (FotS #8)

19. Self-control **INSTEAD** of lack of discipline. (FotS #9)