

Focus on the Kingdom

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The Kingdom as Distinguished from the Church

by Wiley Jones
from *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, 1879

Here is another section from Wiley Jones' excellent collection of sermons, *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (1879).

Previously we have reprinted sections of his book in the following issues of *Focus on the Kingdom*: (all back issues are at focusonthe kingdom.org)

"What Must I Do to Be Saved" October, 2020

"12 Reasons Why the Millennium Must Begin after Jesus Comes Back" March, 2024

"How to Study the Bible" May, 2024

"Christian Duties and Graces to Be Observed and Cultivated After Baptism" October, 2024

"Your Kingdom come; Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." —Matthew 6:10

In previous discourses I have shown that the Kingdom of which the Gospel speaks will in the future be established on earth. But many hold the notion that the church itself is the Kingdom. And this although they are expressed by two words which differ as much in Greek as in English. Church is *ekklesia*; kingdom is *basileia*. *Ekklesia* occurs about 115 times in the New Testament but is never translated "kingdom." *Basileia* occurs about 160 times but is never translated "church." If they were the same ought they not, like other synonyms, to interchange and make sense? But see how strange and unscriptural it would sound to substitute "church" for "kingdom" in the following sentences:

"A **kingdom** that will crush all these **kingdoms**" (Dan. 2:44).

"The saints will receive the **kingdom** and take possession of the **kingdom**" (Dan. 7:18). The saints themselves are the *church*; will the *church* take possession of the *church*?

"The time came for the saints to take possession of the **kingdom**" (Dan. 7:22).

"Inherit the **kingdom** prepared for you" (Matt. 25:34).

"There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in

the **kingdom** of God, but you yourselves thrown out" (Luke 13:28).

"Sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the **kingdom**" (Mat. 8:11).

"He will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his **kingdom**" (2 Tim. 4:1).

"Your **kingdom** come" (Matt. 6:10). Could the church pray for *itself* to come?

But among those who suppose the Kingdom to be already in the world there is a wide difference of opinion as to the time when it was set up; some say on the first Pentecost after the Savior ascended, others a great while before that. The latter class base their opinions, it seems, on a misunderstanding of such expressions as the following, used before Pentecost:

"The kingdom of God is being preached and everyone is forcing his way into it" or "is urgently invited to enter it" (Luke 16:16).

"You shut the kingdom of heaven in front of people; for you do not enter it yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in" (Matt. 23:13).

"The kingdom of God has come upon you" (Luke 11:20).

Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, Virginia taught that the Kingdom was not set up until the day of Pentecost. I will therefore let him answer the preceding objections. He says, "...The *principles* of any reign or revolution are always promulgated, debated and canvassed before a new order of things is set up...In society, as in nature, we have first the blade, next the stem, and then the ripe corn in the ear. We call it wheat, or we call it corn, when we have only the *promise* in the blade. By such a figure of speech the Kingdom of God was spoken of, while as yet only its *principles* were being promulgated...Jesus often unfolded its character and design in various similitudes, and everyone who understood and received these *principles* were said to 'force their way into the kingdom'...and wherever these principles were promulgated 'the Kingdom of Heaven' was said to have 'come near' to those people, or to 'have overtaken them'; and those who opposed these principles, and interposed their authority to prevent others from receiving them, were said to 'shut the Kingdom of Heaven in front of people'; and thus all those Scriptures must of necessity be understood from the contexts in which they stand...In *anticipation*, those who believed the gospel

of the kingdom received the Kingdom of God, just as in anticipation he said, 'I have finished the work which You gave me to do' (John 17:4) before he began to suffer; and as he said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for the remission of the sins of many' (Luke 22:20; Matt. 26:28) before it was shed...Those who received these principles by *anticipation* were said to enter the kingdom."¹

But that writer did not carry this principle of interpretation to its proper length, for the *same* kind of expressions used *after* Pentecost, such as "has transferred us unto the kingdom" (Col. 1:13) or "your companion in the kingdom" (Rev. 1:9) must be understood in the *same* way, that is, as said by a figure of speech called prolepsis or *anticipation*; for I shall presently bring an overwhelming array of expressions which prove the actual setting up of the Kingdom and the actual entrance to it to be *future*.

For convenience let us collect these testimonies into, first, those which prove that the Kingdom was not set up *before* Pentecost; and second, those which prove it was not set up *at* Pentecost, and will not be set up before the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

I. Testimonies which prove that the Kingdom was not set up *before* Pentecost.

1. John the Baptist said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," or "the reign of heaven *approaches*" (Campbell's edition, 1832, Matt. 3:2). "At hand" does not mean "has come," but refers to *future* things, as "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. 4:7), which, being said 1,800 years ago, proves that the expression can have a very wide scope. See also Deuteronomy 32:35: "the impending judgment is rushing upon them." Thus towards the close of this dispensation, on the very verge of the second advent, the kingdom is spoken of not as having come long before, but as being still "at hand": "When you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is **at hand**" (Luke 21:31). That cry, "the kingdom of God is at hand" extends over the whole present dispensation until it is fulfilled in the actual coming of the kingdom. The Savior and his Apostles likewise declared the Kingdom to be "at hand" (Matt. 4:17; 10:7; Mark 1:15). What Matthew calls "the kingdom of heaven," the other evangelists, in reciting the same parables and incidents, call "the kingdom of God."

2. "He who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than John" (Luke 7:28). Hence John was not in the Kingdom, though certainly "in the church," as was Moses in former times (Acts 7:38). This proves that one can be in the church without being in the Kingdom. If

the church were the Kingdom, you would have to believe that the *least* in the church was greater than John, of whom the Savior said there was not a greater prophet "among those who are born of women." After sprinkling a few drops of water on the face of an infant, the Episcopal service says, "This child is now regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's church." But can you suppose the Savior to mean that the least and worst little infant sprinkled in this way is greater than John? I dare not so torture his words, but understand him to say that the least immortal and glorified saint in the Kingdom will be greater than John then was, in his mortal state; and at once the beauty and fitness of his words are seen. And those Jews who were too carnal and groveling in their ideas of that Kingdom which the Messiah was foretelling, were, by this declaration of his, made to receive a more exalted conception of the nature and glory of it. "Is greater than John" means "will be greater." It is the prospective present, as "They are equal to the angels" (Luke 20:36), i.e. they *will be* equal to them after the future resurrection.

3. "Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom" (Matt. 5:20). This was said to those who had become his disciples, and it proves that neither had *they* yet entered the kingdom.

4. "Seek the kingdom of God" (Luke 12:31-32). This too was said to the disciples — the "little flock" — but why tell them to seek it if they had already found it and were in it?

5. Pray "Your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10). But why pray for it to come, if it had already come? Tertullian, who wrote near the end of the second century, shows that this prayer was used by Christians in his time, and that he did not regard the Kingdom as having already come; for he says, in commenting on this petition, "Our wish is that our reign be hastened, not our servitude protracted. Even if it had not been prescribed in the prayer that we should ask for the *advent of the kingdom*, we should, unbidden, have sent forth that cry, hastening toward the realization of our *hope*."²

6. Joseph was already "a disciple of Jesus," and yet he was "**waiting for** the kingdom" (John 19:38; Luke 23:51). The participle is in the present tense, *prosdchomenos*, "waiting"; and in Titus 2:13 is translated "looking for." It would be quibbling to say that he was still waiting for it because he was an *unworthy* church member; for this is at once refuted by the strong certificate of Scripture that he was "a good and just man" (Luke 23:50). Can you suppose that the Kingdom was in the hearts of the wicked Pharisees but

¹ *Christian System*, 1839, pp. 171-174.

² Tertullian, *On Prayer*, ch. v.

not in the heart of Joseph! If the Kingdom only means grace ruling in the heart, that Kingdom must have been on earth ever since Abel; for I do not see how any man from his time until now could be righteous unless grace ruled in his heart...

About Luke 17:21 Dean Alford says, “The misunderstanding which rendered these words ‘within you,’ meaning this in a spiritual sense, ‘in your hearts,’ should have been prevented by reflecting that they are addressed to the *Pharisees*, in whose hearts it certainly *was not*.”

7. As the Savior journeyed towards Jerusalem, near the close of his ministry, “they thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear” (Luke 19:11). This proves that it had not yet appeared.

8. “I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes” (Luke 22:18). Thus, “when eating the last supper he distinctly said that the reign of God was then *future*.”³

Having now brought sufficient proof that the Kingdom was not set up before the Savior’s death, let me next invite you to consider:

II. Testimonies proving that it was not set up at Pentecost, and will not be set up before the second coming of Christ.

1. When Peter explained what took place at Pentecost, he did *not* say, “This is that which was spoken of by the prophet Daniel, *in the days of these kings the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom*”; but “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: I will pour out my Spirit” (Acts 2:16-17). If the long-predicted kingdom had been set up on that occasion it would certainly have been the *great* event of the day; and it seems to me incredible that the Apostles would have neglected to call attention to the fact, especially when I see how prompt they usually were to call attention to less important events that fulfilled some part of prophecy.

2. “We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). This was said about twelve years *after* Pentecost, and proves that the disciples and even Paul himself, though certainly in the church, had *not yet* entered the *Kingdom*, but were still waiting for it like the disciples before Pentecost. The tribulation and Kingdom are not simultaneous; we must pass “*through*” the former before we enter the latter. The same is taught in 2 Timothy 2:12; Romans 8:17-18. Paul does not say, “*We have entered* the kingdom,”

as many people tell those who have joined the church. Can you hesitate as to which language is right, Paul’s or theirs? It is admitted that he uses a cutting irony when (26 years after Pentecost) he says to some, “Now you are full, now you are rich, you are reigning as kings without us. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong.” But, dropping the ironical style, he says, “I wish that you were reigning, so we would also be reigning with you” (1 Cor. 4:8-10).

3. “An entrance **will be**” — not *has been* — “richly provided to you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:1, 11). This was said about 33 years *after* Pentecost to the church itself, which had “obtained the same precious faith” as the Apostles.

4. “That you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are now suffering” (2 Thess. 1:5). About 21 years after Pentecost, he does not say, “You *have been* counted worthy of the kingdom *in which* you are suffering.” When will they be counted worthy? “When the Son of man will **come** in his glory” and invite them to “inherit the kingdom” (Matt. 25:31, 34).

5. “Walk worthy of God, who is calling you into His kingdom and glory” (1 Thess. 2:12). This is the correct translation, as given by the American Bible Union. Dean Alford also gives the same rendering, and he remarks, “*Kalountos*, ‘calling,’ present, because the action is extended on to the future by the following words. God calls us to His kingdom, the kingdom of our Lord Jesus, which he shall establish on earth at his coming.”

This exhortation of Paul was addressed “to the church...which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 1:1). And it shows that God, by spiritual culture and training, is calling the church of the present into the Kingdom of the future. This text alone is enough to prove that the church is not the Kingdom. It is parallel to 1 Peter 1:11.

“The Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 13:17). This appears to be a metonymy in which the effect or end to be obtained is put for the cause that leads to it; as, “I have set before you life and death” (Deut. 30:19), i.e. the things which cause or *lead to* life and death. “There is death in the pot” (2 Kings 4:40), i.e. a cause leading to death. “To be carnally minded is death” (Rom. 8:6), i.e. leads to death, as its punishment.⁴ And so righteousness, peace and joy *lead to* an inheritance in the Kingdom at last; but a contention with brethren about food and drinks

³ Alexander Campbell, *Christian System*, 1839, p. 171.

⁴ “Instances of metonymy of the effect for the cause, are, in the sacred writings, innumerable” (A. Campbell, in *Christianity Restored*, 1839, p. 39).

will not do this, for “food does not commend us to God,” and “the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9; 8:8).

6. “The kingdom which He has **promised** [it does not say *has given*] to those who love Him” (James 2:5). James speaks in the *same* way of the crown of life, which is also future: “the crown of life which the Lord has **promised** to those who love Him” (James 1:12).

7. “**Then** will the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Matt. 13:43). This does not occur before the great day of “harvest,” as the context plainly shows.

8. He “will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Tim. 4:1). So we are not to expect his *Kingdom* until his *appearing*; these events God has joined together, and let not any human creed pull them apart.

9. The very *same* last-day signs indicate the nearness of the *Kingdom* and of our *redemption*; hence the Kingdom and the redemption will come simultaneously, for the Lord has joined them together.

10. “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 15:50).⁵ That one sentence is enough to prove that Christians are *not yet* in the Kingdom. Is it not a very *carnal* view to say that mortal and erring creatures in the present “flesh and blood” nature do enter and commence their reign in that Kingdom as soon as they join the church? A modern writer who taught that the church is the Kingdom has even said that “The kingdom which Jesus received from his Father, however heavenly, sublime, and glorious it may be regarded, is only temporal. It had a beginning, and it will have an end.”⁶ I suppose this was perfectly consistent with the popular modern notion of a present church-kingdom, but it is contrary to Scripture, which plainly declares that “of his kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:32-33) and calls it “the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:11).

11. The whole structure of the parable of the talents proves that the Kingdom which the nobleman went to receive does not appear until he returns *to reign* (Luke 19:12-27).⁷

⁵ “Those to whom it is granted to enter into the kingdom of God, will have to put on the power of an incorruptible and immortal life; for without this, before they are able to obtain it, they cannot enter the kingdom of God” (Tertullian (about A.D. 200), *De Res.* ch. 50).

⁶ A. Campbell, *Christian System*, 1839, p. 153.

⁷ “He went to receive solemn investiture of that kingdom which He had purchased with His blood, and which hereafter He shall return and claim as His own sitting on the throne of His father David” (Trench, Dean of Westminster). “That which they thought would *immediately appear*, Christ tells them will not appear till this same Jesus, who is taken

12. It is not when they enter the church, but when they rise from the grave that the saints begin their reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4).

13. The time for them to possess the Kingdom does not arrive until...Christ comes “in the glory of his Father” (Dan. 7:22; Matt. 16:27).

14. Certainly when the Kingdom is set up, Christ, the King, will take his seat on his glorious throne, but he does not take that seat until his *coming*; hence the Kingdom is not set up till then (Matt. 25:31).

15. It would be unseemly for the nobles of a kingdom to obtain their coronets and subordinate thrones before the king obtains his; hence the Savior does not say *before* but “**when** the Son of man will sit on the throne of his glory, you [Apostles] also will sit on twelve thrones” (Matt. 19:28). And when will that be? Let his own words be our answer: “When the Son of man will **come** in his glory and all the holy angels with him, **then** he will sit on the throne of his glory” (Matt. 25:31).

16. When the Kingdom is set up the descending stone is to smite the image in its *divided* state, i.e. on its feet and toes of iron and clay (Dan. 2:34, 44). But at the *first* advent the image had not arrived at its divided state...Nor does the stone go softly up to the image and gradually absorb it as by the mild and gentle wooings of the Gospel, but suddenly hits it with a *crushing* blow (Matt. 21:44), and “**then**” the fragments are swept away so that no trace of them is found (Dan. 2:35).⁸ Do you think that we would find human governments in the world today, if that smiting had occurred eighteen hundred years ago? ✧

A huge falsehood has been carelessly promoted by some so-called experts. At least one website holds that *adoni*, my lord, or “sir,” is “sometimes used to describe God.” This is simply false! The easy fact is that *adoni* never means God but always a non-Deity, sometimes angelic superior. Tell your friends about Psalm 110:1 where the second lord is *not* God, *Adonai*, but the human lord Messiah, *adoni*. — Editor

into heaven, will in like manner come again; see Acts 1:11” (Henry).

⁸ The celebrated commentary of Jamieson, Faussett and Brown says on Daniel 2, “The kingdom of God coming from heaven originally, ends in heaven being established on earth...The falling of the stone on the image must mean destroying judgment on the fourth Gentile power, not gradual evangelization of it by grace; and the destroying judgment cannot be dealt by Christians, for they are taught to submit to the powers that be, so that it must be dealt by Christ himself at his coming again.”

Keeping the Truth and Enduring to the End

by Anthony Buzzard

from the October online Kingdom of God Missions Conference (kogmissions.com)

May I start with what is for me a very encouraging statement from the late Dr. John Meagher (a Roman Catholic professor of Bible with three PhD's). He wrote to me:

"I think it is relevant for me to say that I am a professor of theology and of New Testament at a Roman Catholic institution...and that I think that your publication *Focus on the Kingdom* is theologically important, however much it may be neglected by the sector that I thus represent. You address radically important issues in Christian theology which are entirely appropriate because in fact the theological exercise is only adolescent and in need of further guidance. I think you are doing a good work that I hope will eventually have an impact on my own church tradition. There is much work to be done before we can, collectively, think clearly, and I am glad that your magazine's honesty about these things is so unflinching. What you are doing strikes me as a very important contribution. And I thank you for it." (2002)

So with that encouragement I **begin** by discussing "Salvation" (= How to live forever and never die!). There is no subject which comes near to matching that topic in importance. How do we **ensure** that all of us are contributing to blessing ourselves and the public with that supremely important information? **First**, by being certain that we ourselves have the right foundation in truth, and **secondly** by enduring in the face of all opposition, to the end. Not that Christianity is easy! "You will be hated by all people," Jesus said, "but the one who endures to the end will be saved" (Matt. 10:22).

Often in theology and Bible it is what people *don't* say which proves to be dangerous and misleading! The following verses are shockingly absent from the mass of preaching and so-called Bible teaching currently being offered to the public:

Luke 9:11: "Jesus welcomed them and began speaking about the Kingdom of God."

Acts 28:23-31: "From morning to evening Paul explained the Kingdom of God to them. Paul welcomed them [Jews and Gentiles] and proclaimed to them the Gospel about the Kingdom of God." The same Gospel of the Kingdom was for Jews and for Gentiles!

Matthew 13:19: "When anyone hears the word about the Kingdom..." This is the parable of the sower, which rabbi Jesus said is the key to all the parables. In

Mark 4:13 Jesus said, "If you don't understand that parable of the sower, you will not understand any of the parables."

Isaiah 59:21: "As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the LORD: "My spirit which is upon you, and **My words which I have put in your mouth** will not depart from your mouth nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the LORD, "from now and forever."

Mark 8:38: "For whoever is ashamed of **me and my words** in this adulterous and sinful society, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

John 15:7: "If you abide in me, and **my words abide in you**, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."

John 6:63: "**The words** which I speak to you are spirit and life."

Isaiah 53:11: "**By his knowledge** My righteous one will make many right."

Hebrews 5:9: "Salvation is given to those **who obey Jesus**."

Luke 6:47: Jesus said, "Why do you keep calling me 'lord, lord' but you will not do what I say? I will show you what everyone is like who comes to me, hears my words and acts on them..."

Luke 4:43: "I have to preach the Gospel about the Kingdom of God to the other cities also; that is the reason why I was commissioned."

Let me ask this question: How is it possible to be **deceived** by preaching which **claims** to be based on Scripture? If someone claims to be teaching the Bible, this will appear to be convincing and authentic. So what must **you** do personally to ensure that you are not being taken in — that you are not being lied to? The answer is simple, but requires constant effort and study. You must listen carefully to **the words** which are being offered to you as genuine! The only way to be sure is that you compare the **words** you hear with the actual **words and teachings** and **sayings** of Jesus, and the Bible.

Just to hear the words "Jesus" or "Paul" or "a Bible writer" is not enough. You must insist on hearing **the very words and teachings** of the Bible. Only when you hear the precise words or **teachings of Jesus** can you be sure you are hearing the real, authentic Jesus, and not a counterfeit version of him!

Of course it is essential always to understand first that the Bible is a Jewish book and that as Jesus said "salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). Satan is a master counterfeiter, and he is determined to lie to you, and he labors at it! He is the great false teacher, and his methods are subtle. Satan works hard at getting you fooled. Satan according to **Luke 8:12** is fully aware of

the supreme importance of believing the **Gospel about the Kingdom**, and so Satan does his utmost to keep people **away from that Gospel of the Kingdom!**

The Bible often makes this point about not being taken in by counterfeit words. Listen to what Jesus said in Mark 8:38: “For whoever is ashamed of me **and my words** in this adulterous and sinful generation [society], the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” Notice the “me *and my words*,” not just “me.” Jesus, that is to say, the only real Jesus, and not a fake, counterfeit Jesus, is identifiable by his words, not just the name “Jesus.” No wonder then that Paul in 1 Timothy 6:3 and John in 2 John 7-9 said this: “If anyone comes to you and does not bring the **teaching of Jesus**,” watch out! The warning should be heeded by us all.

The key to good understanding is the fact that the one true Bible Gospel is called “**this Gospel of the Kingdom**” (Matt. 24:14) — the one we should all know about! But do we?

In our time you very frequently hear it said, massively online: “Won’t you accept Jesus?” or “Receive Jesus, and be forgiven.” “Won’t you come to him?” “Won’t you ask him into your heart?” It sounds impressive! But you are not hearing the actual **words of Jesus!**

So, then, how did the only real, genuine Jesus offer salvation? Go to Mark 1:1, 14, 15: It reads, “The **beginning [a very good place to start!] of the Gospel**”...Jesus then said, “Repent and believe the Gospel about the Kingdom.” These are Jesus’ commands! Two commands: repent and believe. They must be obeyed for salvation (Heb. 5:9).

But are these the words you hear offered by many preachers of so-called “salvation”? If not, be warned and be alarmed. The chances of your being deceived and ultimately disappointed are huge! Jesus warned: “Many will come in my name, saying ‘I am the Messiah’ and deceive many.” This was the **first** thing Jesus said in the famous Olivet Discourse about end-time events (Matt. 24:4; Mark 13:5; Luke 21:8).

How can that be? The trick is played when you are not offered the **actual words of Jesus or of Scripture!** The name “Jesus” sounds fine, but without his words the way is wide open for you to be taken in or tricked and deceived. You could be being taken in by a partial, washed-out Gospel.

Popular religion, often even backed by famous names (for example, C.S. Lewis who astonishingly said “the Gospel is **not** in the Gospels”) invites you to “give your heart to Jesus” and thus “**go to heaven** when you die,” but the words of the Bible offer no such thing.

In Luke 8 Jesus deals decisively with the “once saved, always saved” issue. In Luke 8:13, Jesus says:

“Some people believe for a while, and then fall away.” The popular offer of “get saved now” says nothing about the need **to endure to the end in order to be saved**. No wonder that in Luke 8:8 Jesus **customarily and regularly, habitually raised his voice** to give maximum emphasis to the parable of the sower. But are *you* being told that “salvation is now closer to us than when we first believed” (Rom. 13:11)? You also do not often hear what Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 2:10: “Only those who have a **passion** for truth will be saved.”

Popular counterfeit Christianities also say nothing biblical about the ultimate **destiny and purpose** of being saved, which is to **rule the whole world with Jesus when he comes back to the earth** (1 Cor 6:2, Moffatt). The idea stems from Jeremiah 27:5. “God made the whole world and wants to give you the world”! Jesus echoed that stupendous truth when he said, comfortingly, “Don’t be afraid, little flock: the Father is delighted to give you the Kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

Jesus’ Words

Only **the precise words of Jesus** and the prophets will guarantee against being deceived. I want to make sure that this point is clear to you all. Salvation is a question of what you are being saved **for**, not just what you are saved **from**. We know that we need to be saved **from** our sins, but saved **for** what? We know that Jesus died in our place, but what is the ultimate point of all this? Does “going shopping” mean that you just go and stand outside the shops? Does “going to college” mean that you just sign up, but never graduate?

What if you’re being offered a half Gospel? Will that save you? Did Jesus “come to do three days’ work” (“to die, be buried and to rise”), as the Billy Graham organization system maintains? Are you expecting to “polish rainbows and prepare heavenly dishes in heaven”?

Or what if you **are rightly** being told that God is one Person, not three. But then, what if you are being told that it *does not matter* if you believe in a so-called pre-existing Jesus? (i.e. not a genuinely human Jesus). The Bible says that a non-fully human Jesus is a false Jesus! Actually antichrist (2 John 7-9).

So also in **Nehemiah 8:12** where it is the words which are the decisive element in salvation. We read there: “They understood **the words** which had been made known to them.”

Compare **Acts 8:12**, the key, foundation text of the Abrahamic faith. It was only when the audience “believed Philip as he **preached the Gospel about the Kingdom of God** and the things concerning Jesus the Messiah,” that they were ready to be baptized. And of course, water baptism is an indispensable requirement

for all would-be believers. A crippling theory called Dispensationalism is widespread and fearfully deceptive and misleading. Beware, if you have been misinformed by the so-called “Way International.”

Then also see **Luke 8:12**, which tells us that the crucial basis of the Gospel of salvation is the Gospel of the Kingdom. Satan knows how dangerous and threatening that **Gospel of the coming Kingdom** is, to Satan’s whole fake counter campaign. We must therefore work within that Gospel-Kingdom plan and oppose the Devil at every point — exposing the dangerous falsity of amillennialism and also other false versions of the Great Commission (Matt. 28).

Kingdom and Millennium

The millennium of the Bible is not remotely to do with individual salvation **now**. It is all about “those who had been **beheaded**” and thus being literally **resurrected** in the future, and ruling the world with Jesus in the future Kingdom on earth for a thousand years. Amillennialism (the idea that the millennium is on now!) is a threat to the glorious future Kingdom of God to arrive when Jesus returns! Yes, Amillennialism is a threat to the Gospel of the Kingdom. It is a threat to the future literal **resurrection** of the dead to immortality. Amillennialism implies that the Devil has already been bound! The Bible says in fact that the Devil is currently the god of this present evil age, and that the Devil is currently deceiving the whole world (1 John 5:19, Rev. 12:9, 1 Pet. 5:8). Amillennialism is theological fake news. Tell your Christadelphian friends that “Devil” in Revelation 12:9 and 20:2, *without the definite article*, is a proper name for a person, certainly not human nature!

The Great Commission in Matthew 28 says that we, as followers of Jesus, must preach and proclaim **everything** that Jesus taught, the whole Gospel, and not just part of it. Jesus is not the true Jesus, unless we reattach Jesus **to all his words**! “Teach them **everything** I taught you,” Jesus said. “He who is ashamed of me **and my words**, I will be ashamed of him when I come back.” This is fair warning because Jesus evidently thought that his version of the one true faith, his offer of salvation, would be refused, and in fact rejected by scores of unsuspecting people, and those people Jesus said would be the majority, who **sincerely** thought they were saved when they were not. Jesus offered this amazing warning: “When the Son of man comes back, will he even find the faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). Jesus was above all a realist and a speaker of truth!

Luke 1:32 announces that the “Lord God will give Jesus the throne and Kingdom of his father David,” **“the coming Kingdom of God”** of Mark 11:10! The Kingdom is the heart of the New Covenant. Jesus

“covenanted” (as the Greek says in Luke 22:28) the Kingdom to us, so that we should sit on thrones governing the restored tribes in the land (Matt. 19:28). The Kingdom of God is thus all about the New Covenant.

The Kingdom is a word which must be defined from Daniel (especially 2:44 and 7:18, 22, 27). The Old Testament Scripture defines the Kingdom as a real empire which will replace the present kingdoms and empires of the present evil government system, of which the Devil is the god. If the Kingdom is not defined accurately no one can “repent and believe the Gospel of the Kingdom,” and they are left disobeying Jesus in Mark 1:14-15.

Jesus invited all to train now for rulership positions in that future Kingdom (“Training for reigning and schooling for ruling”). “Don’t you know,” said Paul, “that the saints are going to manage the world? And if the world is going to be under your jurisdiction...” (1 Cor. 6:2). All of this is found in Daniel 7, illustrating the great Truth that the New Covenant Scriptures are commentary on the Old Covenant Scriptures. In church today the audience is given a later, misleading, **Greek philosophically** colored commentary on the Bible.

Some unitarian friends are becoming uncertain about what happens when we die. They are being drawn into so called “dualism,” the idea that part of you goes on living after death, which is linked to the first fake news of the Devil in Genesis.

Believing the Gospel about the Kingdom is not remotely connected with going to heaven when you die. And no one in the Bible “passes away” at death.

I hope you will be telling everyone that “salvation” is in three tenses of the verb: We **were saved** (Rom. 8:24) when we first believed the Gospel of the Kingdom, obeying Jesus in Mark 1:15. We are currently **being saved** (1 Cor. 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor. 2:15), and most importantly we **will be saved** when Jesus comes back (Rom. 13:11; Matt. 10:22; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 1:5). ✧

Comment

- “I use your Bible translation (**onegodtranslation.com**) and your commentary a lot and I refer to your articles and books on your website. I can’t tell you how much of a blessing you have been to me over the past 5 years or so. I was completely lost spiritually after I left the Watchtower and after losing my friends and family over that horrible mind control cult religion. I actually stopped being a Christian for almost 30 years. I was referred to your YouTube channel by a friend and your videos restored my faith. So you have done so much for me that I wanted to thank you personally for your fine work.” — *California*