

Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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Jesus, New Covenant Preacher/Teacher

by Robin Todd, Washington

Despite the Biblical witness that the Law made nothing perfect (Heb. 7:19), and that no one is justified by the Law (Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20), there is still a huge contingency of evangelical Christians who have been taught that Jesus is our Savior because he kept the Old Covenant Law perfectly. The claim is made that since the New Covenant wasn't validated or in force until the crucifixion (Heb. 9), Jesus was not teaching it to others, nor could he live according to it himself. Subsequently, it is further contended, he must have been perfectly keeping the Old Covenant still in force during his lifetime, and this is how his righteousness was reckoned in order to be our Savior.

However, there are two important points to be noted from Scripture which I will show in this article: 1) The New Covenant did indeed exist during the lifetime of Jesus prior to the cross, and, 2) Jesus' righteousness during his lifetime was not according to the Old Covenant Law of Moses.

As for point #1, the case is open and shut from Hebrews 9:16-23:

"For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the **death of the one who made it**. For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while **the one who made it lives**. Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. For when **every commandment had been spoken by Moses** to all the people according to the Law, [then] **he took the blood** of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, 'THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU.' And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

Notice in the above verses that even though a covenant may not be validated or inaugurated for humanity at large until there is blood that is shed, the covenant is still in existence through the *words* of the one introducing/making that covenant. This is true

whether it is Moses or Jesus making the covenant. This verse proves beyond the shadow of any doubt what should be obvious to us all, that Jesus laid down the *terms* of the New Covenant in his ministry, and later inaugurated it officially at the cross.

This is corroborated by Hebrews 2:2-3 where the Old and New Covenants are contrasted, and Jesus is the one who **first spoke** the New Covenant. Not surprisingly, according to Hebrews 1 and 2 the New Covenant is inextricably linked to the Gospel of the coming Kingdom.

Also see Luke 22:28-30: "You are the ones who have remained with me in my trials. I now **covenant** with you, just as my Father has **covenanted** with me, a Kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom, and be seated on thrones to govern the twelve tribes of Israel." This is the new covenant (we might call it the Jesuanic covenant) based on the teachings of Jesus. The words of that covenant were given by Jesus during his ministry, summed up in the Gospel about the Kingdom of God. Jesus was the **messenger** and **mediator** of the New Covenant (Mal. 3:1; Heb. 9:15; 12:24).

As for point #2, there is a massive weight of Scripture:

Romans 3:21-22, 26-28: "But now **apart** from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith **of** Jesus Christ for all those who believe...so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who is **of** the faith **of** Jesus. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we maintain that a man [which would include Jesus] is justified by faith apart from works of the Law."

The above passage speaks about the faith **OF** Jesus, that is, the faith he had while he was on earth. Those who have the faith he taught and demonstrated while alive before the crucifixion, are justified thereby. It is a faith that is apart from the Law. For those who would wrongly speculate that this speaks of a faith that Jesus has only post-resurrection, I refer you to Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

Here are some additional verses along the same line as the one quoted above:

Galatians 3:11: "Now that no one ['no one' would necessarily include Jesus] is justified by the Law before

God is evident; for, ‘the righteous man shall live by faith.’”

Galatians 2:16: “Nevertheless knowing that a man [Jesus was a man] is not justified by the works of the Law but through the faith **of** Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by the faith **of** Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh [Jesus was flesh, or a ‘mortal man’ as in the NASB margin] will be justified.”

Philippians 3:9: “...and may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through the faith **of** Jesus, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.” Compare “the faith **of** Abraham” (Rom. 4:12, 16), which is not faith *in* Abraham.

So far under point #2 we have seen that Jesus was considered righteous apart from works of the Law, and justified before God the same way.

Here’s another pivotal scripture that should really end the whole debate:

Galatians 3:20-21: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith **of** the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.” Compare with this John 1:17: “The Law came through Moses; grace and truth came through Messiah Jesus.” Note also Acts 20:24-25, where the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom is exactly synonymous with the preaching of the Gospel of the *grace* of God.

Do we catch the implications of Galatians 3:20-21? Christ did not need to die if righteousness can come through the Law! If Jesus was considered righteous because he kept the Law of Moses perfectly, he died needlessly. Paul objects to this idea strenuously. Paul does not want to distance us from Jesus by putting Jesus, our model, under the Law of Moses!

But, someone will ask, why is it written that Jesus was born under the law? Does that not mean he was responsible to the Law of Moses, precluding the possibility that he was the first New Covenant preacher? As we will see, it does not.

Let’s look at all the verses where the phrase “under the law” is found in the Bible. We find that there are eight of them in the New Testament. Four of them refer to those who lived in the Old Covenant dispensation. I quote two of those four here:

Romans 2:12: “For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law.”

Romans 3:19: “Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so

that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God.”

The other two of the four are similar and are found in Galatians 3:23 and 4:5. All four of these refer to those who were obviously responsible to the Law of Moses because they were Jews and lived before the New Covenant.

The fifth scriptural reference to “under the law” we will examine is 1 Corinthians 9:20-21, and it is especially enlightening. Paul says, “To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, **though not myself being under the Law**, so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the **law of Messiah**, so that I might win those who are without law.”

Paul wrote this, of course, *after* the crucifixion of Jesus, when God had started to hold all people exposed to the New Covenant responsible to the New Covenant. It is impossible that Paul would still be insisting that anyone, upon conversion to Christ, be held responsible to the Old Covenant Law. Paul says that he himself, as a model Christian and Jew, is not under the Law of Moses. For diplomatic reasons only, he is willing to be as a Jew to the Jews, and as a Gentile to the Gentiles. This was for the purpose of winning them to Christ, when of course they would no longer be under the Law of Moses just as Paul was not.

This brings us now to the much (apparently) debated Galatians 4:4: “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.” Does this verse mean that Jesus was responsible to keep the Law of Moses and thus have nothing to do with a new covenant? Of course not. Galatians 4:4 simply refers to the fact that Jesus was born at the time when Jews were still living under the Law of Moses. This sort of meaning has already been proven valid by our previous review of how Paul used the same phrase in 1 Corinthians 9. But from the time of the official inauguration of the New Covenant, all converts are to become members of that New Covenant. It is the covenant *words* of Jesus which are said to be spirit and life (John 6:63). A process of transitioning was needed to move Jews from the Old to the New Covenant; from the old wineskins to the new wineskins; from the now extinct Law of Moses given at Sinai to the new Law of the New Covenant given by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

Our next Scripture referring to “under the law” disproves yet another major misconception which claims that the phrase in 1 Corinthians 9:20 should be translated “under [*the penalty of*] the law.” Apart from being *not* what the Greek says, this would render Galatians 4:21 unintelligible: “Tell me, you who want to

be under the law, do you not listen to the law?" This cannot mean, "Tell me, you who want to be under *the penalty of the law...*" No one wants to be under "the penalty of" the law; therefore "under the law" can have no such meaning. Obviously, Galatians 4:21 is speaking to those who do not yet understand that they should not be responsible to the Law of Moses in the letter. Paul pleads with them to be otherwise. We must let Paul tell us what he means by "under the law," for after all, it is he who is responsible for this phrase throughout the New Testament.

Our final verse for "under the law" is Galatians 5:18: "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law" (cp. John 1:17). The entire context of Galatians 5 is that Christians should no longer hold themselves accountable to the Law of Moses, but should come under Christ by following the New Covenant teachings of Jesus, summarized as the Gospel of the Kingdom. We should be led by the spirit of God which will empower us to live godly lives. The chapter is too long to be included in this article, but it has nothing to do with "penalty," but rather living a godly life and not subjecting oneself to the Law of Moses.

There is much more in Scripture that presents Jesus as our premier New Covenant preacher/teacher. If his righteousness were based on keeping the Law of Moses, then he died needlessly, and his life was the wrong model for us. The righteousness of Jesus is based on the law of faith, the law of the spirit of life found in the New Covenant (Rom. 8:2; cp. John 6:63), which he first presented during his ministry, then validated at his death. Jesus as our Christian model was followed by Paul, and both Jesus and Paul provide the basis of true Christianity. The popular view in evangelicalism makes this teaching unintelligible. ✧

Baptism Interrupted

by Kenneth LaPrade, Texas

June of 1972 marked my first encounter with trying to take Christianity personally and seriously. Before that, I perceived church involvement as a vague setting for occasionally enjoyable social interactions, like playing on a church basketball team. (We even won a city championship!) After a couple of teenage years, while personally being in a dark, bitter, atheistic hole (with occasional bouts of milder agnostic ideas), Holly Holder, a young lady from Colorado, spoke to me briefly about belief in Jesus. With great fear and trepidation, I accepted her invitation to go to a large outdoor meeting event, on the last day of "Explo '72", a major evangelical activity in downtown Dallas in an open field (which would become the future Woodall-Rodgers freeway). As the famous Billy Graham preached passionately about John 3:16, I was deeply motivated to respond to an altar call (by standing up in a

crowd) and accepting Jesus as my Savior. Thus started my journey of more than four decades of zealous religious involvement, beginning with a couple of years of various associations, followed by decades of more exclusive fellowship within a small group (The Way International), and its later offshoots.

By the way, I have never been unthankful for any wonderful things learned and practiced among friends and good-hearted, Bible-reading truth-seekers from different backgrounds, whether agreeing with my increasingly narrow views or not.

One thing that Holly talked to me about during the summer of 1972 was her joyful experience of getting baptized in a beautiful, clear river in Colorado. It had been so meaningful to her! Since I implicitly trusted her, I started to form a hazy plan in the back of my mind to get baptized. Meanwhile, my enthusiasm for Charismatic meetings made "baptism in holy spirit," in the modern "Pentecostal" sense, a more pressing priority.

One day that summer, I rode my bike down to White Rock Lake (a couple of miles from my parents' house) with a Bible, which I was avidly devouring for the first time! As I sat under a tree by the lakeside, observing the calm waters, I read 1st Peter for the first time. I still remember how exciting it was for me! Though I realize now how little of it I had grasped, I still had an inner desire in my mind to follow Holly's example — and get baptized.

A few months later (in March of 1973), I was in a Bible class setting, listening to the Way Ministry "dispensational" idea that "spirit baptism" had replaced mere "water baptism" on the Day of Pentecost. I was initially quite skeptical of such a forced analysis of Acts 1:5, which was then imposed on other records to **extract water** from baptism! That teaching was not compatible with Holly's attitude at all. Though she was a devout "Pentecostal/Charismatic" in an Oral Roberts-styled tradition, she did not dismiss the significance of baptism in water!

I will go ahead and share a very embarrassing episode with you. I was wrestling in my mind in early 1973 with whether or not to accept the baptism replacement doctrine I had recently heard: i.e. superior "holy spirit baptism" had long ago replaced mere, inferior "water baptism."

I was then working at S.M.U.'s Fondren library part time, while being a full-time student during my sophomore year. My shift was about to end when I noticed, through a second-floor window, a slight drizzle outside. Since I was gullible toward seemingly spiritual, exciting ideas, and still very biblically illiterate, I decided to ask God for a sign! If it was still raining when I left the library, I would follow Holly's thinking and get baptized. If rain had stopped, I would go with

the “replacement” idea from the Bible class (Power for Abundant Living). Since the drizzle had abated when I left the building, I took it as a sign!

Whoops!

Over 42 years after taking the weather as a sign to refuse the possibility of getting baptized in water, I was once again wrestling with baptism ideas in Atlanta. On numerous occasions I had already tearfully pleaded with God to forgive me for countless, fruitless errors and mind-numbing gullibility to **brainwashing** (to be totally frank and honest!). Even though I had painstakingly **dispensed** with “**dispensationalism**” and had **left behind** my old “**left behind**” theology, something was missing! Also, I had already struggled for years to ditch an overwhelmingly aggressive Once Saved Always Saved (OSAS) mentality! I was mentally worn out, spiritually confused, and physically very sick four years ago (in May of 2015).

The old part of my logic ran like this: What’s the big deal about water? I’ve already been committed to Jesus for over four decades! I’ve already tweaked some major flaws like OSAS, etc. I’ve been baptized with holy spirit since 1972, and I can prove it! (I would quietly mumble vocalized syllables to myself, “speaking in tongues,” assuming I was uttering real languages.) “Spirit baptism” is vastly more important than dunking in water (I still thought with the confused side of my brain)! I was also sorely tempted with this thought: I could simply go through the motions of being submerged — to be “**diplomatic**” with these folks who are **into** water, like Paul circumcising Timothy to be diplomatic with unbelieving Jews (Acts 16:1-3).

But a new emerging part of my mind and heart urged me toward the following clarity: Throughout Acts, Christians never equated dunking in water with unnecessary, frivolous activity! They did not think of it as “nice” symbolism which had nothing to do with salvation. Why not admit that I had been wrong? Why not humble myself to God like a child, take the plunge, and profess allegiance to the Kingdom message — according to God’s watery method! Remember the advice given to an angry, reluctant Naaman by his servants? (2nd Kings 5:11, 12). If he had been asked to do something difficult, wouldn’t he have done it? Why not then, as parallel to Naaman, do something as simple as being splashed down in water — with a devoted pledge from the heart, and **definitely not** as a slippery, shady idea of doing it to merely be “diplomatic” (as if it could honestly be anything similar to Paul’s circumcising of Timothy!).

The new, humble paradigm won out in my life when I was dunked on May 2, 2015. Deliverance from the demonic clutches of false religion has been amazing to me! Without claiming to be a spiritual rocket scientist, I would say from 1st Peter’s teaching alone, it is no

wonder that Satanic forces would work intensely to obscure this vital topic of biblical baptism for truth-seekers! ✧

The End of the Age and the Tower of Babel

by Terry Anderson, Minnesota

Anyone who seeks the Kingdom and understands the full implications of God’s government being installed by Messiah and the saints can’t help but, from time to time, speculate about the timing of Jesus’ return.

We all have learned an enormous amount about doctrine over the years, supporting our beliefs in One God, the sleep of the dead and the Kingdom of God. These articles by Anthony and many other contributing authors have given us substantial spiritual nutrition for all who read and believe.

I would like to stimulate your imaginations for a moment and challenge you to look at the current conditions of mankind in light of a few Scriptures. *And remember, I am only dealing with possibilities and probabilities, not dogma.* I regularly review many alternative economic and geopolitical news sites and make copies of predictions. I review these prognostications at the end of each year. I just did this the other day for articles going back as far as 2014, and without fail every prediction, even from many reputable authors, failed. Not one of them was even close. There is a huge difference between predicting an event to occur on a specific date and knowing of the “eventuality” of that event. For example, we know that Messiah will return to earth in the future; we just don’t know the exact date.

With that being said, let me lead into my proposal by discussing the week in God’s timetable. To God a day is as 1000 years. If the week is a picture of God’s work on earth then the first 4 days in the week represent the 4,000 years prior to Messiah. The next 2 days represent the 2,000 years since Messiah. But when does that 2000 years begin? If we assume that it was when Jesus was born then we are well beyond the end of those 2000 years. But what if it began when he was crucified and ascended to heaven?

By the reckoning of most scholars the date of Jesus’ crucifixion was somewhere between 30-33AD, thus making the end of the 2000 years since that event at 2030-2033. The 1000-year reign of Messiah Jesus and the saints will finish the prophetic week. This is looking forward to the establishment of God’s literal Kingdom on earth. Could this speculation be possible? There is enough time for end-time prophecies to unfold as this is 11-14 years in the future.

Now let's look at the Scriptures, beginning with Genesis 11:6. You all know the story of the **Tower of Babel** so I will jump to the part where God said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them" (Gen. 11:6). Could God have prevented this unified humanity from discovering the knowledge which would have enabled them to advance technologically, to where we are now, in just a few decades or centuries? We have to assume so. God decided the best way to proceed was to introduce multiple languages and scatter mankind around the world. God had set the duration at 6000 years. He had to make sure that the technology did not advance too quickly and allow man to acquire the knowledge necessary to bring about the end-times.

As a result, mankind's technological advancement proceeded at a snail's pace up until about 200 years ago, which is about 3.4% of the total of man's existence on earth unless, of course, you believe in evolution, which I doubt any of you do.

Now think about this knowledge advancement curve. In economics there is a concept called an "upright spike" in relationship to plotting data on XY charts (vertical axis on the left and horizontal axis proceeding to the right). What one observes is the progression through time of a curve that starts at the very lower left part of the chart (c. 4000 B.C.) and moves right. If you were to look at technological discoveries and their subsequent inventions to actual implementation in society, you would observe a very flat line for 5800 years with that line beginning to move up gradually in the 1800's. Then about the early 1900's the line would begin a sharper ascent until the mid-1900's where it would ascend even more rapidly. But from the late 1900's, and the advent of the computer, the line begins to go straight up — the upright spike.

Daniel 12:4 says, "But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." That may seem to be a fairly simple statement, but let's examine it a little more deeply. I think that "to and from" has more implication than just people walking about and travelling from town to town. Think about our modern society. Has there ever been a time where more people on earth had access to "fast" travel, where in 12 hours we can be halfway around the world? Travel speed is one of the technological wonders that was no-doubt foreseen by God at the **Tower of Babel**.

There are 3 other technological wonders that have been increasingly perfected in the last 50 years, which is .9% of the total time of mankind on earth. These are the speed of information, the speed of communications and the speed of war and destruction. How many times have

you been on the internet and had to wait for a few seconds to retrieve information? We have become sensitized to speed, or lack of it. These information flow rates are incredible and, once again, remind us of "nothing that they have imagined will be withheld from them." God, Jesus and the angelic masses are now observing the incredible potential of man's intellect and discovering what has heretofore been restricted.

The speed of communications is evident everywhere you look. It seems like everyone has a cell phone and kids and adults have become addicted to them. We can't be away from our "Star Trek" communicators for more than a night's rest. Look at Revelation 11, the **2 Witnesses** chapter. In verse 10 it says "and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them [the 2 witnesses] and make merry and exchange presents." In the days before instant communications that was impossible. Even if you had the Pony Express you could not have disseminated news around the world in 3 days. And here we're talking about video! These kinds of communication and information speeds are needed to bring in the last and most devastating invention which will lead to man's destruction if God did not prevent it.

Ever since the unleashing of the Atomic Bomb, and its more powerful brother, the Hydrogen Bomb, the worldview of warfare has changed dramatically. That was 1945, 74 years ago. Now we have delivery systems that can bring these city destroyers to any point on the planet within minutes. Why hasn't it happened? Obviously, God has not allowed it. Satan is the "god of this world" with great leeway to bring misery and suffering upon humanity, but God will only allow certain events to happen according to His schedule. Paraphrasing 1 Thessalonians 2:1-11, we know that the Day of the Lord will not arrive until the lawless one is first revealed and the one who is restraining him is taken out of the way. Without Satan in the picture we cannot possibly understand the world these past 6 millennia.

Let's examine two more modern phenomena that may well have significant impact on mankind in the end-times — Artificial Intelligence (AI) and genome (DNA) manipulation. AI has made incredible technological advances in the past few years, to the point where techno-prognosticators are predicting vast unemployment due to robotic capabilities rivaling anything man can do, and more efficiently and economically. The AI robots can now communicate on a level unimagined just 5 years ago. And in 5 more years these robots, controlled by malevolent beings, could indeed make for a scary world.

Most of you are aware of the studies and experiments revealing God's organic computer — DNA. This may very well be the "straw that breaks the camel's back" when it comes to what God will allow, and for how long? DNA can now be manipulated to the point

that it may not be long where we can create hybrid humans and human/animal crossbreeds. If God allowed angels to breed with humans in the days of Noah (Gen. 6), are we far away from the genetic manipulation allowing for Petri-dish species? Technological discoveries in every area of life have absolutely gone exponential — the upright spike. Pandora's box has been allowed to be opened and there will be no closing the lid.

So, I ask you, are we at the point that God envisioned where the inhabitants of earth would be, technologically, at the time of the Tower of Babel? Is there anything that man has thought that he can't do now or in the near future? Maybe travel out into the universe, teleportation or time travel. But remember, God said there was nothing they imagined that would be withheld. Man can imagine just about all things now, even if a few of those imaginations haven't found fulfillment as of yet. And certainly, through those imaginations and inventions, we have been brought to the brink of annihilation. But God won't allow that since He will shorten those days for the elect's sake (Mark 13:20).

So, if we are close, then how close is that? That depends on God's timetable. He can speed things up or slow them down, kind of like landing a jet airliner. Coming in for landing, especially in bad weather, the pilot will speed up and then slow down, in order to hit the runway at the proper time and space. God has His hand on the time throttle and will land His Kingdom at the precise time that He so desires.

Praying "Thy Kingdom Come" should become increasingly easy and heartfelt as the world experiences first the wrath of Satan and then the wrath of God. Because of what is about to come, which will destroy all the world's political, economic and religious systems, I pray earnestly for the protection of the elect and God's mercy to call many to righteousness before those events come upon us. ✧

What They Don't Tell You

There are some 31,000 verses in our Bible, Old and New Covenants. In various systems of Bible exposition, it is glaringly obvious that certain key verses get little or no mention — ever!

Mark 1:1, 14, 15 tell us most instructively when the saving Gospel *began*. It began with Jesus. So that is where to begin, simply because Jesus began there. We are claiming to be followers of Jesus, but are we sure we are not just calling him "lord, lord" while failing to believe and obey what he said and taught?

How often do you hear an exposition of Mark 1:1, 14, 15? And what about this verse: "Salvation is given to those who *obey Jesus*" (Heb. 5:9)? Have you been instructed that the Gospel of the Kingdom is precisely the same as the Gospel of Grace? (Acts 20:24-25).

Preaching which is not thoroughly permeated by Gospel of the Kingdom language does not sound like Jesus! How misleading is the popular "Apostles' Creed," which speaks of the birth of Jesus from a virgin, and then skips immediately to his suffering and death? Why no mention of what he preached as the saving Gospel, the Kingdom of God? Why is Jesus' Gospel teaching not mentioned?

Think also of two sparkling and spectacular verses towards the end of our New Testament. These are apostolic warnings against the fatal danger of calling Jesus "lord, lord," but not doing what he says (Luke 6:46). These warnings should be thought of as giant watchdogs, standing guard over the true faith.

1 Timothy 6:3: Do you read this often or hear it preached? Paul warned as follows: "If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the health-giving words, namely those of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing."

The same stark warning from another Apostle in **2 John 7-9:** "Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in that teaching has both the Father and the Son."

Be alarmed! You are in danger of being swallowed up by mindless group-think. But false teaching can be effectively held at a distance by using these Apostolic passages in 2 John and 1 Timothy. The Gospel preaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God, plus of course his death and resurrection, were central to the faith of the New Testament.

What most Bible readers have not understood is that the saving Gospel as Jesus preached it (Luke 4:43) is much more specific and precise than popular requests to "believe in Jesus," "accept him into your heart," or vaguely "receive him." Such vagueness, imprecision might be compared with describing a soccer match as "22 people running in different directions"! What many have not known is that the Gospel/word of the Kingdom reappears repeatedly throughout the New Testament under synonyms like "the word," "the word of God" "the truth," "the message" of life in the age to come (vaguely and poorly translated as "eternal life") or "the promise." Don't forget "the promise to Abraham that he would be heir of the world" (Rom. 4:13).

Our point is this: that Paul can be twisted, thus causing a loss of his clear Gospel of the Kingdom, following Jesus. Paul must never be put at odds with Jesus! "The Gospel of the grace of God" is precisely the same as "preaching the Kingdom" (Acts 20:24-25).

A fatal shift occurs when the four Gospels are even relegated, by some very false systems, to the Old Testament, and for Jews only! But the truth is this: Jesus, you see, is not Jesus if divorced from his clear

Gospel of the Kingdom announcement. Jesus' most stark warnings are given in Matthew 7:21-29 where large numbers of "sincere" people will be shocked to find out that their efforts "in his name" were not even recognized. The problem was the prevalence of false teachers using the name of Jesus as a cover and camouflage for a gutted Gospel. Make defining the Gospel your first and urgent priority. ✧

Comments

"Thank you once more for the *Focus on the Kingdom*. I enjoy the way you explain Bible truths. I also enjoy the comments, especially from the ex-JWs. I am very happy about the European Mission Trip." — *England*

"I just wanted to thank you for all you have done and are still doing to help reveal what it is that we must know in order to be a part of the Kingdom of God which is yet to come. I consider it a great blessing and honor to have listened to your teachings. The words of our Messiah are true when he said if we will seek with our whole heart we will find, and if we will knock it will be opened to us. The message of the Kingdom of God has brought about a long searched for peace and expectancy of that which is yet to come in our lives. Know that your labor of love has not been in vain, for there are others like us who are longing to come into the understanding which has been so graciously been revealed to us." — *South Carolina*

"I have finished translating *The Amazing Aims and Claims of Jesus* into Swedish. Yes, perhaps God is more thrilled than we are about our talents. I never knew (or even imagined) that I could (and even would) translate an entire book! But again I am sure God knew, as He knows all. He also knew (of course) that not only would it benefit other people who speak or understand Swedish, but it would also give me (as the translator of every word in the book) the great pleasure to get more insight and knowledge. I hope many will read it and draw closer to our wonderful Father and His Son, the Messiah Jesus! I have done my best. 'God's Kingdom first,' and everything will be fine in the end, and in the future (Ps. 126:5, Rom. 8:28)." — *Sweden*

"I have been studying the book *The God of Jesus in Light of Christian Dogma* by Kegan A. Chandler. Seldom did I read and study a more erudite work from the theological and historical points of view than Mr. Chandler's excellent book. If I had not already been a believer in the **YHWH echad** fact and truth, I would certainly have been convinced by the overwhelming evidence presented in this book. I also shared many sections of it with my wife who wholeheartedly agrees. We would give the book FIVE STARS! Just like with the book *The Amazing Aims and Claims of Jesus* which (last year) I was privileged to translate into German, my

desire and growing urge is to translate this book. I think that with the help of God it can be done. Such a textbook would be highly needed in this part of the world!" — *Switzerland*

"I have enjoyed and have learned so much from watching your teaching videos on YouTube. I have purchased both of your books on the Trinity several years ago, and have slowly grown into the unitarian model of Christianity — starting even before I knew it existed and is known as 'Biblical unitarianism.' I would like to tell you a little bit about my story: About 20 years ago, I requested my local library to borrow a copy of the Michael Servetus book *The Errors of the Trinity* (1531). Why was I drawn to this book? Because within the inner circles of the United Pentecostal Church, it was their claim that Michael Servetus believed in the Oneness doctrine like them. They take great pride in believing it and speaking of it behind closed doors, but I seriously doubt if most have ever read it. I wanted to find out if that was true or not. I discovered it was not true. I found most of his book very difficult to read, and I couldn't read it all, but Michael Servetus opened my eyes to some truths about the humanity of Jesus Christ and his anointing which I had never seen before. And that information was just within the first few pages of his book. It was undeniable. I struggled to wrap my mind around this idea that Jesus was a man, and not man and God in two natures. What was I doing agreeing with a heretic? I can't help it that I agree with the Scriptures which prove this man to be correct. I don't know about all the other issues he brought up in his book, but this one issue I know was certainly and definitely right!" — *email*

"I have been following your videos and as always, it is a great thing to find a like-minded believer of the same faith as I have learned myself in the Spirit. This lifetime would not be enough even if every minute lived was spent on the Scriptures. I thank you for continuing your attentive service to our Great God and our Savior. Since the last time we emailed, the fervor feeling towards spreading the Gospel of the Kingdom has only amplified in me, and I believe I need to do my part, however small or great it may be." — *India*

Europe Missions Trip

Tracy Zhykhovich and her daughter of **Kingdom of God Missions** will be traveling to visit believers in Europe from June 4th through mid-July. The trip will include Denmark, Sweden, England, Switzerland, Hungary, and more. At least three baptisms are planned, and they will participate in a weekend fellowship of scattered brethren in England. Please see <https://kogmissions.com/europe-2019> for more details and contact information.