



Face the Issue:

This week we began a new series on our way to Easter. The Journey. Jeremy introduced this new series by teaching us what Jesus was trying to teach His followers: The Kingdom of God is already here and you can have it now.

The first three days of the D-Day invasion included 6,000 ships, 5,000 planes, 13,000 vehicles, and 3 million men in 47 divisions. The plan also included the movement of an artificial harbor so that people and materials could be landed with more ease once the beaches had been secured. It was all done in secret—the Germans did not know the when (the day or hour), the where, or the how. It all depended on the time being right.

Jesus was trying to tell His followers and the Pharisees that were listening that God was announcing that the time was right but, just like the Germans in WW II, the people did not see what was right under their noses.

Have you ever experienced a surprise that you should have seen coming?

How did you feel once you realized what was happening?

Into the Word:

Read John 17:1–5.

What do you think Christ meant when He said “the hour has come”? What was He accomplishing?

What evidence do you see in this prayer that the one who is blinding eyes, who has schemes to bend minds from God, and who prowls about looking for ones to devour is losing?

During his time on earth, Jesus did not look like the Son of man prophesied in Daniel 7:14, with authority, glory, sovereign power, and an everlasting kingdom of all peoples, nations, and languages that will never be destroyed. Why was that? (Note: Consider what the Pharisees and others were looking for and the motives that they had in hoping for that type of Messiah. How does that compare to the Father that Christ revealed?)

According to verse 3, what is essential for eternal life? What does it mean to know God? How do we go about getting to know Him? (Note: God is infinite and eternal. What does that mean for how long it may take to know Him? Is it something accomplished in a “Moment” of Conversion or Salvation or does it take a “life” of discipleship?)

If the Journey is not to find a kingdom, what should we be taking a journey toward? (use verse 3 as your guide)

Apply The Word

God is the Almighty One. But He is also Immanuel. If you want a balanced picture of God, you've got to account for both those two names. He is God Most High and God With Us. He exists beyond the limits of time and space, but He's also Immanuel—God with us.

Jesus came to show us that the time of the Kingdom of God was now. It is here. He was the Messiah that was bringing the Kingdom of God to fulfillment. Don't be looking for it, take the gift now.

AC Dixon was an evangelist during the last part of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th century. He wrote the following:

"A friend of mine who was quite a lover of the hunt told me the following story.

Rising early one morning, he said, "I heard the barking of a number of dogs chasing a deer. Looking at a large open field in front of me, I saw a young fawn making its way across the field and giving signs that its race was almost run. It leaped over the rails of the enclosed place and crouched within ten feet of where I stood. A moment later two of the hounds came over, and the fawn ran in my direction and pushed its head between my legs. I lifted the little thing to my breast, and, swinging round and round, fought off the dogs. Just then I felt that all the dogs in the West could not and would not capture that fawn after its weakness had appealed to my strength."

So is it when human helplessness appeals to Almighty God. I remember well when the hounds of sin were after my soul that at last I ran into the arms of Almighty God."

On your own this week, read Psalm 80 and jot down ways you see both sides of God in this chapter—the fact that He is both Almighty and Immanuel. Share your findings with someone else. as you do, reflect on where you are in the Journey. Are you still on a journey to find a kingdom or have you accepted your place as a citizen of a Kingdom that has already come and you are on the journey to knowing the King more?