

All the images Jesus uses to describe the kingdom of God are images of something within, something inside, something hidden deep down.

At one point he explicitly says: “The kingdom of God is within you.” In other places he speaks of treasure buried in a field and of bringing up fish from deep in the sea. Today he compares the kingdom to a seed growing in the soil. What Jesus *never* says is: ‘The kingdom of God is outside you, it is around you, it out there.’”

He repeatedly makes it clear that the kingdom of God is an inward reality within each one of us. It is a greater reality – it is more real – than anything we experience ‘out there’. Compared to the kingdom within us, the world outside is only relatively real.

The treasure hidden in a field, the pearl of great price, the kingdom of God, is first and foremost a *vision*, a way of understanding life, and it is a vision which is *unitive*. It doesn’t see a hundred billions separate life forms, it sees the one life *appearing* as a hundred billion forms. It is an understanding of life that refutes four basic lies:

- 1) A sense of self-centredness: the feeling that 'I' am the centre of my world. I am not. I am the tiniest, subatomic fragment of an inconceivably vast creation. I am the centre of *nothing whatsoever*. I am not the centre, I am a *part*.
- 2) A sense of linear time: the feeling that time passes by in a regular sequence. It does not. That is only what I experience from my restricted little perspective. Einstein was one of the first to demonstrate that at a certain distance from the point of the observer, time has no meaning at all. St Therese of Lisieux said: "Time is a mirage, an illusion. Already God sees us in glory."
- 3) A sense of separateness: the feeling that I am a self-contained unit of consciousness distinct and separated from all others. I am not – none of us are. The universe is indivisibly one. This is why Jesus taught: 'Love others as you love yourself. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. Forgive others, that you yourself may find forgiveness. When you have done it to the least of my little ones, you have done it to me.'
- 4) A fear of death: the feeling that the death of the physical body ends all life for the individual. It does not. Life, consciousness, a sense of self – as opposed to self-centredness – continues.

The truth is that God is the centre of the universe, that time as we experience it is a non-reality because life is eternal, that we are not separate and divided from everything else which exists but are essentially one with *all* life, and that death is as big an illusion as time.

The physicist Darryl Reaney wrote:

“From hydrogen, the simplest of atoms, have come symphony orchestras, diamonds, the glimmer of dew on spider-webs at dawn, the underwater flight of dolphins, the sheen of mother-of-pearl inside seashells, voyager spacecraft, fractal images on computer screens, and the laser light of cognitive awareness. This is not a mechanical progression from simplicity to complexity; it is a creative act of unimaginable stupendous proportions. We – you and me – are the products of this evolutionary creative process. The universe is one in a way that we can hardly imagine. Our very bodies are made of exactly the same raw material as the most distant galaxies; they consist, if you like, of stardust.”

This is the vision of the kingdom of heaven; it is the treasure buried in the field and it is the pearl of great price. It is the seed planted in the darkness of the soil that grows to produce a great crop.