

VIDEO: Change the world

Kingdom Minded People

Change the world...such a tall order...

Change the world...seems so distant and abstract...

Changing the world is concept that easily inspires us but also easily evades us!

- Especially for a high school student
- You desire to change the world...SOME DAY!
 - You know...go to college and learn something that could change the world.
- Why not change your world today?
- Why not impact eternity today? At your work? In your school? At your home? Wherever you may be?

Did you know that 85% of all people who don't accept Christ by age 18 never will?

- Staggering statistic!
- You have an opportunity during a short stretch of your life to be Jesus to a specific group of people...quite honestly, you are the best person to reach these people too...
 - Peers reaching peers...best person...

I think that to do that effectively, you have to be willing to change your mind and perspective on you, on others and most importantly on God!

Consider that the Kingdom of God should be the focus of all we are, have and do!

READ: Ezra 1:1

Cyrus was a mighty king- conquered Babylon.

Jews- carried into captivity under Nebuchadnezzar.

God calls Cyrus by name 150 years before he lives.

Isa 44:28 "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.'

And he declares of Jerusalem, ' She will be built,' And of the temple, ' Your foundation will be laid.'" NASU

God calls Cyrus into a position of power/influence to bring about His purposes for the Jewish people.

God was able to stir the heart of a mighty king who did not know Him or His ways.

If He can stir the heart of a mighty king, he can stir my heart/my spouse/my children/heart of a church.

As He is sovereign over kings/kingdoms, He is sovereign over the every day affairs of our lives.

Ezra 1:2

He stirs the heart of Cyrus to build a house for the God of Israel in Jerusalem.

Side Note

Jer 29:10-14

Jews prayed over/held onto these promises for them.

God does not just do things because we ask Him.

Our prayers open the way for Him to do what He wants to do for His purposes in our lives.

We must bring our heart/mind/prayers into alignment w/His plans for our lives.

Often we pray selfish prayers to satisfy our desires.

Prayer should be a vehicle, not to get our desires, but to find the heart of God to align ourselves with it.

Ja 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. NASU

Our prayers may not be bad, but do they align themselves with God' heart for our lives?

As we align our prayers w/His will, He answers them.

1 John 5:14-15

14 This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him. NASU

Back to Ezra ...

God has called Cyrus to be a part of building His Kingdom, as He has called each one us to be a part

Ezra 1:3-5

The generation carried away to Babylon had died ...
Sons/daughters knew Babylon as home.
May have been established- homes, businesses.
The journey would be difficult/dangerous.
Jerusalem- in ruins, what would await them?

Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. NASU

God stirred the hearts of the Jews- a few responded.
Only a few- rise above the earthly/embrace the eternal

Ezra 1:6

Perhaps everyone not called to return, but everyone was called to be a part of building God's Kingdom.

Those who did not return donated generously to the work to rebuild the temple of God.

Lets switch gears to the NT era, the era we live in.

He is calling us to be Kingdom minded people.

Jesus has much to say about building God's Kingdom.

Mt 4:23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.
NASU

Jesus- taught disciples to pray about God's Kingdom.

- Mtt 6:10 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. NASU

Jesus talked to them about Kingdom priorities ...

- Mtt 6:25, 33 - " For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

- 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. NASU

Jesus warned them to live by Kingdom principles.

- Mtt 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.

Jesus instructs- disciples how to minister Kingdom-

- Mtt 10:7-8
- "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'
- 8 "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. NASU

God is calling each of us to be Kingdom minded and builders.

He calling us to participate in Kingdom work.

For many, like the Jews who returned to Jerusalem, that will be helping by working in some ministry.

For others, like the Jews who remained in Babylon, it may mean generous, sacrificial, faith giving.

For all of us it will mean getting involved beyond just the obligatory church meetings

This fall, we are shift gears and truly begin to realize what it is that God has for us here with Paradox student ministries

- We are going to begin to focus on being Kingdom minded
 - Being Kingdom minded means that we put aside our preferences
 - Being kingdom minded means we focus on others needs first...
 - Being kingdom minded means that we want only what God wants...FIRST AND FOREMOST...my needs, desires, and opinions come after God's leading

ILLUS: What I learned about mass production of disciples in November

In response to this, and in conjunction with the kingdom mindset, we are going to shift our focus from what we currently do here on a weekly basis, to a more intimate, personal, and comfortable format!

- Paradox High school ministry is moving into homes!
 - 3 Home groups - same focus and direction - geographically convenient
 - 4 adult leaders per home
 - Mixed groups of guys and girls
 - Allowing for guys and girls to meet together and separately
 - Dispel fears:

- I'm not gonna be with my friends
 - We are going to work hard to make sure everybody is in a place where they have friends
 - HOWEVER, being kingdom minded means that we focus outwardly on others and their needs more than our own, as Christ leads us!
- I will miss being with the larger group
 - In response to this concern, we are going to make be integrating a regular connection time with all the groups.
 - First Wednesday night of every month will be a combined group night doing something fun together
 - Quarterly combined worship here at Grace - Band
 - Jump Street
 - Xtreme Challenge
 - Boondocks
 - Etc
 - Still have combined other events too
 - Sunday mornings - Band
 - Winter retreat
 - Mission trips
 - Events
- Not focused on teaching but rather focused on community, caring for each other (OUTreach and INreach), worship, and prayer...
 - teaching will be a component that will be included with each meeting, small group discussion time...
 - Safe place to come, be yourself, with like minded people, seeing Jesus work in your heart and in the hearts of the lost too!
- How are you going to divide groups?
 - Geography will be the primary way
 - Other things will be taken into consideration too
 - Relationships
 - Interests
 - Etc
- As groups grow and work together, my prayer and the goal is that they will not only be together on Wed nights, but that their community will desire to be together at other times too
 - Community service opps like leaf raking, helping and serving shut ins, etc

- Each group doing Operation Xmas child
- Ding dong ditch
- Etc...you get the picture

I believe that this is where God is leading Paradox...

- I know that this is not a perfect plan from the start, but if each of us commits to fostering a kingdom mindset, that is selfless and God/ others centered, it will be the best thing that could happen

I'd be naive to not know that discussion about this change will happen outside these walls through texting, facebook, face to face, on the phone, etc. I would just ask that each of you be very careful with what is said...

- I know that some will be skeptical
- Some will be critical
- Some will quit and go elsewhere
- Some will come and be even more involved

No matter how you respond or what your thoughts are, I would ask that you make this a matter of prayer.

- I would also ask that you allow this to have a chance to succeed and thrive.
- I would ask that you not be a part of any criticizing that may come in your discussions...in fact I am calling us all to stand together in this change...
 - The change of realizing what Paradox student ministry is all about!

Remember last week, we talked about worship and how our preferences will often times get in the way...putting aside our likes and desires for the sake of the kingdom of God...

- Those statements were intentional as we discussed this change today! Being kingdom minded...kingdom focused!
- We are still talking about worship...I'm asking you again to put aside your preferences in this different STYLE that is being presented
- To say what I ended with last week, "If I cannot put aside my preferences in how I worship, then I'm not worshipping God - I'm worshipping myself"

Conclusion

So many churches today are so focused on appeasing people and making people happy and interested in their production and have in

the process lost sight of what is truly important and why the church and thus youth ministries like Paradox exist.

- The church does not exist as a social outlet
- The church does not exist for the purpose of entertaining people
- The church exist for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of ministry - namely reaching the lost with the gospel
 - This does not mean that we cant have fun together, socialize, or be entertained.
 - This does mean that our focus here is going to be first and foremost on God and His glory.
 - We are going to live and do what is on the front lines of what God is doing

...because you see, there are two types of churches,

1. Those living on the cutting edge of what God is doing
2. Those who are being baby sat until Jesus returns

I refuse to lead a ministry that is about babysitting.

- We are stepping out to do something bigger than us...
- ...something that is gonna take all of us working together..
- ...something that is going to need the hand of God in the middle

Finally:

An important part of being Kingdom minded is learning to hear God's voice and this is why I've asked you to pray.

I want to hear what God is saying **to** me today and what God is saying **through** me today.

Kingdom minded people are seeking to hear God's voice!

- What He is saying to them
- What He is saying through them.

We as a church must learn to stand close to each other in order to stand in the face of the enemy...

We don't use the word sanctuary very often anymore, but the word implies a sacred space...not necessarily a location, just a space.

What is the sanctuary today ...

- our hearts/our lives (body- temple of God),
- corporate gatherings of the church,
- our cities, our states, our nation,
- It is wherever we, the church, are sent by God.

I want to maximize the opportunities for God to be present in everything that we do.

I want God to work in my heart so there is nothing that would cause His presence not to be with me...setting aside whatever it is that will make me critical and divisive

Psalms 139:23-24

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;

Try me and know my anxious thoughts;

24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me,
And lead me in the everlasting way. NASB

Lawrence Wilson ...

We think we can see because all we see is what we can see. We do not realize we cannot see until we are able to see something we have never seen before.

Guys listen to me, we are in a battle of the hearts/lives of men and women and young people...

Let me encourage you to live your lives with an eternal vision...kingdom minded

Learn to live for God before living for yourself.

God has called us to sacrifice our lives, our time, our dreams, our comforts, our everything, for His Kingdom.

What is your response going to be today and this coming year as we change or focus as the body of Christ?