

Focus on the Kingdom

Vol. 28 No. 11

Anthony Buzzard, editor

August, 2026

The Millennial Reign of Christ: Reward and Restoration What Will Life Be Like?

by Tracy Z, Minnesota
from the 2026 Online Theological Conference

Consider the grand and glorious day when Jesus will return and establish God's Kingdom on this earth, over all the nations! This is a real hope, not some wish or fanciful fairy tale. Unfortunately, since not many are talking or thinking about this promised hope, it may seem distant or unreal. Tragically, many are now also stripping the first 1,000 years of God's Kingdom right off the future timeline (and saying it is now!). This has thrown many into confusion.

I hope to bring this biblical hope into better focus today and help us see the reality of what Jesus spent his life talking about. It is about actually living life in that new and coming age. It is about Jesus' and the believer's reward.

So what will life be like under the new leadership? What will we be doing? What will life look like on planet Earth during the coming millennium, the first 1,000 years of God's Kingdom?

The teachings of Jesus and his last words to the church in the Book of Revelation clearly teach a literal 1,000-year reign of Christ before the Father comes to earth. They do not suggest or support a "Kingdom now, but not yet." In fact, Revelation adds more concrete details about the end-time events and the coming Kingdom that were not revealed before Jesus went to heaven.

The first 1,000 years of God's eternal Kingdom will be an exciting time for believers and the mortals who are allowed to live during that time! Believers will be a Kingdom of priests, and our job will be similar to the command given to Adam and Eve: to manage the earth and to spread Eden throughout the whole world as we make our God and His will known.

"You have appointed them as a Kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10; see Ex. 19:6).

Israel was called to be priests to the other nations because they knew God and were His chosen people. Now, followers of Christ are given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19). We are called to focus

on this ministry of reconciliation and to live like priests, bringing people back to the Father as we teach the nations to obey everything Jesus commanded, both now and during the first thousand years.

However, we must remember that we do not reign until God's King reigns on the throne in His Kingdom, which will happen only when Jesus returns. Right now, we are called to be heralds of God's coming Kingdom, and we should be living in obedience to Christ so that we can be future residents and rulers when it comes. Today, we may be jailed or persecuted for heralding this Kingdom, just as Jesus and the Apostles were, but when Jesus returns, we will be put in positions of authority and elevated and honored (Dan. 7:22, 27).

Only when the Prince of Peace comes will he rule from Jerusalem. Only then will his dominion be vast, and will he bring immeasurable prosperity. Only then will he rule "on David's throne and over David's kingdom, establishing it and strengthening it by promoting justice and fairness, from that time forward and forevermore" (Isa. 9:7).

Only after the end of the last 3 ½ years of this present evil age, the time of the Great Tribulation, will God's Kingdom reign begin. From that time into eternity, God's Kingdom will govern the whole earth.

Imagine, even with the miracles people saw and experienced at the hands of Jesus and his disciples, they still never thought that the Kingdom was already there. If they had, they would not have asked, before *and* after his resurrection, if he was going to establish the Kingdom "now." After listening to Jesus' teachings, his followers obviously did not believe the miracles and signs *were* the Kingdom! Those things gave his message credibility and also pointed to what was to come — resurrection, renewed bodies, and authority over the nations, the angels, and the demons.

"God confirmed their witness with signs, wonders, and various miracles" (Heb. 2:4).

The first believers were waiting for Jesus to establish God's Kingdom over the nations and conquer the world's political leaders. Their hope was for the restoration of Israel, which would be the anticipated Kingdom: **"Lord, is this the time when you are going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"** (Acts 1:6).

What a glorious day that will be when Jesus marches into Jerusalem after throwing the False Prophet and the Antichrist into the Lake of Fire, after destroying all the armies of the world that gathered to

fight him, and after putting Satan into prison for the next 1000 years! Satan will be locked up in the abyss, unable to continue his current work of deception.

During those first thousand years of transition, Jesus will put all his enemies under his feet until he completes the work given him by the Father (1 Cor. 15).

Unfortunately, many today are trying to remove the first 1,000 years of God's eternal Kingdom, by saying it is now! We cannot and should not disregard the command and commission given to Jesus by our Father, to take control of all the nations, as well as the powers in heaven, and put them under his feet. This has not happened and is not happening now! Jesus has been given the authority to do it, but he has not yet begun.

There is an order to how God's Kingdom rule will be firmly established on the earth. We were not commissioned or given authority today to control anyone or any nation; we were only commissioned to preach and to teach everything that Jesus taught and commanded (Matt. 28:19-20). We are to make disciples of the faith of Jesus.

The millennial Kingdom is an integral part of the prophecy that Jesus passed on to the church. It is not just about eschatology. It is our hope and reward, as well as Jesus'. He even ended his book of prophecy by warning people about what would happen if they discarded any of its prophecies. This includes the millennial Kingdom, the first one thousand years of God's Kingdom, when Jesus is putting everything under his feet.

This is a stark warning by Jesus that we must carefully consider. He obviously expected us to take his words of prophecy from the Father literally. Cutting any prophecy out of the book of Revelation could get one cut off from the Kingdom and immortality.

"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy contained in this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are described in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19).

This is a very serious warning! Are we taking it seriously today? Please be warned and take note if you hear teachers doing this treacherous thing — removing and changing the millennial reign and rule.

God spoke to us through His prophets, and now through His Son (Heb. 1:1-2). Again, the *prophecies* in Revelation are Jesus' last words to the church, which God gave to him to pass on to believers. We must be good Bereans and examine the Scriptures

carefully every day to see whether what we hear is true (Acts 17:11), including the book of Revelation.

We must listen to what God gave to His Son to reveal to the church in this last *prophecy*. The book of Revelation contains prophecy, not just metaphors, and it is not all a book of symbolism.

The Book of Revelation confirms the prophecies of old and reveals more details about what is to come. We must understand these "clear words" as Jesus says (Rev. 1:1), so that we can endure if we are alive then and not be deceived.

Our hope and reward need to be so real to us that they motivate us to live the crucified life today in obedience, because we do not want to lose our place in God's coming Kingdom. We do not want to forfeit the cities he has for us to rule. Now is the time to be talking about this great hope in our preaching, teaching, and in our churches and families!

Time Periods in Daniel and Revelation

The timeframes given in Daniel and Revelation not only confirm the time allotted for these specific events at the end of this evil age, but they also support the fact that the 1,000 years is a fixed, literal span of time. The other prophecies associated with the beginning of the millennium specify a literal number of days, months, and years; they support one another and underscore the need to take these prophesied periods of time literally.

Revelation confirms the determined duration of the Beast's (the Antichrist's) rule as prophesied by Daniel. In Daniel the angel names "a time, times, and half a time" (3 ½ years; Dan. 7:25; 12:7) and then in 12:11 he gives Daniel a specific number of days to avoid confusion: 1,290 days (or 1,335 days in v. 12), which is about 3 1/2 years. That is the time from the setting up of the Abomination of Desolation until the end of this present evil age and the beginning of God's Kingdom reign.

In Revelation, we have more information about what is going on during these very last days, and perhaps an explanation of the differing number of days given to Daniel. We see that the extra 45 days may possibly take into account the Bowls of Wrath and Jesus' parable about the sheep and the goats.

- In Revelation 12:6, we see that the remnant of Israel will be cared for by God for **1,260 days** (3 ½ years), during which time Satan will be making war with Christians. This is the time known as the Great Tribulation. At the Abomination, many Jews will flee into the wilderness and will be protected by God, most likely by other countries that take them in.

- The two witnesses in Revelation 11:3 are given authority to prophesy for **1,260 days** and to inflict

plagues that torment those who live on the earth (Rev. 11:1-13).

- The Gentiles are allowed to trample the city for **42 months** (Rev. 11:2).
- In Revelation 13:5, the Beast (Antichrist) is given authority to rule for **42 months**, and the saints are told to endure his persecution, meaning that they will be present during this time.

All these prophecies give us a clear **3 1/2-year** timeline, the various things that will be happening then, and the “players” involved, all of which should be taken literally.

There is no reason why we should not take the 1,000 years literally as well. In Revelation 20, we see multiple events related to the first 1,000 years of God’s Kingdom, thereby confirming the literal number of days for this transition period. If God wanted to say that it was just a long time, He would have said so (see Rev. 20:4 where Satan will be released for “a short time”).

Revelation 20:2-3 says that Satan — the dragon, the ancient serpent, and the Devil — is put in prison for 1,000 years. He will not allowed to deceive the nations for that time, and after 1000 years, he will be released from prison for a short time. Revelation 20:11 confirms that “when the thousand years are finished,” Satan will be released from his prison.

Revelation 20:4 and 20:6 say that those who are beheaded because of their refusal to worship the Beast and because they did not take the mark will be resurrected and will reign with Christ for 1000 years. We know that this is not just speaking of those who will be in the Great Tribulation because there is only one resurrection of the righteous. As Hebrews 11 says, all the saints of all time will receive their reward together. 1 Corinthians 15:23 also says that when Jesus comes, those who belong to him will be resurrected, and 1 Thessalonians 4 confirms this, stating that sleeping Christians will be resurrected at Jesus’ return (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

If we do not believe the 1,000 years are literal, and we throw out all the other prophecies that give important, specific timeframes and events, we are left in the dark and will set ourselves and our hearers up for deception. There will be an even slimmer chance that we, or they, will endure to the end.

Revelation 20 clearly shows the timing of these events. Six times it mentions “one thousand years” in connection with these events and provides precise details about what will be happening then. There is no reason to doubt that Jesus really meant 1,000 years. This period of time was not meant to be “spiritualized” or understood symbolically. The language is clear,

straightforward, and chronological, and should be understood that way.

After the Beast and the False Prophet are thrown into the Lake of Fire at the battle called Armageddon, and Satan is put in prison for one thousand years, the millennial Messianic Kingdom begins. The mortals who are still alive at this time are separated, and those allowed into Messiah’s Kingdom now have a chance to know and obey God and His Son. Blessed are these people! Blessed is the one who waits and attains to the 1,335 days (Dan. 12:12).

Daniel 7 also ties these events together. The beast (Antichrist) will be killed and his body destroyed and thrown into the flaming fire. The other “beasts” or world leaders will be stripped of their power, and Jesus will be the supreme King over all. This is the first one thousand years of God’s eternal Kingdom, during which the saints will reign with Christ over the mortal nations.

The millennial Messianic Kingdom is not a separate Kingdom. In fact, Old Testament prophecy speaks more about the millennial reign of the Messiah, the first one thousand years, than the ongoing eternal Kingdom after the White Throne Judgment. It is not until the final prophecies in the Book of Revelation that we see how all the prophetic puzzle pieces align, revealing the whole picture. (Would anyone throw the Book of Daniel or any other prophet out just because some of the prophecies are only spoken of a few times there? Most would not, although unfortunately, the same people who disregard Revelation disregard Daniel as well.)

The millennial reign is the first thousand years of forever. It is Jesus’ reward and time to be King over the nations. Resurrected, immortal believers will govern alongside Jesus. As priests (Rev. 5:10), they will teach the nations to know and obey Jesus and, ultimately, the Father. As Jesus said in Matthew 25:14-30 in the parable about the talents, “Well done, good and faithful servant! I will put you in charge of many things.” And in Luke 19:11-27, in the parable about the ten minas, Jesus will say when he comes, “Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very small matter, you will have authority over five or ten cities.”

This is what the resurrected, immortal believers will be doing. They will be given authority over cities and over mortal humans. If we cannot faithfully proclaim His Kingdom message today, how could we possibly be trusted to govern cities and rule the nations when His Kingdom finally comes?

As Jesus at his resurrection, so will those be who are in the first resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20-23). We will

be crowned with glory and honor and have things put under our control (Heb. 2:5-10).

Even Jesus, who was also initially made lower than the angels for a little while, but is now crowned with glory and honor after his resurrection, who went and announced his victory to the “spirits in prison,” does not have control over the nations or all things at this time (Heb. 2:8). By the end of the 1,000 years and the White Throne Judgment, when all humans and angels will have been judged, all powers in heaven and on earth, other than God, of course, will be subjected to Jesus.

This wonderful reward during Christ’s millennial reign is why we want to give people the opportunity to enter the Kingdom at the first resurrection! It guarantees immortality and the reward of ruling, which is why we also should want to be in the first resurrection.

What does this authority over cities and mortal humans look like? We will be priests, as Israel was supposed to be, for the nations. We will be a kingdom of priests (Rev. 5:10), to teach the people and draw them to YHVH, as in the past (Deut. 4:6-8, 28:9-10). Paul asks, “Don’t you know that the saints are going to govern [manage] the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2).

Since many pastors do not preach on this, many believers cannot even begin to envision these glorious 1,000 years. Because they lack understanding, they do not even think about it. When it is brought up, they even wonder who the saints will be reigning over!

The saints will not be reigning over each other. That would be absurd. Instead, they will govern the mortal people and nations who survived the Great Tribulation and God’s wrath — those who were not destroyed and were not part of the first resurrection.

Consider the reality again: immortal believers will be reigning with Christ over cities and nations of mortal people! There will finally be a righteous government on the earth, and we can be a part of it!

If you are like me and not involved in politics today, or question the integrity of those leading your country, you might say, “Why would I want to be part of politics or any government? I do not want to govern.” But remember: this will be a different government with different leadership and a very different agenda.

Think about what role you might have in the new government. Consider how you might rule and what position you might have. Of course, we do not know for sure today, but Jesus will tell us when he comes and equip us to do it. We should pay attention because he is equipping us today in some way as well. What

we do today will determine what authority and what roles we are given then.

Another reality to consider is that after the 3 1/2 years of the Great Tribulation and God’s wrath, there will be a much-needed cleanup of the earth as God’s Kingdom begins. This is very real. Imagine what the cities and the earth will look like after years of famine, natural disasters, and war! We can see a glimpse of that in today’s news.

Just because the King will be on the throne does not mean that Paradise will be instantly restored. It says that it will take seven months to clean up all the bones from the Battle of Armageddon (Ezek. 39:12); thankfully, God provides the birds to help get rid of the flesh before it rots and causes disease (Rev. 19:21). Some of us may be overseeing the nations as they do this work.

We, the resurrected and changed saints who will be immortal, will govern with Jesus and help the remaining mortals know the one true God and His Messiah. We will be teaching them everything Jesus taught us. So, if today we are training for this reign, we should best learn what he taught and practice living it and teaching it now.

After the thousand years, Satan will be released and allowed to go out to deceive mankind one last time. It will be his final attempt to destroy God’s Messiah and God’s plan for Paradise on Earth. Unfortunately, many people will follow him, believing they can fight and destroy Jesus and the saints. They will quickly be defeated and realize it was a lost cause.

Imagine!

With all that we have discussed, imagine with me for a moment the beginning of, and the ongoing millennial reign of Christ.

- Imagine now, being woken up by an angel or hearing a loud trumpet and looking up into the heavens as an angel comes to get you, your body changed in an instant, and all the pains you feel today, gone! Imagine going up to meet Jesus in the air, then being transported to the Middle East, where he and you will descend with all the faithful brothers and sisters.

- Imagine seeing the remnant of Israel as they weep and finally accept YHVH’s Messiah, Jesus.

- Imagine a white horse and the one riding it, who is called “Faithful” and “True,” and who, with justice, judges and goes to war.

- Imagine the crown on his head and his clothing dipped in blood as he wages war on his enemies. Imagine “payback time” arriving, and the one coming from Bozra stomping the grapes and the “juice,” the blood, splashing on his clothes (Isa. 63).

- Imagine marching with Jesus toward Jerusalem without getting tired or blisters, freeing captives as we go.

- Imagine his armies dressed in white, clean, fine linen, following him on white horses.

- Imagine the sharp sword coming from his mouth, with which he strikes the nations.

- Imagine him ruling them with an iron rod, and imagine him stomping the winepress of the furious wrath of God, the All-Powerful, as his Kingdom begins.

- Imagine following the “King of kings and Lord of lords” to the last battle of this evil age, known as “Armageddon” (Rev. 19:11-16).

- Imagine seeing the hordes of military personnel, machines, and jets descending upon Jerusalem. Imagine seeing the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembling to do battle with the one riding the horse and with his army.

- Imagine the Antichrist being seized, and along with him the false prophet who had performed the signs on his behalf — signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.

- Imagine them both being thrown alive into the lake of fire burning with sulfur, and others being killed by the sword that extended from the mouth of the one riding the horse.

- Imagine the birds swooping in, hear the loud sounds they make, and see them gorge themselves on the flesh of the fallen soldiers (Rev. 19:19-21).

- Imagine Jesus raising his scepter to the Father in victory as he banishes Satan to prison for the next 1000 years!

- Imagine Jesus’ enemies being brought before him and slaughtered (Luke 19:27).

- Imagine the great banquet of choice meat and wine (Isa. 25:6), and toasting Jesus as he drinks the cup of the vine once again, this time with all his faithful followers (Matt. 26:29).

- Imagine seeing lame brothers and sisters now leaping and praising God. Imagine the once-blind now seeing the glory of our Lord and us for the first time (Isa. 35:5-8)!

- Imagine which cities or towns Jesus will give you to teach and govern.

- Imagine walking up to Jerusalem and into the grand temple (Ezek. 40-48).

- Imagine no more abortions and no more babies living only a few days!

- Imagine the mortals living healthy lives to well over 100 years (Isa. 65:20)!

- Imagine not working in vain (Isa. 65:23). Imagine peace, even with wild animals, the wolf and the lamb lying down together and the lion and the ox eating grass (Isa. 65:25).

- Imagine all the military weapons being made into agricultural tools (Isa. 2:4; Joel 3:12; Mic. 4:3).

- Imagine finally having peace on earth and good will to all men (Luke 2:14).

- Imagine no more war!

- Imagine your new immortal body and living and ruling with Christ for the first 1,000 years of eternity.

We don’t have to imagine all this! We can know that this will all come to pass and that we will be right in the middle of it all with Jesus! The question is: do you really believe it, and how badly do you want to be there? Can anything today that you may have to sacrifice even compare closely to all this that is to come?

To embrace this reality today, to pant for it as the deer does for water, to long for it as the saints of old did, we must hear and know what is about to come.

If we are to be like the faithful men and women of Hebrews 11, who were tortured, who did not accept release because they wanted to obtain resurrection to a better life, we must be prepared spiritually, mentally, and emotionally today. They were willing to suffer and experience mocking and floggings, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, sawn in two, and murdered with the sword. They were destitute, afflicted, and ill-treated (Heb. 11:35-37), yet they endured.

Only people with a true hope and trust and a love of the truth would even consider enduring any one of these things, and even more so, expect their families to do the same.

As the brothers were reminded years ago,

“Remember the former days when you endured a harsh conflict of suffering after you were enlightened. At times, you were publicly exposed to abuse and afflictions, and at other times, you came to share with others who were treated in that way. For in fact, you shared the sufferings of those in prison, and you accepted the confiscation of your belongings with joy, because you knew that you certainly had a better and lasting possession. So do not throw away your confidence, because it has great reward. For you need endurance in order to do God’s will and so receive what is promised. For just a little longer and he who is coming will arrive and not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith, and if he shrinks back, I take no pleasure in him. But we are not among those who shrink back and thus perish, but are among those who have faith and preserve their souls” (Heb. 10:32-39).

Summary

As you can see, we cannot remove the first 1,000 years from God's plan and prophecy, and say that it is happening now! It would disrupt much more in Scripture than just Revelation 20. In addition, it would deprive Jesus and the saints of their reward of ruling the nations, as well as the remnant of Israel of the right to prosper and live peacefully in the Land.

Mankind will have one thousand years to renovate and restore the earth that they destroyed, and in the end, God will totally renew the heavens and the earth. Paradise, in all its glory, will be restored and fill the earth. Both the first thousand years and eternity are God's Kingdom because both are under His rule and reign, even if He reigns by His agent, His Messiah, during the first one thousand years. That was His plan from the beginning.

Jeremiah 33:13-18 prophesies that the Messiah will rule from Jerusalem, thereby confirming the Davidic Covenant. Jesus will fulfill this prophecy when he returns. This is the answer to the disciples' questions in Matthew 24 and Acts 1 as to when the Kingdom will be restored to Israel.

God ordained mankind to rule over the earth (Gen. 1:28), and He is giving His plan a second chance. This time, because of Jesus, we will succeed!

What was promised to Israel in Deuteronomy 26:19 has been transferred to the church, which now consists of both Jews and Gentiles, all those who will be in the first resurrection: "Then He will elevate you above all the nations He has made, and you will receive praise, fame, and honor. You will be a people holy to the Lord your God, as He has said."

1 Peter 1:7 reminds us of that and that the trials we endure today will "show the proven character of our faith, which is much more valuable than gold...and will bring praise and glory and honor to you when Jesus Christ is revealed."

As Moses spoke to the Israelites and Jesus to his followers, so we, too, will speak to the nations, both today and during the Millennium:

"Speak to the whole congregation of the Israelites and tell them, 'You must be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy' (Lev. 19:2).

"So then, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

As Jesus said, "If you love me, and if you love God, you will obey us" (John 14:15, 33; 1 John 5:2). True belief leads to love and obedience, which in turn lead to a rich reward when Jesus returns. You can exchange this short life, maybe 100 years if you are lucky, for 1,000 years, and into forever. When Jesus returns, we will see that giving up our lives today and

choosing to sacrifice and live for him during these years was the best choice we ever made!

The inauguration of the Messiah as King over all the earth and over all nations will be the beginning of the life that most people are seeking today. Go tell them about it before it is too late! God does not go back on His promises! Be a light to the nations (Isa. 42:6; 49:6; 51:4; 60:3). Help reconcile people to God. Give them the opportunity to live and reign with Christ during the millennium, the first one thousand years of God's Kingdom. ✧

A Gospel of Current Politics

by Carlos Xavier

Turning Point USA, a nonprofit organization founded in 2012 by Charlie Kirk, is now known around the world, especially after the horrible public assassination of its founder in 2025. According to its website, the organization's mission is "to identify, educate, train, and organize students to promote the principles of fiscal responsibility, free markets, and limited government."

Although its stated mission centers on politics and government rather than Christianity per se, Turning Point USA also has a dedicated arm called TPUSA Faith, launched around 2021. Their website says it "exists to serve the American church by resourcing Christians across the nation to boldly stand for truth, liberty, and the Kingdom. We believe in the Gospel, and an outworking of the Gospel is for the Church to be salt and light in every aspect of life, including the public square."

By this, they primarily mean going to schools and university campuses across the U.S.A. to convert young people to their cause and establish what they call "chapters." But the Gospel — which is about the coming Kingdom of God, not only that Jesus died for our sins — has nothing to do with the political-military-industrial complex of this present evil age. A Christianity that recruits our youth into that system is not discipleship. It is corrupting them with "another gospel."

Acts 8:12 says that when people believed Philip "as he was heralding the Gospel about the Kingdom of God and the things concerning Jesus the Messiah, they were being baptized, both men and women." This heralding, or preaching, was not a call to join the politics that govern systems such as the military, which turns human beings into instruments of killing, or other law enforcement and judicial systems, such as police and courts of law.

Jesus commanded his followers to love their enemies (Matt. 5:44). He rebuked the use of the sword (Matt. 26:52) and made clear to a politician, Pilate, a

Roman governor, that his coming Kingdom does not have its origin in this present system; otherwise, his servants would fight (John 18:36).

The apostles of Jesus continued this same pattern. They never commanded Christians to join the military or political systems, because those systems, for the most part, stand contrary to the teachings of Jesus. Instead, the Apostles taught that “our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20). Christians are described as “foreigners and spiritual resident aliens” (1 Pet. 2:11) and “ambassadors for Messiah” (2 Cor. 5:20). Therefore, “the weapons of our warfare are not man-made weapons” (2 Cor. 10:4), but God-given ones. Instead of a literal defensive shield, Christians are given faith, “so that with it you can put out all the flaming arrows of the evil one.” And instead of a literal sword, they are given “the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word of God**” — meaning the Gospel about the coming Kingdom (Eph. 6:16–17).

This means Christians are not to be conformed to this present age, but transformed by the renewing of their minds, so that they may discern the will of God — what is good, well-pleasing, and perfect (Rom. 12:2). Christians are commanded to feed their enemies when they are hungry, give them drink when they are thirsty, and always seek to “overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:20–21). Paul then commands Christians to obey the governing authorities (Rom. 13), but never when that obedience results in disobedience to God. When the government commands what contradicts the Gospel, the apostolic answer is clear: “We ought to obey God rather than people” (Acts 5:29).

That is why followers of Jesus must “pursue the things which make for peace” (Rom. 14:19), serving “the God of peace,” a repeated New Testament title (Rom. 15:33; 16:20; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20).

So it is deeply disturbing to see Christian evangelism twisted into a recruiting tool to persuade the most innocent and impressionable among us — our youth — into professions and allegiances that plainly contradict the preaching and practice of Jesus and his Apostles. When used this way, one is no longer preaching the Gospel of Jesus, but religious propaganda dressed up as Christianity. This is the kind of conduct Scripture rebukes when professing believers act worse than unbelievers (1 Tim. 5:8; cp. 1 Cor. 5:1).

The late and noted John MacArthur wrote a book called *Why Government Can't Save You*. Although he was a Trinitarian Evangelical pastor, he was nonetheless unique in his views on this topic. He once rightly preached that:

“Jesus did not come to seek social change. He did not come to alter the tax code or address economic issues as his primary mission. Were these things unknown to him? Absolutely not. He was fully aware of every abuse, every injustice, and every inequity. He knew there was a great need for social reform, tax reform, and care for the poor and the sick — many of whom were wrongly viewed, even by some Jews, as being under God’s punishment. He knew that widows were mistreated, orphans were neglected, and the vulnerable were often treated with indifference and abuse. Yet Jesus did not come to launch a social revolution. His appeal was always to the hearts and souls of men, not merely to their political freedoms or social rights. He did not lead a civil-rights movement. He did not organize a crusade to abolish slavery. He preached the Gospel.”

I would add once again — not merely the Gospel that Jesus died for our sins, but that the Kingdom is coming. MacArthur added that Jesus “was not interested in creating a new social order through the powers of this age.”

The Great Commission is not a recruitment campaign for Caesar. It is not Christianized politics — ruling and judging now. It is not a God-given right to bear arms for the protection of yourself, your neighbor, or to serve in the military fighting wars on behalf of *demonized* nations (Ps. 96:5). The Christian call is to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded (Matt. 28:19-20). That begins with the Kingdom as Gospel, a salvation “which had its beginning when spoken through the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard him” (Heb. 2:3).

In John 7:24, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees, telling them to stop judging according to outward appearances and instead to judge or discern according to what is right. We need to be far more discerning when other Christians attempt to indoctrinate our youth into the political-military-industrial complex of this present evil age. That is not the Gospel of Jesus. It is simply “another Gospel.” ✧

Comments

• “I really benefit from the article Anthony wrote on the Assyrian in prophecy (July). Prophecy has always seemed too murky and complex for me to comprehend. However, it is biblical and it is available even to such as me *through explication*! So much of my understanding of Bible prophecy must leave behind natural fears which impair comprehension. Many thanks to Anthony and the other writers for all the articles presented for our confirmation of trust in humanity’s real hope.” — *Virginia*