

Genuine Ways That Kingdom Citizens Foster Belief in a Fallen World

"You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world"

Sent as Representatives of the Kingdom

Matthew 5:13-16

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by people. ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor do *people* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

John 17:13-21

But now I am coming to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. ¹⁴ **I have given them Your word**; and the world has hated them because **they are not of the world**, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I am not asking You to take them out of the world, but to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ **Sanctify them in the truth**; Your word is truth. ¹⁸ **Just as You sent Me into the world, I also sent them into the world.** ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

²⁰ "I am not asking on behalf of these alone, but also for all those who believe in Me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one; just as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, **so that the world may believe** that You sent Me.

- "I have given them Your word..."
- "They are not of the world..."
- "Sanctify them in truth..."
- "Just as You sent Me into the world, I also sent them into the world."
- "So that the world may believe..."

Going Beyond Superficial Adherence to the Kingdom Code

Matthew 5:17-20

¹⁷ "Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished! ¹⁹ Therefore, whoever nullifies one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

²⁰ "For I say to you that unless your righteousness far surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

- "You have heard...But I say..." – Calling Out and Correcting Superficial Allegiance to the King

Living in the Spirit Behind the “Kingdom Rules” of Human Relationships

- Not “new” rules – But the spirit of those rules reclaimed...clarifying the King’s true character and values

(Rule) Don’t Murder – (Spirit) Deeply Value People (5:21-26)

²¹ “You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not murder,’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be answerable to the court.’ ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be answerable to the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell. ²³ Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. ²⁵ Come to good terms with your accuser quickly, while you are with him on the way *to court*, so that your accuser will not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you will not be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last quadrans.

(Rule) Don’t Commit Adultery – (Spirit) Authentic Inner Commitment (5:27-30)

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; ²⁸ but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ Now if your right eye is causing you to sin, tear it out and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your *body*, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand is causing you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your *body*, than for your whole body to go into hell.

(Rule) Your Right to Divorce – (Spirit) Be Generous in Mercy & Forgiveness (5:31-32)

³¹ “Now it was said, ‘Whoever sends his wife away is to give her a certificate of divorce’; ³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

(Rule) Be Careful in What You Say – (Spirit) Have Integrity in What You Do (5:33-37)

³³ “Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.’ ³⁴ But I say to you, take no oath at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵ nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Nor shall you take an oath by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷ But make sure your statement is, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’; anything beyond these is of evil *origin*.

(Rule) Hold Up Fairness/Justice – (Spirit) Use Unfairness and Injustice as Opportunities for Witness to God’s Goodness (5:38-42)

³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ ³⁹ But I say to you, do not show opposition against an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other toward him also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak also. ⁴¹ Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

(Rule) Do What's Best for You in Personal Relationships – (Spirit) Serve Others Even When It Hurts (5:43-47)

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may prove yourselves to be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors, do they not do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers *and sisters*, what more are you doing *than others*? Even the Gentiles, do they not do the same?

Always Intentionally Reflecting the Character and Values of the King

Matthew 5:48 Therefore you shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

- This is how you represent the Heavenly Father...
- Not by lip service or reducing Kingdom life to shallow, loophole-finding, legalistic adherence