

The Church Of The Bible

Lesson 3

The Kingdom

Introduction

- The terms “kingdom” and “church” are often thought of as interchangeable
- The term is used in close connection with the “term” church
 - The two terms are not synonymous
- “Kingdom” connotes a different relationship than “assembly”
- Having reviewed the biblical church, let us review the biblical kingdom

The Word

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**“The Church Of Christ – A
Biblical Ecclesiology For Today”**

- **In Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, the primary meaning of “kingdom” is “kingship”**
 - That is, a royal power or kingly rule
- **The word more often refers to “reign” than to “realm”**
 - The dominion rather than the domain

Biblical Designations

- **The kingdom of God**
 - God is King
- **The kingdom of Christ**
 - Christ is King
- **The kingdom of heaven**
 - The eternal kingdom
- **Two manifestations of the “kingdom” – temporal & eternal**

Two Manifestations of The Kingdom

- **Christ's Kingdom**
- *Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” **Matthew 16:28***
- **God's eternal kingdom**
- *His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation. (**Dan. 4:3**)*

A Temporal Kingdom

- A beginning and an end
 - *As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'* (**Matt. 10:7**)
 - *Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"*
"Hosanna in the highest!" (**Mark 11:10**)
 - *Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.* (**1 Cor. 15:24-25**)
 - **At the end of time Christ's Kingdom will be delivered to the Father**

Before Pentecost

- **Christ's prophecy**
 - *"I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power"* (**Mark 9:1**)
- **Christ's warning**
 - *From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."* (**Matt. 4:17**)

Not An Earthly Kingdom

- Not of this world

- *Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."* (John 18:36)

- "Within you"

- *"The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."* (Luke 17:20-21)

Christ's Reign

- **Jesus' own kingship began at his resurrection (Matt. 28:18)**
 - Within the lifetime of some there
 - With an exhibition of God's power
- **As individuals entered Christ's kingdom at Pentecost, the church (assembly) began**

Christ's Kingdom

- **No physical boundaries**
- **No earthly government or administrative functions**
- **Each Christian is a subject and individually accountable to the king**
- **The king's reign is altogether in the hearts of the subjects**
 - **The new covenant is applied to the hearts of men**

The Church & The Kingdom

- The term “church” (ekklesia) speaks to the people of God
 - Used 77 times (NIV)
- The term “kingdom” speaks to the reign of God in the hearts of men
 - Used 284 times (NIV)

To pray for the kingdom to come in the sense of God’s reign as king is not the same as praying for the church to come.

Distinctions

- **Kingdom characteristics not implied in the term “church”**
 - **A ruler (king) – church implies a non-institutional group**
 - **Organization and power of control**
 - **Promises of divine benefits**
 - **A gospel –to preach**

A Parable – Matt. 13

- The “seed” of the kingdom
- The soil – the hearts of men
 - Hardened hearts reject the seed
 - “Shallow” hearts hear but soon turn away
 - The “preoccupied” heart lets the worries of life choke it out
 - The receptive, understanding heart produces a good crop

In The Church = In The Kingdom?

- Not All “Church Members” Are In The Kingdom
- *The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.*
- *They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*
- *Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. **Matthew 13:41-43***

Christ's Kingdom

- **The gospel preached in the first century was the gospel of the Kingdom, not the gospel of the church.**
- **The mysteries made known to the apostles were the mysteries of the kingdom, not the mysteries of the church.**
- **The word church was used only in a limited sense to designate God's people – the word kingdom was used to represent the Christian's relationship to God.**

Paul Preached The Kingdom

- **Acts 19:8-9 (NIV)**
- *Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God.*
- **Acts 20:25 (NIV)**
- *"Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again.*

Paul Preached The Kingdom

- *Acts 28:23 (NIV)*
- *They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.*
- *Acts 28:30-31 (NIV)*
- *For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him.*
³¹ Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

What It's Like

- **A mustard seed – the smallest of all seeds**
 - Grows into the largest of all plants
 - It germinates in the heart and grows until it is the dominant influence
- **Yeast – once activated, it insidiously permeates**
 - A small amount permeates the entire batch of dough
 - Permeates one's entire life

Summary

- **The word, Kingdom represents the Christians relationship to God.**
- **Demands recognition of authority and provides assurances to those who give it.**
- **The word church implies no indication of organization, power of control or promises of divine benefits.**

Comments

- **To give the term “church” a significance greater than a group of God’s people is to honor the Church of England’s institutional doctrine.**
- **To reduce the term “Kingdom” to mean only an earthly association is to depreciate the significance of Christ’s reign in the hearts of men.**

A Heavenly Kingdom

- **The heavenly kingdom is eternal**
 - *In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. (Dan. 2:44)*
 - *His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation. (Dan. 4:3)*
- **The heavenly Kingdom is a Spiritual Kingdom**
 - *I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (1 Cor. 15:50)*

A Treasure

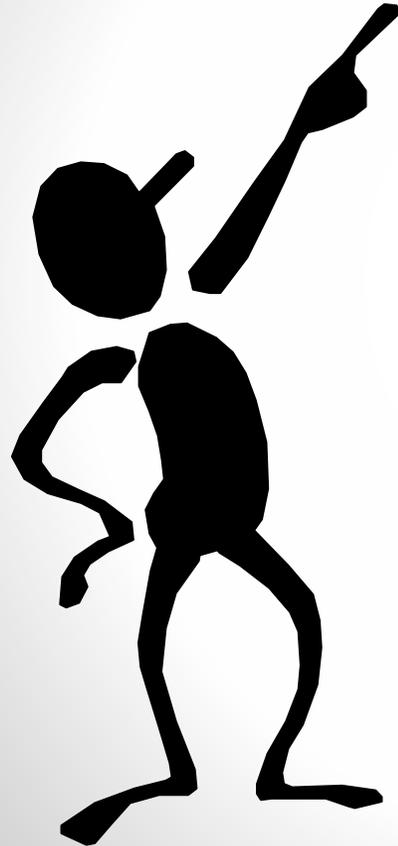
- **The kingdom is a valued treasure**
 - Like a treasure hidden in a field
 - Valued above all earth's treasures
- **Valuable pearl among pearls**
 - Worth all a man has

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it. (Matt.13:44-46)

Changes To Enter

- *Listen, I tell: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.*
- *For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*
- *For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. **1 Corinthians 15:50-53***

How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation. (Dan. 4:3)



- **Matthew 16:18-19 (ESV)**

¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

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