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TUL 500 – Chapter Review & Reading Log

Week 8: Feb 25-Mar 2

The Kingdom of God

* Bellingham, Rob,(1987)  [Kingdom](http://vizedhtmlcontent.next.ecollege.com/CurrentCourse/000readings/Bellingham/BellinghamKingdom12.pdf): A Biblical approach to social transformation. unpublished
* Grigg, V. (2009). [Spirit, Kingdom and postmodern city](file:///\\500writings\08kingdom\Kingdom%20&%20Postmodernism.htm). In The Spirit of Christ and the Postmodern City: Transformative Revival Among Auckland's Evangelicals and Pentecostal. Lexington, KY, Emeth Press and Auckland: Urban Leadership Foundation. Chap 8.
* Myers, B. (2003). [Kingdom Mission](http://vizedhtmlcontent.next.ecollege.com/CurrentCourse/000readings/Myers%20Walking%20with%20the%20Poor%2046-56.htm). Walking with the Poor. Monrovia, MARC. Ch 2Glasser, Jesus and the Kingdom: His Parabolic Teaching.  Kingdom and Mission, NT, chap 2 pp 169-180.
* Sachs, J. D. (2005).  [Investing in Development.](http://vizedhtmlcontent.next.ecollege.com/CurrentCourse/000readings/SaxInvestinginDevelopment.pdf" \t "_new)  London, Earthscan.

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**Summary:**

TRANSFORMATION: THE KINGDOM MODEL

The Centrality of the Kingdom in the Teaching of Jesus

* "I must preach the good news of the Kingdom of God, for I was sent for this purpose" (Lk 4:43).
* "It is well known that Jesus came preaching the Kingdom of God. According to the Synoptic Gospels, the Kingdom was the major theme of His sermons and parables" (CRESR Report, 1982).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Signs of the Kingdom | emphasis on it in my tradition? |
| 1. Jesus in the midst of His people. | High |
| 2. The preaching of the gospel. | High |
| 3. Exorcism. | Low |
| 4. Miracles of healing and control over nature. | Low |
| 5. The miracle of conversion and new birth. | High |
| 6. The "fruit of the spirit": in the lives of Christians. | High |
| 7. Suffering. | Low |

Images of the Kingdom

1. Commercial
   1. Treasure / pearl / sharing wealth / reward for faithfulness / managers
2. Agricultural
   1. Sowing seed / wheat & weeds / abundant harvest / tenants of vineyard
3. Family
   1. Faith like a child / cup of water to helpless / marriage feast

Jesus used stories of things that are familiar. Consider how we might do the same.

Values of the Kingdom

Beatitudes… “Blessed because their circumstances of life help them to know and come to God.” (3/8)

Kingdom Priorities

(seek ye first…)

Kingdom’s 2nd priority: regard for others / service.

* “The challenge is to offer whatever one has, even if it is only a little… linked with membership of the Kingdom and entry into heaven” (4/8).
  + *[…not to be confused with merit-based salvation…]*

“True Kingdom development combines proclamation and service.” (4/8)

Characteristics of the Kingdom

Newbigin:

1. Universal
   1. Extends to physical restoration; restorations relationships with others & God; growth of personal character.
2. Structural
   1. Doesn’t just modify, but goes to the roots of faulty structures.
3. Definitive
   1. God’s final will: this suffering world will pass away, to be replaced by a ‘new heavens & new earth.’

* Best explained by parables
* Invitational – attracts: mostly the poor
* Judgmental – decisive: you’re in or out. And out is “catastrophic” (5/8).\

Kingdom Leadership

1. Rightful Leader – ***acknowledging the King***
   1. JC is worthy of our worship – the kingdom is present in us today as we worship him
2. Jesus’ New Model – ***going to the people***
   1. JC’s kingly leadership = liberating / healing
3. Servant Leadership – ***serving the poor***
   1. JC washing feet

Modern Parables

* Rich man senses inequality; poor pities the rich for being lonely; both go to move the fence: *[the rich: probably to make his own land smaller; the poor: perhaps to include the rich man’s house as part of all the same land].*

Five Perspectives on the Poor

1. Mirror Analogy: “rich and poor are basically the same”
   1. Doesn’t sense need for deeper change before advancement can come.
2. Pollution: **idealizes native culture**: not ‘polluted’ by materialism
   1. My family (Dad especially) tends to lead this way. ☺
3. Natural: poor are inferior: aren’t going to attain what we consider a decent standard of living
4. Medical: structures / people are *sick* and need a cure: education / training / organizing
   1. *Probably the most common one I’ve come across, and am most likely to resonate with, pre-MATUL.*
   2. *Now, my modification would be: Jesus is the cure. Yet still with reconciliation in Christ naturally flows these other forms of restoration: in education / training / organizing & brainstorming around a common goal…*
5. Moral: poor are sinners & must repent
   1. Yes, but… we’re ALL sinners.
   2. Jesus was seldom calling out the poor for their need to repent over & above the *rich* to repent from their oppressive ways. The poor were asked more to come and receive. (At least that’s my perception; I should find stats to back it up.)

**Key Question:**

Signs of the Kingdom: hmm… do I / should I have an increased emphasis on exorcism, healing, and suffering? What do I want to communicate with my witness?

5 perspectives on the poor: was Bellingham meaning to imply that any of them are in fact the “right” view? They seem to all have their flaws. What would a “right” view look like? (Probably a combination of all 5, modified.)

Myers, B. (2003). [Kingdom Mission](http://vizedhtmlcontent.next.ecollege.com/CurrentCourse/000readings/Myers%20Walking%20with%20the%20Poor%2046-56.htm). Walking with the Poor. Monrovia, MARC. Ch 2 Glasser, Jesus and the Kingdom: His Parabolic Teaching.  Kingdom and Mission, NT, chap 2 pp 169-180.

**Summary:**

Three important theological ideas

1. Incarnation
   1. God isn’t just concerned about the material realm
   2. JC didn’t come as conquering / problem-solving during his time on earth – though in the end, through his death, in relation to the spirit world, that is exactly what he did.
   3. Purpose: inviting people to redirect their lives
2. Redemption
   1. Material & spiritual
      1. Transformational development by itself will not save
      2. But God’s redemptive work isn’t limited to one’s spirit, affecting only the sweet by-and-by.
      3. We are God’s agents of redemption
3. The Kingdom of God
   1. “The kingdom of God was the subject of Christ's first sermon (Mk 1:14), was the only thing he called the gospel (Mt 4:23), and was the topic on which he focused his teaching to the disciples during his last forty days on earth (Acts 1:3).”
   2. People & Social systems mold each other.
      1. Don’t reduce the Gospel to just naming “Jesus” & admitting his sacrifice
      2. As development workers / agencies: “Where do we believe the power is that can help the poor? In whom or in what do we trust?”

The biblical story and transformational development

1. Evangelistic intent
   1. Heal communities with hope & life
2. Restoring relationships
   * 1. With God
     2. With ourselves & our communities
     3. With outsiders
     4. With creation
   1. We know they’re right if we’re *living at peace (justice, harmony, & enjoyment)*
      1. Jesus offers *life to the full*.
3. A holistic story
   1. Know & consider the whole story (beyond birth-resurrection of JC.)
      1. Otherwise it’s like we’re starting in the middle. ☺
   2. Holistic view of persons
      1. Discipling
      2. God speaks into every aspect of Hiebert’s 3-tiered worldview:
         1. Truth (upper)
         2. Power (excluded middle)
         3. Love (concrete world)
   3. The whole gospel message (life, deed, word, sign)
      1. 1st apostles preached repentance & healed
      2. But JC’s 1st call is to be *with* *Christ*

Life in Christ

Deed (healing)

Sign (casting out)

Word (preaching)

1. Technology and science have a place in the story
   1. Science has lost its story: it may explain how things work, but not why or what for.
   2. Because it’s “value-free,” it doesn’t contain a vision for what ought to be
   3. Early scientists weren’t out to replace the Xn story, but be an extension of it
   4. Xn dev’pt workers ought to know & use science/tech in solving physical problems.
2. The biblical story is for everyone
   1. Poor *and non-poor*
   2. Non-poor suffer the temptation of adapting the gospel to justify their wealth/position.
   3. We all have poverties in their own forms.
   4. “We need to understand who the poor are and why they are poor, as well as who the non-poor are and how their poverty contributes to the poverty of the poor.”

**Key Question:**

It’s interesting that the gospel message is framed as a pyramid with life in Christ as the capstone, and word, deed, and sign as its supporting frame. Can *deed* be *my faith lived out in how I interact / show love?* And can that also be a *sign* of my faith? I’m just trying to reconcile this for the many in my faith tradition who will never be inclined to experiment with healing & casting out demons.

Sachs, J. D. (2005).  [Investing in Development.](http://vizedhtmlcontent.next.ecollege.com/CurrentCourse/000readings/SaxInvestinginDevelopment.pdf" \t "_new)  London, Earthscan.

**Summary:**

* Goal: cut world poverty in ½.
* Millennium Development Goals can be achieved by 2015: “All that is needed is action” (1/23)

Why the Goals are important and why we’re falling short

* Grid on pg 3 suggests that:
  + Slum conditions on are:
    - “on track” to improving in N Africa & SE Asia.
    - Suffering most in Sub-S Africa & W Asia.
  + Drinking water access is improving more rapidly in the cities than in the rural areas
  + I’m encouraged by all the goals that *are* being met: measles vaccinations, girls in primary school, etc.
* “powerful relationship between poverty reduction and global security [efforts to end violent conflict]” (6).
* “Many slums are controlled by gangs of drug traffickers and traders, who create a vicious cycle of insecurity and poverty. The lack of economically viable options other than criminal activity creates the seedbed of instability—and increases the potential for violence.” (8)
* “Within countries, poverty is greatest for rural areas, though urban poverty is also extensive, growing, and underreported by traditional indicators (table 2)” (9).
* “About 900 million people are estimated to live in slum-like conditions characterized by insecure tenure, inadequate housing, and a lack of access to water or sanitation. The highest share of slum dwellers is in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, accounting for more than 70 percent of the urban population in many cities (see map 3)” (11).
* Pollution & deforestation contributes significantly to rise in vector-borne diseases, lower quality of water, “more floods, landslides, and local climate change” (12).

Why Progress is so Mixed

* The key: “ensure that each person has the essential means to a productive life.” (12)
  + Need: human capital (health / literacy / skills); infrastructure (water, sanitation, power, roads); political, social, and economic rights (equal access to public services; tenure / property rights)
  + “But when individuals and whole economies lack even the most basic infrastructure,

health services, and education, market forces alone can accomplish

little. Households and whole economies remain trapped in poverty, and fail to

reap the benefits of globalization. Without basic infrastructure and human capital,

countries are condemned to export a narrow range of low-margin primary

commodities based on natural (physical) endowments, rather than a diversified

set of exports based on technology, skills, and capital investments. In such

circumstances, globalization can have significant adverse effects—including

brain drain, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, capital flight, and

terms-of-trade declines—rather than bring benefits through increased foreign

direct investment inflows and technological advances” (13).

* + “Some slums are so densely populated that it is not even possible to drive an ambulance into them” (14-15).
  + “If every village has a road, access to transport, a clinic, electricity, safe drinking water, education, and other essential inputs, the villagers in very poor countries will show the same determination and entrepreneurial zeal of people all over the world.”(15)
    - *Will they? I hope so. But the people themselves may need to transform as well, in many cases, eh? …before their determination & entrepreneurial zeal will come into fruition.*
* We ought to “convert subsistence farming to market-oriented farming.”
  + - *Is this always a good thing?? What if subsistence –(assuming you’re healthily sustained by it)-- is better than capitalism?*
* “ensure that critical investments—in infrastructure, human capital, and public administration—get channeled to lagging regions, including slums” (22)
  + [if we can get healthier people, those people can work for change, and they ought to aim first at better infrastructure.]

**Key Question:**

Sachs seems to have done a phenomenal job of identifying for the developing world “what *they* need.” Yet we know that in the end, it’s not about us telling them what they need, but letting them decide what issues they want to address. Sachs seems to put an emphasis on *becoming* ***productive*** *like the West.*

* How do we reconcile Sachs’ theory that *productivity leads to a better quality of life* with likely cultural preferences to be chill & not over-work?

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