

# Luke

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Preacher: Hyde, Leslie S B (1916-2001)

[ 0 : 0 0 ] For the Lord's help this evening, I will direct your attention to the gospel according to Luke chapter 17, verses 20 and 21.

The gospel according to Luke chapter 17, verses 20 and 21. And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo, here, or lo, there.

For behold, the kingdom of God is within you. When he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo, here, or lo, there.

For behold, the kingdom of God is within you. It has always been a question in religious circles as to when the kingdom of God should come.

It was so in these days. It is so today. Even the disciples, who we might say should have known better, they themselves could do no more than visualize a kingdom that could be seen in this world.

[ 2 : 1 5 ] And so in the Acts of the Apostles in the first chapter, we read, When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?

The Israel and the Jews and the disciples, of course, had lived under the tyranny of the Roman Empire, and their idea of salvation must be delivered from that sea.

And to have the prevalence and the reigning power over the Romans, and not the oppression which the Romans brought.

They envisaged a wonderful occasion, when the Jews would be filled with pride, as the nation that God had lifted up and raised above, all the opposition of which Antichrist brought forth.

And there are many people in religious circles today who are looking for a kingdom to come which will be so distinctive and so powerful, and in the end, the whole world will be converted to Christianity.

[ 4 : 0 3 ] But in coming to these conclusions, it is very clear that some parts of the scriptures have been completely overlooked.

Firstly, the Lord Jesus said, My kingdom is not of this world, else would my soldiers fight.

And yet, I know we do speak of the church militant, but the church militant is not as some may consider it to be, but rather that which is referred to in the Epistle of the Lord to the Ephesians, where he speaks, For put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the spiritual wickedness in high places.

And these things are very often not visible at all. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

[ 5 : 39 ] And we may just briefly read these verses concerning the armour. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with fruit, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet, shot with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Above all, take in the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer, and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

The Pharisees are asked this question, when the kingdom of God should come? When their idea of the kingdom of God should be seen.

Many undoubtedly are looking for a kingdom to appear, which they can easily conceive, and their natural mind can grasp, and so they're looking for it.

But all the while, this kingdom of God is being being raised up, and though it is hidden from many, yet God day by day is bringing to pass the things of this kingdom.

[ 7 : 23 ] Now there are two points, principally, that we would dwell upon, as God may help us, in the text. First of all, the kingdom of God cometh not with observation, or as the margin says, without which show.

And secondly, that behold, the kingdom of God is within you. Now, these are the two principal points.

May God help us to look at them this evening. So the kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Some of us can look upon our personal experience of the kingdom of God.

And we know very well that it did not come with observation. Being born of the Spirit, having the nature of God, was not seen, but something was suddenly felt.

And so we are witnesses to this truth, the kingdom of God cometh not with observation. It was there. There was no outward show.

[ 8 : 46 ] But it came. It came mysteriously. It came suddenly. But it nevertheless came forcibly. God's kingdom set up in the heart.

Christ sitting on the throne. The desire of the soul being toward Christ's reigning. Evidently, here is a kingdom kingdom that supersedes the kingdom which did reign at one time.

By nature, when we are born into this world, we are all under the kingdom of Satan. The kingdom of darkness.

And that being so, what little likeliness there is of us ever being aware of the truth or seeing the truth when it comes.

It is a wonderful thing of when God brings to our hearts the life of God. There is a wonderful expression in the scripture, the grace which is to be brought unto you.

[ 10 : 12 ] Now, you see, many people seem to have the idea that you've got to get grace.

You've got to pray for grace. And you've got to seek for this and that. And much emphasis is laid upon the importance of seeking.

seeking. But those people who are in the kingdom of God will know that to be true they were sought out.

It was not their seeking but it was because God sought them out. And suddenly God was on a throne.

in their own hearts. And God was directing their spirits. And God had effected such a kingdom in them in the new nature that made them willing to listen to what the Lord had to say and follow that.

[ 11 : 29 ] Surely we can see this clearly enunciated in a few characters in the scriptures. Think of Abraham.

Abraham was surrounded with paganism. There was nobody to tell him to seek God. Nobody. In the midst of pagans of all kinds.

God and yet God suddenly spoke to him and he said come out come out and he went out not knowing whether he went.

He was quite blind and the voice that he had heard yes it was the voice of God undoubtedly he was persuaded of that but it was a God that he didn't know before no doubt he was an idle worshipper but God said get thee out of this country get thee out we should remember that area of the country was a prosperous city so naturally there was no reason for him to get out and naturally there was no reason that he should ever want to get out but God's kingdom came not but observation but suddenly he felt the effect of it and suddenly he felt the power of it get out get out and if

God speaks then that will be a very powerful word just coming to the new testament we know the enmity that was in the heart of Saul of Tarsus and at the very day when this kingdom was to come to him this grace was to be brought unto him was the day that started as many other days before when he was going to persecute the people of God persecute the Christians put them into prison make their life uncomfortable and then suddenly suddenly without observation until the brightness there was a brightness that shone above the brightness of the sun and then there was a voice which said I am

[ 14 : 30 ] Jesus whom thou persecutest it is hard for thee to kick against the bricks the kingdom of God cometh not with observation and there were those with him they saw the outward but they knew nothing about the inward the kingdom of God as we read in the next verse is within you and what God does within you will never be will not be seen by the ungodly be thou ever so near to you they may wonder what's happened and they may be greatly puzzled but they will never understand they were just taken two cases from one from the old testament and one from the new which surely demonstrates that the kingdom of God cometh not with observation but what is the kingdom of

God it's not the idea that so many people have it is the kingdom where Christ reigns it is the kingdom wherein Christ is revealed it is the kingdom where sinners find hope of salvation it is the kingdom of the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ it is the kingdom of heavenly instruction now we're still on the earth or we're still on the earth but God has taken possession of our souls God himself has begun to reign in our hearts God God has given us a life life in our souls and that is entirely new from anything that we ever felt before now I want to make this clear because it may possibly give some of you hope for who can tell that God may come and sort me out and put me amongst the children who can tell maybe you find some of you may find an opposition to the things of

God and have all sorts of thoughts bringing you to almost a don't care spirit but what a blessing it is that the kingdom of God has a great king and at the time appointed he will send the means by which he will arrest and by which he will bring this soul and that soul to God and they will not say well this is how it began with me I began to seek the Lord if you began to seek the Lord there must be something before it and that is that God sought you out there is a teaching of the Lord Jesus which says I came to seek and to save that which was lost now you see many people will lay a great deal of emphasis on saving but let us also join and not separate what God has to join together to seek and to save

Jesus sought me when a stranger one bring from the fold of God he to save my soul from danger interposed his precious blood and it didn't come by observation did you see it come has God quickened your heart did you see it come did you feel it come and you say what's happened to me something has happened to me yes the kingdom of God may be has been set up in your hearts and you have realized what you are by nature you have realized that you are a simple creature now then why do you feel that you are a simple creature because God has brought you into a new kingdom and that is a kingdom of holiness a kingdom of righteousness a kingdom of love and a kingdom of bliss and happiness and you feel perhaps that you are out of place what a blessing it is that as

God works in this kingdom in your heart without observation from the outside you begin to see that this is the kingdom oh this is the kingdom but I fought with hand uplifted high maybe some of you have been in that place are in that place now but the appointed time gold rolls on a base and we should notice though in trying to come to some order in this text the kingdom of God cometh not with observation so we need to make a few descriptions relative to the kingdom of God in order that we may realize that it has come we didn't see it come but we've now felt the force that it has come indeed this is a kingdom of order the world itself is complete disorder and we shall not have to go to great lengths to prove that to you I'm sure complete disorder wherever you look there's uncertainty wherever you look there's indecision wherever you look there's a lack of persuasion wherever you look even if some things seem to be settled yet you cannot be sure that something will not arise in a day or two to upset every settlement but this kingdom is a kingdom of order in the epistle to the corinthians we read that all things be done decently and in order now that is the order of the church of God or should be and it is God's order and an experience that we may have over a period will bring us to this point that everything

[ 21 : 44 ] God has done has been done in order there's been no rush there's been nothing forgotten everything has been ordered now we read the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and we should remember this that where God orders he does not have to detract or go back on what he has said he does not have to say well now we have to alter this we've made a mistake here the footsteps of a good man are ordered by the Lord they're not ordered just to satisfy the women fancy of the almighty but they are in order that you may be profited and instructed by every step that you take in the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy we read those words he found him in a desert place and he led him about and he instructed him and he kept him as the apple of the eye now this is one of the writings on the wall in the kingdom of God he found him in a desert place that is of course a reference to Jacob he found him now it's good to begin your testimony that God found you where did he find you some cases are not found in the chapel or church at all other case cases are found yes in church and chapel an alpha religious profession but you're found with your mind miles away having no thought or desire for what's going on except that which appeals to the natural of mine but God found you oh it's a great blessing a great wonder when God finds you find you and he will find you amongst a thousand people oh he will find you my sheep hear my voice

I know them and they follow me and this is one of the acts of God's power in regard to the kingdom of God that cometh not with observation have you been surprised sometimes at the response that your soul has given to what God is to say when he said as it is recorded in Corinthians come out from among them and be separate and touch not the unclean thing where did the voice come from did it not come from this kingdom of God which is in heaven and did it not also have its reflection and response in the kingdom of God which is within you I wish you to remember from the word of

God we read that Christ in you the hope of glory now this is a great mystery but this is how it is when the kingdom of God comes Christ has come to dwell in your heart and to be there so every good thought every good desire is not proceeding from the natural mind because it is impossible for the natural mind to think one good thought let alone a good thought of God about this kingdom of God is a kingdom of power but the power which works by love everything that God does in this kingdom and it is a kingdom without length or breadth or height or depth we can't enclose it with so many walls no we cannot enclose it even by putting a ceiling on a certain place no the kingdom of

God is worldwide when the Lord Jesus or rather God gave it was the Lord Jesus that spoke to Jacob you see and gave him the vision of the ladder which reached the earth but reached also right into heaven the angels were ascending and descending upon it Jacob's repercussion was this how dreadful is this place this is none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven but there was no place like we're meeting in now no it was the house of God why was it the house of God because the kingdom of God was there and the kingdom of God was in Jacob's heart and because the kingdom of God was the presence of God in Jacob's soul but how did that kingdom come did Jacob know it did it not come without observation and surely this is a characteristic that may be encouraging to you there's a lot of false things that are spoken in the religious world today and maybe you could be very discouraged by people saying well this is what it is and this is what people feel and this is what people should do and this is what is required of them to do and then perhaps you may be sitting and hearing another godly person narrating a few points in their own experience and you may perhaps say I have nothing like that but that's not the yardstick the yardstick is in the word of

God the word of God will distinguish will describe to us the features of the kingdom of God the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee says Solomon much less this house which I have built and cometh not with observation so has the kingdom of God been set up in your heart did you suddenly feel a change now don't look at other people and say well of course this feeling that I have the circumstances they're so different from anybody else's can you find in the scriptures the very situation which describes the way in which you were sought out and brought into the kingdom of God the word of God makes this point clear we do not well to compare ourselves among ourselves and there are ever so many people even amongst us

[ 29 : 34 ] I fear who they keep comparing themselves among themselves about the kingdom of God is to compare themselves yes not with anybody else but by the love favor and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ Jesus indeed sought me did he seek you this is the beginning it's not the beginning is not when you began to seek God that's the fourth beginning and there are many people that begin there they come in part way along the road we find ignorance he came from the city the town of self conceit and that's how he started he began to get into the way about what happened to Christian is that the way he started here he was in the city of destruction and suddenly

God sought him out and God seeking him out made him realize that this world was a city of destruction and if he stayed here spiritually though he may have to stay here physically yet he would perish with the wicked so he goes forth crying life life eternal life the kingdom of God had come it hadn't come to his neighbors at that time it hadn't come to his wife but it had come to him now you may look at your own hearts and what a wonderful thing it will be if it has come to you now this is God's sovereign purpose and love Jesus sought me the kingdom of God Jesus in seeking me communicated his own person and nature into the soul take the blind man that was born blind and the

Lord Jesus opened his eyes and the Pharisees were very disturbed about this they wanted to corner him if they could and he said one thing I know whereas I was blind and now I see now it is good for us to keep within our compass the man didn't say yes this is the Lord Jesus Christ if a question had been put to him do you believe on Jesus Christ he would have been completely nonplussed but he said one thing I know and this is one of the features of the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of knowledge one thing I know whereas I was blind now I see and he didn't go any further but then even with that confession he was cast out cast out of the synagogue and

Jesus found him now the kingdom of God cometh not with observation now this man couldn't say that he knew Jesus but Jesus knew him and so Jesus sought him out again despite the fact that this man's eyes had been opened yet he didn't know much about Jesus Christ but that didn't prevent Jesus Christ coming to him so he was sought out and the Lord said to him dost thou believe I'm the Son of God and he said who is he Lord that I might believe on him the kingdom of God had come with observation without not with observation he wanted to know the truth who was this man

Jesus Christ I that he that speaketh unto thee am he and the Lord Jesus so caused that word to be spoken with power that he said the man said I believe and he fell down and worshipped we should notice in the very chapter that we have before us of the ten lepers now they had a bodily affliction affliction which was very solemn and very sad for many people in those days and as Jesus passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee these there met him ten men that were lepers which stood afar off and of course they had to stand afar off and they had to put their hand upon their lips and make it clear to anybody that came near to them that they were lepers then they lifted up their voices and said

[ 35 : 26 ] Jesus Master have mercy on us well surely we've got here very clear evidence that here are ten people who have received the spirit of God and they are seeking for mercy but we have to remember there are many many people who cry out every Lord's day in the various churches and chapels have mercy upon us miserable sinners and they don't mean it at all but nevertheless when he saw them he said unto them go show yourselves unto the priests and it came to pass that as they went they were cleansed now this is one point that you are in the kingdom of God a miracle has been brought and their leprosy sometimes spiritually considering it we think of sin which is so contagious which gets into the walls of our houses as well as in our bodies which comes up with great sores and boils and so on all over us and it has to be investigated sometimes if you look at the book of

Leviticus the priest had to look at it very carefully and sometimes the people were set aside for a week or a bit longer to see how this saw was actually working but to come back to this and one of them when he saw that he was healed turned back with a loud voice glorified God now the characteristic of the kingdom of God is a glorifying of God there were ten healed but only one returned to give glory to God and we may say only one there was into whose heart the kingdom of God came it wasn't by observation they all were healed on the outside it all looked the same but one was different oh one was different and that one returned to give glory to

God and fell down on his face at his feet giving him thanks and he was a Samaritan now of course you may remember the Samaritan the Samaritans had nothing to do with the Jews or rather we might say the Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans but here was a man a Gentile an outcast but this man had the kingdom of God raised up in his heart and his desire was to glorify God to give thanks unto God were there not ten cleansed where are the nine there are not found that return to give glory to God save this stranger and he said unto him rise go thy way thy faith has made thee whole and the kingdom of God was there but it didn't come with observation it didn't come with a great show it didn't come with the sounding of trumpets it didn't come with calling so many to the front to say that they had received the

Lord Jesus Christ it was the secret work of God in the soul of this poor leper an outcast from the cold mouth of Israel and God spoke to him in his soul changed his heart put him amongst the children and he would have to say if asked about the kingdom of God it came not with observation I couldn't see the beginning of it it was there I felt the beginning but I didn't see the beginning there are cases when people aren't able to speak somewhat clearly about the beginning sometimes I like to look at it like this we are quickened by the word of truth we have the parable of the sower the seed is the word of

God and that seed may be dropped into the heart sometimes now what does a seed do it doesn't come up straight away and there are some seeds that we might become very anxious about because after two or three weeks well we wonder what's happened and if we should have investigated and because of our anxiety we might find out there was nothing growing up but there was a lot growing down now the kingdom of God cometh not with observation because the rooting process is the first part of growth and so it is with the things of God so then you may not see anything by observation but God sees it God sees this root taking this root going gradually down and so to speak creating a firmness in the earth before there is a spouting upwards so that's why the kingdom of God cometh not with observation we find

[ 41 : 43 ] Job had a lot of persecution as I'm sure you know but there was an occasion when he was particularly troubled begins on the 19th chapter how long will you vex my soul and break me in pieces with words and so on but subsequently he comes down to this why do ye persecute me as God and are not satisfied with my flesh oh that my words were now written oh that they were printed in a book that they were written with an iron pen and led in the rock forever for I know that my redeemer liveth and that he will stand in the latter day upon the earth and so he goes on but then we come to this verse but ye should say why persecute we him seeing the root of the matter is found in him well how could they see that the root of the matter was found in him it was because being so much troubled so much so much vexed so much persecuted yet there was a confidence of faith which said

I know that my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth and though after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold and not another though my reins be consumed within me the kingdom of God cometh not with observation just think of one of the beginnings of Saul of Tarsus now it was dramatic in one sense but not so in the worldly sense it was necessary for God to speak to Ananias about Saul of Tarsus and as as

God began to speak to him oh says Ananias I've heard much about this man and how much evil he hath done to the saints of Jerusalem and here he hath authority from the chief priest to bind all that call on thy name but the Lord said and this is all in the kingdom of God nobody else knew the Lord told Ananias but the Lord said I have heard the Lord said unto him go thy way for he is a chosen vessel unto me now you see this is in the kingdom of God the secrets of the kingdom of God and shall bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel and I will show him how great things he must suffer for my sake there was something that had been said and that was this for behold he prayeth now nobody can tell when a person begins to pray very often those people that stand up and pray as some of the Jews used to do well they haven't begun to pray but this was one thing that God told Ananias he prayeth behold he prayeth now who would have believed that the kingdom of

God had been set up in the heart of the the the the the the the the significant point God would look down he could look down upon his kingdom because he was sitting on the throne of his kingdom and he knew prayer had come forth out of the heart of Saul many prayers had doubtless come out of the heart of Saul in the past they were all parasyical prayers they were all setting forth a great eye but now what wilt thou have me to do and you see that made all the difference to to Ananias it made a bond as it were between the two there was nothing to go on apart from what God had communicated in the secrecy of the kingdom of God and so as so

Ananias went his way and entered into the house and putting his hands on him said brother Saul they were joined you see in spirit the kingdom of God has this effect of unity brother Saul the Lord even Jesus has appeared unto thee in the way God had told him about this and is this the way in which God speaks to you and me in these days you know sometimes you may think that if God has begun a good work if he has set up his kingdom in your heart that nobody knows but God can say God can tell another this woman this man this child he prays he prays and this will immediately produce a bond because if you are in the kingdom of God you will be praying may you may be you could be praying for the very person whom

[ 48 : 07 ] God is now going to tell you the kingdom of God has come not by observation but it's come and that person is praying brother saw the Lord even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost and immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales and he received sight forthwith and arose and was baptized the kingdom of God cometh not with observation but we must join it with this other verse for behold the kingdom of God is within you and so much religion is an outward show but real religion is within our demonstration of outward religion perhaps shall I say could be found in our being our being here or the doors are open where the gospel is preached but that's only a little part a very very small part if the kingdom of God is within you because the kingdom of God you will come under the influence of the

Lord Jesus Christ under the influence and power of the Spirit of God it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure not your good pleasure no but his good pleasure and there is a verse in our hymn book which surely discloses a very important knowledge that you are blessed with the kingdom of God you couldn't say it come you only know it's there the kingdom of God reign o'er us as king accomplish thy will and powerfully bring us forth from all ill till falling before thee we Lord thy loved name ascribing the glory to God and the land the Samaritan did this the poor leper and we shall find that Jacob did this and Abraham did this and Saul of Tarsus did this they gave glory to

God and surely as we turn to the revelation and get a view of the saints in heaven what are they doing unto him who washed us from our sins by his own blood glory glory glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land but the effect of that the experience of that is personal but you may say is it always just personal no it's not always just personal to be contained in ourselves if the kingdom of God is in your soul and the kingdom of God is in my soul there will be a feeling between the two of us it is encouraging to read in the book of Malachi and they that feared the Lord spake often one to another and the

Lord hearkened and heard and the book of remembrance was written to them that feared the Lord and to them that thought on his name I believe it was one of John Bunyan's pilgrims who said he liked good company now you might not be able to say very much but do you like good company do you like to hear what the people of God you know they're the people of God because you can see that the kingdom of God is within them do you think upon his name oh the ungodly will not think upon his name and if you are not the spirit you will not think upon his name but if you think upon his name we must surely identify you as one to whom the kingdom of

God has come not with observation maybe you point to this point yes I do think upon his name but there was a time when I didn't so what has happened what has happened well God has caused his kingdom to come and you didn't see it but it was there and further more it came within you into your soul into your soul so then may it be ours this evening to encourage ourselves in with these words the kingdom of God cometh not with observation the kingdom of God is within you now when the scripture says examine yourselves to see whether you be in the faith now there's one point I want to make here because some almost take the idea



[ 53 : 50 ] I dare to examine myself because I'm afraid I shall find that I'm not in the faith but the word of God doesn't say anything about not being in the faith it is to those who are in the faith the apostle writes under the power of the spirit examine yourself to see whether you are in the faith to have the sweet consolation that the kingdom of God has come and that it does dwell within you may the Lord grant us a profitable self examination and forgive all the speed of mess and make the application to the honor and glory of his name amen amen to itself in the kingdom that one and damn in and the name and the time to and later when let see hidden and again the cant