

In today's Gospel we have a major dis-connect between Jesus and Pilate. They are conversing, yet relating on 2 different levels. Jesus speaks about his kingdom not belonging to this world. Pilate doesn't yet understand. What is the kingdom of which Jesus is talking?

Jesus rules through service of others rather than through domination of them. His authority is rooted in Truth, not in physical force. In His kingdom, Jesus calls people to live lives of justice & compassion, understanding & generosity. Jesus rules through self-giving. In His kingdom, Jesus favors the poor, weak & sick; the oppressed, widows & orphans; the homeless, social rejects & vulnerable ones. Jesus accepts and forgives.

In many ways, Jesus' kingdom is a heart-kingdom. It is hugely different from the kingdoms of queens and kings.

So, what's the connection for us?

We are followers of Jesus....His disciples. We are a part of His kingdom. We are called to help establish His kingdom on earth. How?

We don't have to lord it over others. Kindness, gentleness and tenderness are wonderful qualities. We don't have to be right, win every argument, dominate every discussion or have the last word in a conversation. Listening, paying attention to others, learning from what we hear shows a loving respect for others. We don't have to wait until someone else apologizes and says "I'm sorry." before we forgive. We needn't scream, yell, shout and take out our frustrations on others simply because they are nearby. We can count to 10, pause, take some deep breaths and connect with a deeper place of peace within.

The kingdom of Jesus is the little way....the quiet way....the way of the heart. Jesus' kingdom doesn't get a lot of attention. It doesn't make the headlines or the TV or radio news. The kingdom of Jesus becomes a reality when we follow the Jesus Way in our daily living, in our choices and decisions, and in our actions and attitudes.

My sisters and brothers, continue living the Jesus Way....the quiet way of the heart. In doing so, we make Jesus' kingdom present in our world. We make our community a very good place to live.