

The Ethics of the Kingdom John 18

John 18:10-11 - *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)¹¹ So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"*

John 18:36-37 - *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."*

The world has demonstrated its ethic throughout the gospels and it is anti-Christ. The Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes have met Jesus at every corner and attempted to stop the progress of his kingdom.

Matthew 3:2 – *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Matthew 4:17 - *From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Matthew 13:31-32 - *He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field.³² It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."*

*"To be Jesus' disciple means to allow one's identity to be stamped
by the identity of the one who died forsaken on the cross"*

*"To be Jesus' follower is to share his vocation of suffering servanthood,
renouncing the world's lust for power"*

– Richard B. Hays in *The Moral Vision of the NT*

First: Kingdom Ethics Reflect the Character of the King

a) Love

1 John 4:8 – *Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

- God is love
- The fundamental kingdom ethic is love
- Citizens of the kingdom are called to love as the source of all other ethics

What is love?

The Greeks had as many as eight different words for love:

Storge: affection

- *Philia or Phileo*: friendship
- *Eros*: sexual, erotic
- *Agape*: unconditional, divine, selfless
- *Ludus*: flirtatious, playful, casual, uncommitted
- *Pragma*: committed, long-standing
- *Philautia*: self-love
- *Mania*: obsessive, possessive, addictive, dependent

1 John 4:7-11 - *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

Love is not an emotion, but a predisposition to sacrifice and service

b) Truth

John 14:6 – *I am the way, and the truth, and the life*

What is truth? God is absolute truth and falsehood is any deviation from him, his character and authority.

See Titus 1:2; Exodus 20:16

c) Holiness

1 Peter 1:15 - *but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct*

What is holiness? Uniqueness, distinctness,

d) Mercy

Luke 6:36 – *Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful*

What is mercy? Compassion or pity.

Luke 10:25-37 – the parable of the Good Samaritan

In addition to these, the Sermon on the Mount and the fruit of the Spirit could qualify as kingdom ethics:

SOM - Poor in spirit, mourning, meekness, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, mercy, purity of heart, peace, persecution for righteousness,

FoS – Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

Second: How Do We Live These Ethics

The goal of Christian ethics is to live for God's glory

1 Corinthians 10:31 – *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

- A character that glorifies God
- Behavior that glorifies God
- Results that glorify God

Glory = doxa = weight – God has infinite, intrinsic worth that deserves our greatest consideration.

John 2:11 - *This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.*

See the 'weight' of God. For the first time, Jesus displayed his true weight, significance, power, authority, the difference he can make.

God outweighs us, everyone, and everything else.

Doxa = doxology = praise

These are all 'is' questions. Who 'is' God? Answering them enables us to move to the 'how' questions. 'How do we then live?'

a) The Bible

The Bible both reveals God and what is required of us as God's people. The record of Scripture teaches us what pleases God and what displeases him.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God^[b] may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Colossians 1:9-12 - And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[e] to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 - Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more.

Conclusion: This is why it is imperative that Christians love, read, study and apply Scripture to our lives.