

ENTER THE KINGDOM BY DOING THE WILL OF GOD

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Follow Me

Peter was a fisherman who had heard about Jesus. One day Jesus walked past Peter and his brother's boat and said: "Come and follow me, I will make you fishers of men."



What was Peter's response?

Matt 4:18-20

Jesus started teaching the disciples how they could enter the Kingdom of God. He told them who God was and showed them what the Kingdom of God looked like on earth. It was fantastic news. People were forgiven of their sins and the sick were made well. People who had been bound for years by demons were set free. People who were without hope found hope and there was joy for those who were mourning.

Peter saw this very Kingdom with his own eyes and wanted to follow this Teacher.

What does Jesus say here about himself?

**John 4:34,
John 5:19-20,
John 8:28**

Jesus knew very well how the Kingdom of God worked. He also knew from where His authority came. This is what He wanted to teach His disciples right away. "Follow me", he said. "Listen to the Father, just as I do. Do this and you will experience the Kingdom." For this reason it is very important to live in dependence upon the Father, just like Jesus.

The Wise Man

Jesus said someone who hears the word of God and puts it in to practice is compared to someone who builds his house on a rock. When the storms came it didn't collapse because it had a solid foundation in Jesus.

What is said about the man who built his house on the sand?

Matt 7:21,24-27.

What is the difference?

In verse 21 we read that we enter the Kingdom of God by doing what He asks of us. The Old Testament is full of rules. Many tried to live by these rules but no one could actually keep them.

When Jesus came He did something no man on earth had ever done before. Jesus fulfilled the law, the rules which God had given. Yet

Jesus demonstrated something other than just keeping the rules to His disciples. He showed that He walked with God, just as Adam and Eve did in paradise. He listened to God the Father. In each situation of His life he trusted in what God showed Him. He trusted God and was completely dependent on Him. For this reason God gave Him His authority and His Holy Spirit.

What then is the difference between the command from the NT “Do what Jesus asks of you, God’s will” and the command from the OT “Keep the law of Moses”? The greatest difference is actually love. Jesus knew the heart of the Father and wanted to live as the Father. He didn’t need any rules for that. He did what the Father wanted because He loved Him.

When we were young, rules were given to us by parents and teachers. You had to obey them. Sometimes you did this against your will and sometimes you tried to get round it. A consequence could be punishment. You can do what someone says because if you don’t, you will be punished. But you can also do what someone says because you love them. Then it is from the heart. Even if you do not really like what someone asks of you, you do it because of your love for this person.

Matt 5:20 Something is said here of the Pharisees. They taught the people about God and His laws. They told others how to carry out the law. Outwardly they did this themselves. But the inside was not like the outside. It is written that you cannot enter the Kingdom in this way.

Doing His Will

In order to enter the Kingdom it is important to discover the heart of God and to become His follower. God the Father desires to bring justice, peace and joy to earth. It is not about following rules, but about experiencing that Kingdom on earth and knowing the God of that Kingdom. The followers got to know God by following Jesus. Each day they saw how Jesus knew God as the Father; how He listened to Him’ and how the world into which Jesus came was changed. This example of Jesus is worth both the joy and the trouble of following.

You can choose to follow Jesus, to walk in His ways and do what He asks of you. In this way you can live as He lived. You get to know Him and His Father. Jesus knew the Father so He trusted the Father and for this reason Jesus could do the will of the Father. We can also choose to live this way. As you get to know the Father then you can trust Him and choose to do His will. Only if you do this with your whole heart does it give God pleasure.



EXERCISE:

What do you think is the big difference between the disciples such as Peter and the Pharisees? Compare this with your own heart. What do you feel has happened to you?

Read for yourself Luke chapters 10, 11 and 12. These are full of instructions for the disciples of Jesus. As you read these three chapters, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through these words.

Tell your mentor what you want to do with this lesson if Jesus becomes King of your life. The King will point out areas in your life in which He wants to enter. Learn to listen to his small, soft voice. If you are already experiencing Jesus showing you to live according to God's will, pray for this together. Ask the Holy Spirit to work this decision out in your heart.

PRINCIPLE 14

You can enter the Kingdom by doing the will of the Father. Follow His will with your whole heart, not because you have to do it.



Matt 4:18-20

¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

John 4:34

³⁴ “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

John 5:19-20

¹⁹ Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater works than these.”

John 8:28

²⁸ So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.”

Matt 7:21-27

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Matt 5:20

²⁰ For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.