How Do I Enter the Kingdom of Heaven?
(Sunday, June 13, 2021)

In a biblical kingdom there needs to be a **king** who **rules** over a **people** who live by an **ethic** in a **land**.

The Kingdom of Heaven is **wherever we see the rule or the reign of God**.

John 3:1-3
Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." 3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.[a]"

1. Kingdom membership is not dependent on my <u>resume</u>. (John 3:1-2)

Mark 7:3-4 "(The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.[a])" The "tradition of the elders" was also known as the Oral Law – an extra layer of to-dos.

John 7:45-52
45 Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?" 46 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards replied. 47 "You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. 48 "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? 49 No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them." 50 Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, 51 "Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he has been doing?" 52 They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee."

John 19:38-42
38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. 39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.[e] 40 Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. 41 At the place where Jesus was

crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. 42 Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

2. Kingdom membership is dependent on <u>spiritual</u> <u>transformation</u> (John 3:3)

John 3:3-9
3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.[a]" 4 "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit[b] gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You[c] must be born again.' 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."[d] 9 "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.

3. Kingdom membership is a work of God's <u>Spirit</u> (Jn 3:5-8)

John 3:10-17
10"You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? 11 Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people (you Pharisees!) do not accept our testimony. 12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.[e] 14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,[f] 15 that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."[g] 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

4. Kingdom membership is open to <u>all</u> who <u>believe</u> (John 3:16)

John 3:16
16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

5. Kingdom membership cancels my <u>condemnation</u> (John 3:18).

John 3:18-21
18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Romans 5:8-9
“8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!”