

## An Island Kingdom

Growing up, the favorite vacation destination for our family was a place called Association Island. It was a 65-acre oasis in the Thousand Islands region of upstate New York. It was literally an island, accessible only by a 10-minute ferry boat shuttle. It was

completely independent of the mainland, with its own power generating facility. Amenities included a golf course, athletic fields, archery range, recreation building, family dining room, snack bar and even a town hall. Families



were housed in cabins that lined the road extending the length of the island. It was a peaceful haven for families desiring a wholesome Christian experience, removed from the chaotic world on the mainland.

As I think about the phrase “the Kingdom of God,” Association Island is the closest earthly setting to my vision of the Kingdom of God. An inset page in my Bible describes the Kingdom of God as “God’s rule of grace in the world, a period foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament and identified by Jesus as beginning with His ministry. Jesus proclaimed that He was the fulfillment of the Old Testament expectations of God’s deliverance” (Read Luke 4:17-19). In a world in chaos, “God would display His power and establish His Kingdom of peace and righteousness.” Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God was already present. (Read Matthew 12:28).

Pastor Rodney Buchanan wrote, “Jesus travelled from one town and village to another proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God” (Read Luke 8:1). Rev. Buchanan made four key points about the Kingdom of God: (1) it transforms us individually; (2) it transforms the world; (3) it is present now; and (4) it is still to come. Just as a vacation on Association Island was transformational to our family, living a life of grace and salvation in the Kingdom of God is transformational to the human spirit. We must be “born again” to experience of Kingdom of God. Being “born again” is a change of heart, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Rev. Billy Graham said, “The only way one can come to God and experience what it means to be ‘born again’ is through repentance of sin and faith in Jesus Christ.” *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).* When Christians share the Good News they help to transform the world, sowing the seeds, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, winning people for Christ. We can be part of Jesus’ efforts to replace the chaotic world order when we share the gospel.

The Kingdom of God is present today in the lives of believers who repent and are of the faith. We can have an impact on our families and communities. But what about the future Kingdom of God that is yet to come? This refers to the second coming of Jesus Christ, when His victory will be complete. At the time of His second coming, *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10-11).* At that time the character of our entire world will be the character of Jesus Christ.

Association Island was a special oasis that exhibited a wholesome, fun Christian environment for our family. It was a vacation kingdom where our lives were enriched and transformed and reflected the character of Jesus Christ. In time, God will establish His kingdom over all the earth, when righteousness will prevail and every knee will bow.

**Prayer:** Lord. We give you our lives to be part of your kingdom now, and look forward to the Kingdom reaching all corners of the earth when Jesus returns. Amen.