

## *The Big Picture: The Kingdom of Heaven*

Many news organizations use drone cameras which can pull back from a major event and provide aerial views that help capture “the big picture.” A recent example of this was Milwaukee’s 120th Harley Davidson Anniversary celebration. The aerial shots of hundreds of bikers were stunning.

Today’s gospel, so rich in metaphors, can be a challenge to find the whole of Jesus’ message. Rather than focusing in on the meaning of its individual images, let us attempt to see, though not perfectly, the big picture of the kingdom of heaven.

The kingdom of heaven is the community of our Triune God. Its mystery is that it is here now and, at the same time, it is coming. The kingdom of heaven is here because God the Father sent his only Son to announce the good news that those who accept Jesus and his message and commit to carrying on his mission are the righteous who “will shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.” (Matt 13:43). In certain hope of their eternal reward, the righteous are not befuddled by the evil they see around them. They are patient and tolerant in believing the God will set the record straight and that, in the end, evil will not prevail.

The kingdom of heaven is coming. There will be an end to time, an end to human efforts to lead a holy earthly life, and an end to evil. In expecting the human family to accept Jesus, the Father promised growth and transformation in glory beyond all human comprehension.

Therefore, it is important for Jesus’ disciples to step back and recognize that today’s immediate attractions and material distractions are not all there is. Our kind and loving God prompts us to adopt a worldview that sees things as Jesus sees them. Saying a daily “yes” to the Father’s will, recognizing the power of small works done in the name of the Father and accepting God’s Spirit of Love to double or triple the good we do here on earth are our contributions to making God’s kingdom come.

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