

## "Greeting Team"

### For Sunday, February 27

Remember: Meet in the coat room @ **10:30 am** for brief prayer & then go "welcome" people! NOTE: Keep an eye on the auditorium for those who slipped past!

### Greeters this week:

**Curt Mastbergen Sun Noon;**

**Josh Tackett Sunday Night**

- 1st— Erickson Thursday PM:
- Jen Hagler Thursday PM
- 2nd— Justin Taylor Sunday Night;
- 3rd— Randy Ehlers Sunday Night;
- 4th—Curt Mastbergen Sunday Noon; Tackett Sunday Night

### Small Groups @ MBC

Are Committed To  
Developing  
New Leaders Through  
Apprenticeship—  
Small Group Leaders Are  
Intentional About  
Reproducing Themselves

## Announcements

1. A Great Bible Study Website!  
Check out [www.studylight.org](http://www.studylight.org)  
Great source of Biblical info!
2. A Great Read: Check out  
“*Epic*” by Tim Challies.  
(Only 176 Pages.  
Subject: Christian History)

## God's Kingdom Plans!

If you've read of Israel's rebellion & falling away from God in the Old Testament, you know that God's Kingdom plans, for Israel, were never fully realized. But, God is still determined to place a descendent of King David on an eternal throne that will govern not just Israel; but, the entire world! And, we know that Jesus will ultimately be that fulfillment of God's Kingdom prophecy! And, for us! His Kingdom will finally be achieved beginning with His return; or, His 2nd coming; followed, by a millennial reign on earth; and, then over a new heavens & a new earth, when the substance, of God's Kingdom, will finally be realized. And, then, for all eternity it'll be the people of God living in God's place under the authority of God. And, He will dwell among us the book of Revelation says. Literally, it says He'll “pitch a tent” in our midst (21:3). But, where we struggle, in our understanding of the Kingdom, is with some of the teachings of Jesus. There's a tension there! He speaks of God's Kingdom as both present; and, still future. When He sent out the 70 He told them to preach, “*The Kingdom of God has come near you*” (Luke 10:9). That's “has come”; present tense. To the crowds, in Luke 11, He said, “*If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the Kingdom of God has come to you.*” Right now! It's here! In Luke 17:21, He's even more explicit: “*Behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you.*” So, how can God's Kingdom be both present & future? I tend to think that the best answer is that God's Kingdom is in place right NOW! God IS; and, always HAS BEEN the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. But, the Old Testament was more prophetic; or, forward-looking toward the Messiah's coming; and, His Kingdom. So, when Jesus came everything changed because the King had come! The Kingdom is in place, in other words. In Mark, Jesus preached the good news of God: “*The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near* (or, literally, it “has arrived”). *Repent and believe the good news*” (1:15). So, the Kingdom is both physical and spiritual. Repentance & belief are necessary. To enter it physically requires a spiritual rebirth. Look at John's Gospel, chapter 3, v.1. This is where we begin when we talk about the spiritual aspects of the Kingdom: “*There was a man from the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus at night and said, ‘Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher, for no one could perform these signs You do unless God were with him.’ Jesus replied, ‘I assure you: Unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’*” You can't see the physical Kingdom, Jesus told him, unless you're born again spiritually!

## Reenter Your Mother's Womb?

And, then, look at v.5. After Nicodemus asked Jesus if he needed to reenter his mother's womb to be born again, “*Jesus answered, ‘I assure you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’*” To be born of water, many believe, relates to physical birth after living for 9 months in the womb of a mother's amniotic fluid. And, to be born of the Spirit is easily understood as spiritual birth by the Holy Spirit. You cannot enter God's Kingdom, Jesus tells him, unless you have BOTH a physical and a spiritual birth. And, in context, Jesus explains the spiritual birth to him in v.16, “*For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.*” Spiritual birth only comes through belief in Jesus; a belief that He is the Messiah; and, that His death on the cross was necessary for our redemption; and, our entry into God's Kingdom!