

**Sermon:** Creating a Kingdom Culture – August 16, 2015 (Scripture is from the ESV)

**Location:** New Philadelphia Church, Sillim Campus – 3pm service

## **Introduction**

Good afternoon, Sillim! Let's open up our Bibles to Matthew 6:10. We're going to read one verse from the Lord's Prayer. It's the part of the Lord's Prayer that demonstrates what our purpose in life should be. It reads...

**Matthew 6:10 – Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

Our purpose in life is to glorify God, and one of the greatest ways we can do that is to reveal God's love and power here on earth. We are meant to bring God's kingdom here to earth. The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon us, because the Lord has anointed us, to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners (Isaiah 61:1). God has given us His Holy Spirit to reveal Himself through us here on earth.

**Today's sermon is titled, "Creating a Kingdom Culture."** Today's sermon is going to have a bit of a testimony feel. I'm going to share with you all a bit about the orphanage ministry that I direct, Jerusalem Ministry, and how a kingdom culture is being established through our camps. My hope is that through this message you all will not just catch more of Pastor Sky's and my heart, but that you will also be equipped with faith and wisdom to establish a kingdom culture in your life as well.

## **Background to Jerusalem Ministry**

As most of you know, I came alone to Korea at the end of 2005 and lived in an orphanage in Seoul for three years. In 2006 I established Jerusalem Ministry to help train and place prospective volunteers into different children's homes. Jerusalem Ministry became an NGO in 2007. In 2008 we had our first soccer camp for 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade boys from different orphanages and in 2009 we had our first Arts and Crafts Camp for 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls. In 2013 my staff and I established Oak Tree Project, a scholarship and mentoring program for Korea's orphans. So presently I am directing Jerusalem Ministry and Oak Tree Project while still volunteering for that same orphanage that lived in years ago. And my wife Sky and I are also serving as lay pastors here at Sillim. We don't receive any salary here at Sillim, but instead live off of support as missionaries like the rest of my orphanage ministry staff.

## **Background to Soccer Camp/Arts and Crafts Camp**

While I was originally alone when I moved to Korea in 2005, God led different key people to me over the years who helped build up the ministry to where it is at now. In 2006 two members of the church joined me to start the ministry. One would leave after a few months and the other after a year, but God would send others. Later in 2006 I got my first full time staff who came from America to serve with me and live in another orphanage. His name was John Lee. While my personality is more easy-going and preferring to keep status quo, John was more goal oriented. When we were encouraged to apply to become an NGO he quickly took on the project and made it happen. I had no idea at the time that becoming a registered NGO would be crucial for our ministry to be able to hold camps and eventually run a scholarship program. John pushed to make it happen and worked hard to get everything set. God's grace was over the whole situation.

In early 2008 John decided he would end his commitment to the ministry in the summer, but he remained committed until the end. Together we setup a summer volunteering internship and we accepted 10 interns to live and serve in three different orphanages that summer. John also noticed that during summer and winter breaks the kids at the orphanage were required to attend boring educational camps or just stay at the orphanage, and that they had little fun or memorable moments. So he proposed making a three-day soccer camp for the boys. I told him, "Sure, but you have to direct it." And he worked hard with our limited funds and limited contacts to put together the camp. So in July 2008 we had our first soccer camp in the middle of monsoon season. The weekend before the camp a typhoon swept over Seoul and the night before the camp heavy rain poured down along with very strong winds. I woke up in the orphanage to find a tree had fallen over our driveway. Some of the boys and I had to go out with little hatchets and chop away at it until we could get through. By God's grace though the rain had stopped and it wouldn't rain again until after the camp ended. This would become a theme for almost all of our future soccer camps.

For our first soccer camp we only had a little bit of money and we only had a few volunteers who could commit for all three days. We had a little over 40 boys participating and they were split into four teams. We didn't have much money so instead of uniforms we gave them cheap pinnies to wear. For lunches we got cheap doshiraks, or Korean lunches, mainly consisting of rice, a fried egg, and a piece of spam. We also only had about two or three volunteers per team including the coach, and for one team their head coach never showed up so just one volunteer had to run the team by himself and he had no prior soccer experience. We held the camp at a Han River park and would continue to have the camp there until 2011. During the first camp there were a number of tough moments with the kids and discipline was needed often. It wasn't easy.

Here is a picture from the first camp...

### SLIDE ONE

This was our championship team, the Sharks. They had three volunteers, which was more than the other teams. We had no photographer or videographer at this camp. This picture was one of the very few that was taken by friends who visited.

Because the camp had been difficult and because John was leaving, I figured that it would be our ministry's only soccer camp. But to my surprise, a number of my boys would mention to me how they enjoyed the soccer camp and how they would love to attend another. And many of the girls at my children's home complained to me that they should have a camp too.

After John left I was the only full time staff in my ministry. But God would provide again, and in late 2008 Jee Lee was led by the Lord to quit her job and move to Korea to live in a children's home and serve with Jerusalem Ministry. During our first meal together after she arrived I told her she would be in charge of an Arts and Crafts Camp for elementary school girls and we would hold it in January during their winter break. Jee took full responsibility and did a great job. That first camp, like the first soccer camp, was very difficult. Many of the girls were unstable, insecure, and divisive. Some volunteers got impatient with the kids and didn't come back. The camp seemed like a disaster until the last day when the kids finally settled down and only the committed volunteers remained.

I learned a lot through the first camps. For one, **selfless commitment is crucial**. We had allowed some volunteers to only serve one or two days, and they made the kids feel unstable. Our training was weak and many of the volunteers were flaky and self-entitled, complaining

about the kids and the conditions. The orphans could pick up the lack of love among some of the volunteers very quickly and closed their hearts or acted up around them. But it was the committed, three day volunteers who had genuine love that the kids gradually connected with. It was the positive volunteers who refused to be discouraged that were gradually able to coax smiles out of the insecure kids. **These were the difference makers.**

Now let's fast forward to 2015. This year we held our 7<sup>th</sup> annual Arts and Crafts Camp in January and then last week held our 8<sup>th</sup> annual Soccer Camp. Earlier I showed you the championship team from the 2008 camp the Sharks with their three volunteers. Now here is a picture of our 2015 championship team, team Argentina with their nine volunteers.

## SLIDE TWO

Quite a contrast, right? It looks like two different countries. The 2008 picture looks like a rough, poor soccer camp that was thrown together for some underprivileged boys. The 2015 picture looks like a professional soccer camp for boys from the upper class. The first picture seems to project "ORPHANAGE SOCCER CAMP" very clearly, while for the second picture most people likely wouldn't presume the boys in the picture are orphans.

The first picture was taken on the last day of the camp after the boys won their championship. In the first picture two boys are smiling, five boys are looking at the camera, and the rest are looking away. The second picture was taken on the first day of the camp before the team had even played a practice game together. These boys had only been with the volunteers for a few hours, but every boy is looking at the camera and nearly all of them are smiling. Their demeanor is a complete contrast to the 2008 picture. Don't get me wrong, the 2008 boys had a good time at the camp, **but the amount of joy, confidence, and unity they experienced at that camp was only a small fraction of what all the boys experienced at our camp this past week.**

So what happened in between? What changed over the years to open the boys' hearts so quickly and to make them feel like privileged boys rather than poor orphans? I'm now going to share with you a few keys for creating a kingdom culture...

## God is Provider

The first key is a complete trust that God is our sole provider. God is our sole provider. When we pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" we are asking God to release His kingdom here on earth. We are asking for Him to provide His presence and change the atmosphere around us. We can't manipulate conditions to establish His kingdom. We can pray and seek wisdom and guidance, but in the end it is God who provides. **We can pray and fast all we want, but if our confidence is in our religious activities for provision rather than in God's goodness, we will never get the provision we desire. Our trust must be fully in God to provide.** Our trust cannot be in us or in our own actions.

As I shared about Jerusalem Ministry's history you probably noticed a theme. God would send people into my life that were needed for different seasons. These people, like John Lee, blessed me greatly. But all of my original staff in my first couple years ended up leaving. While there was a fleshly desire within me to try and convince them to stay, I knew I had to commit each of them to the Lord. While these staff had blessed me greatly, they were not to be my source of provision or hope. God had to remain my sole provider. I believe God let these different people in and out of my life to test me and strengthen me. **The more I could demonstrate trust in Him, the more God could bless me and strengthen me.**

In July 2007 my original staff had already left the ministry. John Lee was serving with me, but was uncertain about the future. I felt a bit alone and had been going through bouts with depression. God had given me a clear vision for reaching the orphans in Korea but I felt very alone. Then that month we received a new part time volunteer application. Her name was Mijeong Song. While I had been attending the same church as Mijeong for nearly a year and a half, I had only interacted with her once or twice and barely knew her. I remember meeting her on a Friday afternoon to train her for the ministry and then to take her to the Girl's Orphanage where she would begin serving. While Mijeong was quiet during our meeting and was only starting as a part time volunteer, there was something about our visit to the orphanage where I could sense God's strong blessing for her. The orphanage had previously been closed to receiving volunteers, but that day the director welcomed us and gave us a full tour of the home. God was clearly opening doors for Mijeong and I was encouraged.

After the orphanage visit I went by myself to a coffee shop to read. That day I was reading through 1Chronicles about King David's mighty men and how many of them joined him when he was first alone in the wilderness. These mighty men were amazing and David didn't recruit a single one of them. Instead they came to David. As I read 1Chronicles 12:22 I felt God's presence very strongly...

### **SLIDE THREE**

1Chronicles 12:22 – For from day to day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army, like an army of God.

Remember, David had been alone. He didn't have a slick ad campaign to recruit an army. David didn't have money or anything else to offer these men. They were simply drawn to him.

I have been astounded by how God has provided for us over the years. God has stirred peoples' heart from all sorts of different backgrounds to serve with us, and while a number of these people might not be thought of as mighty in the physical, they are true mighty people in the Spirit. While over the first few years of the ministry a number of people came and left, in recent years we have had more and more key people remaining fully committed. I know some of them may have to leave at some point and I have fully entrusted them all to the Lord, but it has been clear that through these committed people God's presence has become so much stronger in our ministry. David's army wasn't great just because he had a lot of people. God specifically sent to him mighty people to help him in his cause. As we look to the Lord as our sole provider and pray for His kingdom to come, God will send specific mighty people in our lives to help establish His kingdom. God will also release provision of funds and other necessities. The 2008 camp and the 2015 camp isn't just different because of the amount of committed, mighty volunteers, but also because we have received more support and have been able to demonstrate God's provision and love for the kids more through the uniforms, shoes, meals, and location. It is God's desire to reveal His kingdom here on earth. We just have to walk with Him, look to Him, and grow and prove true through the testing. He will provide more and more, not because we deserve it but because the testing has cleansed us of our pride and anxieties and established a deep trust within us with God.

**Being Genuine in Love** (kids can pick it up so clearly... Josh Smith, our coaches, etc)

So once our eyes are set on God for provision, the very first request we need to make is for His genuine love. We can have all the riches and resources in the world, but apart from love they are all nothing.

## SLIDE FOUR AND FIVE

1John 4:16-19 – So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us.

**God's genuine love is crucial for creating a kingdom culture.** Heaven can only truly be heaven if love is found there. Genuine love is a taste of heaven. We need it for our own lives and we need to be active in pouring it out.

Personally I have been blown away by the volunteers who have served with us at our camps and with Oak Tree Project. These volunteers truly rely on the Lord. None of them are perfect, and neither am I. Instead we lean on the Lord. And the children are drawn to us. Kids have a sixth sense to know who genuinely cares for them and who doesn't. If you desire to create a kingdom culture in your life, your first request from God is for provision of his pure, genuine love. This is the love that will enable you those early tough times of testing and to keep breaking through the hard hearts of your family members, co-workers, or whoever else God has called you to minister to. You will see breakthrough. God's love never fails!

## Being Active to Speak Life

The last key I want to share for creating a kingdom culture is to be active in speaking life. **Be active to speak life.** Having a group of mighty people is only the start of creating a kingdom culture. The next step is getting the mighty people to be active not just in love and deeds, but specifically in speaking life to those they are called to minister to.

In Luke 10 Jesus sent out his disciples, who were his own group of mighty people. He gave them very specific instructions...

## SLIDE SIX

Luke 10:9 – Heal the sick in it and say to them, “The kingdom of God has come near to you.”

He told them to not just heal the people as they went, but to specifically speak life over them. Don't just heal them, but speak life over them. “God is near!” “You are forgiven!” “Daughter, you are healed.” Our words have power! And the people need to know the source of our love.

## SLIDE SEVEN

This is a picture of Luke and Kee Baek. Luke was our youngest volunteer at our camp. He admitted to me after the camp that his initial main motivation in signing up was to be able to play some soccer and have access to the US military base where we were holding the camp so he could get some American snacks. But during the training for the volunteers before the camp, Luke was struck by how great an opportunity to love the boys he had and that he needed to be strong on their behalf. Luke's heart shifted from selfish motivations for serving to a place of genuinely wanting to love and build up the kids.

During the camp he connected with a number of the boys, including Kee Baek. Let me read part of his testimony from the camp...

“In the middle of the camp, Ki Baek wanted to know why all the volunteers were here, for no pay, no reward and why I loved hugging him. And I told him, “It's because we all loved him so much,

and that Jesus taught us to go out and love people. Jesus loved us first and died in doing so, and we want to share that love with the world.” Throughout the camp, I constantly focused on the idea that every person on earth was God's flawless creation that was loved by the most powerful being in the universe. Whenever the kids fought, I would go to them and instead of disciplining them, I told them that they were creations of God, loved and mighty, with the power of God lingering in their bodies. Not many of the kids had great effects, but Ki Baek definitely had the effect. After intensively talking about Jesus' love for him, he was speechless. Right there, he was shocked. He told me he had never heard about love, he that lived in a 'jungle', which the strongest only survived. He thought he was abandoned. Abandoned by his own parents. Abandoned by so many people that had said had come to help him.

I told him, yes that may be true, but you have more people in this world that pray for you and love you. Because God told us to, and He loves you so much. I came here to volunteer and coach you because Jesus loved me. I told him about my testimony as well, how I was neglected by my parents, and often beat up. I told him about all the things in my life that had brought me almost to death, and then how Jesus's love shocked me. I bared it all in that moment, fully sure that this was the moment that Jesus had set up... to change a boy's life.

Right there, he stared into the air for 30 solid seconds... and then after a long silence, he asked, can you tell me more ... about God and his love? .... and so we went on, continually talking, until lunch was ready, and I told him to go eat.

This kid was the one that I was able to minister to, talk about God's love and how he was loved beyond what he could imagine... and it struck his heart. Especially orphans are sensitive to that kind of stuff... I think there was something very special about that moment. We had that deep connection, and I could sense the Holy Spirit moving right there.”

After the camp I had to drive Kee Baek back to the children's home. I asked him who his favorite volunteer was and he told me it was Luke. I knew why immediately. Luke had been intentional about speaking life over Kee Baek, words that Kee Baek almost never hears, and Kee Baek had soaked it all up.

Kee Baek is actually one of the tougher elementary school boys at my home. At times he can be rebellious, mean to the other boys, and have a bad attitude. But at the camp, surrounded by loving people, he was very different. Like all the other boys he knew he was in a safe place, so he didn't have to act tough. He also knew the volunteers genuinely cared for him, like Luke, so his desires to rebel faded. This is the power of a kingdom culture. People become safe. Prostitutes and tax collectors can relax and know they are accepted. Lepers and demon oppressed people can find their healing and their peace.

## **SLIDE EIGHT**

This is a picture of Soo Jung. Soo Jung, despite being a fifth grader, was brand new to our camp this year. Unlike most of the other returning boys, he was unfamiliar with how the camp was run and was insecure when he first arrived. Soo Jung would have moments of smiling and enjoying the camp, and other moments of picking fights with the other boys and being upset.

At the end of the second day he picked a fight with another boy on his team and they got upset at each other. While the other boy calmed down quickly and was willing to make up, Soo Jung completely shut down and just laid on the field not responding to anything. Psychologists would call this, “flooding.” His insecurities, anger, and fear had flooded him to the point that he completely shut down. After about 20 minutes of this he finally got up and walked to a corner of the field with his head down, still not responding to anyone. At this point one of the volunteers called me over and told me what had happened. The volunteer smiled at me and said, “Soo Jung is all yours.”

So what do you do to help an orphan you barely know come out of this flood of unhealthy emotions? I prayed and asked God for wisdom and love as I walked over to him. I came beside Soo Jung and knelt down so that we were at even level. I gently placed one hand on his back and the other on his chest and asked him if he was okay. He didn't respond, so I began speaking life. I told him that he is a good kid and that I was really glad he was at the camp. I told him that I know he has a pure heart and that this moment of anger and frustration isn't who he really is. I asked him if he had been blessed by the camp and he nodded his head slowly in response. I told him that we all love him and that the other boy doesn't hate him and wants to make up. I told Soo Jung that he should shake hands with the other boy, and that by shaking hands he is choosing to forgive the other boy and forget about the tough moment and continue to enjoy the camp. I told Soo Jung he is a strong kid, and then asked him if he is willing to shake the other boy's hand. He nodded okay. I called the other boy over and they shook hands and Soo Jung then returned to his team. The next day some of the volunteers, unaware of what had happened the day before, mentioned that Soo Jung's attitude was completely different and that he was opening up a lot more. He had softened up. The kingdom of God was breaking through within him. Praise the Lord!

#### **SLIDE NINE**

This is a picture of Soo Jung with volunteer Jasmin on the last day. Jasmin shared with me after the camp that she made sure to speak life over every boy on her team throughout each camp day. Some of the kids soaked in the words and happily responded to her high fives and hugs, but some of the kids refused to open their hearts. Soo Jung was her toughest boy. He would even react in disgust and offense to any form of affirmation or encouragement from Jasmin. But she didn't let up. She knew she had love in her that he was lacking, and so she couldn't let herself be discouraged but had to keep strong for him. And sure enough, by the third day Soo Jung finally began to receive her words. He was able to look at her, say thank you to her encouragement, and respond to her high fives. He stopped shaking off her touch, as you can see in this picture. All the love was gradually sinking in.

#### **SLIDE TEN**

Here is a picture of Soo Jung from the last day with a boy from another orphanage. This is what happens when insecure, broken people are put into a place with a kingdom culture. Safety, peace, acceptance, and love come over them. God is good!

**Kingdom Culture Effect** (no complaints from kids, contrast of behavior from in home and at camp, learning to drink living water and learning to pour it out)

So through our focus on God as provider, through our prayers for genuine love to come in and flow through us to the children, and through our efforts to speak life to these kids we saw powerful transformations among all the children at the camp. Volunteers from different orphanages were shocked at how different their boys were at the camp compared to how they usually are at the orphanage. The boys never complained. Many of them were even able to complement each other as the camp progressed. They weren't just drinking in the genuine love, they were learning to pour out too!

Here are a few more pictures for you guys to witness God's work at the camp...

#### **SLIDE ELEVEN**

This was one of the toughest boys to come to the camp. His orphanage warned us about him ahead of time. While he definitely had some moments where he needed discipline, you can witness through this picture how God's love was working through him. Praise the Lord!

### **SLIDE TWELVE**

Look closely and you'll see the boy on the left has his foot in a brace. He had sprained his foot the previous week and couldn't participate in the soccer games. He still wanted to come to the camp though and he had an amazing time cheering on his team and being with the volunteers.

### **SLIDE THIRTEEN**

This boy broke his arm the previous week. He still wanted to come and managed to sneak his way into some of the drills. Despite being one of the most difficult boys from his orphanage, he connected quickly in joy with the other kids and with the volunteers.

### **SLIDE FOURTEEN**

Boys from separate teams hugging after a game.

### **SLIDE FIFTEEN**

These are boys from different homes and different ages playing a game together. The younger boy was having the time of his life. These pictures of joy and unity bless my staff deeply.

### **SLIDE SIXTEEN**

Another picture of boys from different orphanages connecting closely.

When a kingdom culture is established age, race, social status, scars, and other things no longer have any power or effect. Instead there is freedom, love, joy, unity, and confidence.

Remember, the soccer camp wasn't held in a church. It was held on soccer fields. Kingdom culture is not to remain in the church. It's meant to be released in every aspect of our lives. The more you look to the Lord, the more He will provide. The more people you partner with, the more powerful the anointing is released. The more you receive His genuine love the more His presence will fill the atmosphere around you. The more you speak life the more you will see lives changed.

**Close in Prayer**