

In the New Testament the gospels use this phrase to summarize all of Jesus' teachings. Jesus also went about proclaiming the "good news" of God's Kingdom. Jesus saw himself as the messenger bringing the news that God reigns. In fact, after Jesus returned to Nazareth, he would read aloud in the synagogue the words of Isaiah about himself (Luke 14:17-21)! "He stood up to read,"¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.²¹ He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

But Jesus will describe a godly kingdom that will surprise everybody. Jesus's "good news" is not about a powerful kingdom that needs to impose its will, enslave its people, and crush its enemies, where only the powerful reign. For Jesus the greatest person in God's Kingdom is the weakest one. The greatest is the one who loves and serves the poor and if you live under God's reign, you respond to evil by loving your enemies and seeking peace. Jesus presents an upside-down Kingdom--- one His followers didn't expect.

Further, Jesus will act like a King. He appoints twelve disciples emblematic of Israel's twelve tribes. He has unimaginable power, as He heals people, forgives their sins, and even has power over death. But like His upside-down Kingdom Jesus will humbly enter His holy city to the shouts of "Hosanna" on a donkey not a kingly horse. Therefore, in the gospels Jesus' crucifixion is depicted almost as a kingly enthronement. Jesus's enemies will give Him a crown of thorns. He will receive a robe and He will be exalted up, not onto a throne but onto the cross. And only in Jesus's Kingdom would the innocent say, "forgive them Father, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

The "good news" is that Jesus reigns as king. Jesus defeated death and his perfect sacrifice has saved us all from sin and death. Today Jesus stills sends His followers to go out and to keep announcing this "good news" of the upside-down Kingdom and to invite everyone to just believe and become a Child of God.

"How beautiful are the feet that bring good news".

Praying that our Lord finds you and yours well

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