



# **Peninsula City Church**

## **The Kingdom of God**

### **Refocused: Consistency**

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# The Background

## Refocused

**Q.** Was the Kingdom of God established when Jesus came, or is there more consistency to it?

There is some discussion regarding the idea that Jesus Christ established the Kingdom of God when He came to earth.

“Scholarly opinion is divided on the question as to whether Jesus taught that the Kingdom had actually arrived during his lifetime.”<sup>1</sup>

However, is this the biblical understanding on the matter? What does the Bible have to say on the Kingdom of God and our participation in it as rulers? It would appear that it is a central theme of the Bible from Genesis through to the Revelation. There is more consistency to the God the King and His Kingdom than merely at the coming of Jesus Christ. It would also impact how we view the idea that we have been made in His image as co-rulers with Him.

Then we read in Genesis chapter three that the creation was ruptured, and our focus blurred due to the lie of the false one who wanted to be king (a created being). The result was that this blurred focus regarding God as the King of kings and His own in co-regency went sideways. Humanity rebelled and joined the one who instigated the rebellion. We can also see that God had chosen or called out a people for Himself, Abraham, and then Israel, who were meant to be the light to the world about true life in the Kingdom of God. However, Israel grew introverted and narrow-minded about their Kingdom of God responsibilities and citizenship and shunned the world around them.

But then we read how the Church of Jesus Christ was also called out to be His Kingdom of God light and citizens. It came to the forefront within the pages of the New Testament. Jesus began refocussing Israel as to the ever-present and the eternal Kingdom of God since they had lost that focus. So, did the Church come into existence at the expense of Israel (as is taught by some)? It is essential to realise that the Kingdom of God set the proper context for the Church to come to the front to be God’s light in the world. It did not come into existence at the expense of Israel. The Church is part of His Kingdom, although the kingdom is not the Church.

Some things that will be helpful to think about from today’s discussion are:

- What is God’s perspective on His Kingdom as He called us to co-rule with Him?
- How can we explain what happened in the coup and the mess that the world is in today?
- How do we live from the perspective that Jesus came to refocus us on the ever-present Kingdom of God?

In dealing with questions like these, it is essential to know what we believe, why we believe it and how we respond.

### 1. From God’s Perspective

**Q.** Where do we start to refocus on the Kingdom of God?

Well, an obvious place would be to start in the beginning. But first, a few things need to be pointed out. For example, the phrase the Kingdom of God is not used in the Old Testament. However, the phrase,

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<sup>1</sup> “Kingdom of God: Christianity.” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kingdom-of-God> (9<sup>th</sup> August 2021).

“Kingdom of the Lord” does appear in 2 Chronicles 13:8; see also the talk of God’s kingdom in Daniel [for example, Dan 6:26].”<sup>2</sup>

“So now you intend to resist the Kingdom of the LORD through the sons of David, being a great multitude and having with you the golden calves which Jeroboam made for gods for you” (2 Chron 13:8 NASB).

Notice how that king Abijah of Judah was accused of resisting the Kingdom of the Lord. It was some 900 years before Jesus came to earth. So, the Kingdom of God is still active, and God is still on the throne.

“I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; For He is the living God and enduring forever, And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, And His dominion will be forever” (Dan 6:26 NASB).

God’s Kingdom is declared to be eternal and cannot be destroyed. So was it destroyed at the rebellion recorded in Genesis chapter three? In addition to this, we need to ask, “Did Jesus really establish the Kingdom of God again when He came to earth?”

Well, having made these opening remarks, we can now go back to the start to try to refocus on the matter at hand. Firstly, due to the rupture and rebellion of the creation, we need to realise that we only have a limited understanding of God’s Kingdom. However, God’s perspective of His Kingdom and His reign recorded in the pages of the Bible is that He is ever-present, and His reign is never-ending. So, it cannot be destroyed. We have probably heard about the Kingdom of God in any number of ways. But here, we need to understand how the everlasting Kingdom of God influences our lives and how we live.

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His reign is that He is ever-present, and His reign is never-ending.

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When endeavouring to understand any kingdom, it needs to be realised that there are two necessary implications. One is that it requires a king (or queen) to rule, reign, and have dominion or authority over that territory. Then, in addition to this, there needs to be a realm under the ruler’s dominion, i.e., over the domain and people. So, when it relates to God, it is God’s rule, reign, dominion, or authority as the King and His rule over the territory and people. He never lost it or relinquished it at the fall or rupture of creation. For example,

<sup>6</sup> “Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises. <sup>7</sup> For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with skilful psalms” (Ps 47:6-7 NASB).

“The LORD shall reign forever and ever” (Ex 15:18 NASB).

<sup>3</sup> “Let them praise Your great and awesome name; Holy is He. <sup>4</sup> And the strength of the King loves justice; You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob” (Ps 99:3-4 NASB)

However, we first see the idea of the Kingdom of God first revealed in the book of Genesis (Gen 1:26-31). However, it is woven through to the end of the Bible in the book of the Revelation: Rev 4:2-5:7; 7:9-12; 11:15; 12:10-11; 17:14; 19:16 etc.

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<sup>2</sup> “The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament: Kingship and Creation.” <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/kingdom-god-old-testament-kingship-and-creation/> (3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021).

So, in the beginning, we read that God was in control of everything, so He created everything in its entirety Gen 1:1-25. But then we read that God created humanity in His image, and He was the One who gave them the right to be in charge of His creation as representatives of God the King. That is, He brought humanity into partnership with Him as co-regents,

<sup>26</sup> “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man (Heb. *adam*, i.e., humanity) in Our image, after Our likeness. And let them have dominion (*reign*) over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’

<sup>27</sup> So God created man (Heb. *adam*, i.e., humanity) in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male (*zakar*) and female (*neqebah*) He created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue (govern) it, and have dominion (*rule* or *reign*) over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ <sup>29</sup> And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’ And it was so. <sup>31</sup> And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day” (Gen 1:26-31 ESV).

If we read these passages carefully, we will notice that humanity was to have dominion (be in charge) over creation. So, from the beginning, God was the One who was in control as the King of kings. It has never changed; He has always been and still is the eternal King.

We were given dominion but was never meant to reign apart from God. He gave the proper instruction in the beginning, which should have carried us forward from that point as rulers under His rule. He was the controlling King of His Kingdom and, therefore, could manage all divine knowledge. It can be seen when He restricted humanity from a specific knowledge that is only for the King of kings in Gen 2:16-17,

<sup>16</sup> “And the LORD God commanded the humanity, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:16-17 ESV)

It is the knowledge that only God could understand and know how to handle. Humanity was never meant to have access to this knowledge. We do not mention then and have not been able to do so since, as we have seen during history. So why put the tree there in the first place? Well, firstly, it was God’s choice to do so, and He is the only One who knows what He is doing. Secondly, it was a constant reminder of His rule as the supreme King who has all things in control. It meant even things that humanity is unable to understand or handle, like this knowledge. Finally, it was evidence of His trust in humanity as His co-rulers to obey Him and leave this kind of knowledge alone.

However, we are told in the story of one who was more cunning than all the beasts in the garden. It came along and twisted the Word of God with an agenda playing that the first humans did not know about. He was pursuing one thing, that is to be the one who was king of all creation. He instigated humanities questioning God’s Word (Gen 3:1-5), something they had never done before. He proposed doing something that only God could do in their minds, i.e., know good and evil.

## 2. What happened in the coup?

**Q.** What happened that the false king was able to carry out his planned, sly, and illegal coup?

The being known as satan (Heb. meaning accuser, which he did to God accused Him of not being good and forthcoming with His gifts) wanted desperately to rule over God's creation and humanity. He organised the scheme to undermine what God had said and got the first humans drawn into questioning the goodness and trustworthiness of God. Once they began down this slippery path, they had their God-given and shared authority and power usurped by satan. It has remained that way ever since. So, we have tried to dominate each other since the rupture of the created order of things through the first humans. It was never meant to be this way. From the start, we were in charge as co-rulers with God and with each other sharing the God-given authority and power. After that, we have been abused by a tyrant, and we have effectively learnt his ways, which we use on each other. It has been said that,

“...we made a terrible mess out of it, and we were subjected more and more to the power of Satan.”<sup>3</sup>

In Gen 3:1-5, we read about the lie, which the enemy used to deliberately challenge humanities right to have dominion under God's rule. The lie was designed to refocus humanity's view of things, questioning God the goodness and trustworthiness of God the King. They were not aware of what was happening, so they fell for the trick, and their perspective changed at that moment. It was the lie that questioned God's Word and God only right to have His knowledge of good and evil. The enemy's underlying motive was to reign as the self-styled oppressor of the earth. However, it needs to be remembered that this authority was never given to him. Instead, he planned to steal it through deception all along as he deceived the first humans, and he did so.

<sup>1</sup> “Now the serpent was craftier than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say, ‘You (*plural*) shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’ <sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God said, “You (*plural*) shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you (*plural*) touch it, lest you die.”’ <sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You (*plural*) will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that when you (*plural*) eat of it, your (*plural*) eyes will be opened, and you (*plural*) will be like God, knowing good and evil!” (Gen 3:1-5 ESV).

The first humans fell for the cunning ones lie as recorded in Gen 3:6-8. They did not understand that God had a purpose for saying what He did regarding this tree. In fact, he wanted to keep humanity from death, a death that they should never have experienced. Instead, He wanted humanity to be co-rulers of creation and enjoy ruling in partnership with Him. That is why He said,

<sup>16</sup> “And the LORD God commanded the man (*adam*), saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:16-17 ESV).

We know that result was that they believed the lie and ate what was not theirs to eat. We read in the remainder of Genesis chapter three the consequences of accepting this lie. They had their right to have dominion under God's reign by the enemy fraudulently snatched away. So, in His grace, he had no other option than to expel humanity from the garden. It was to keep them from a further fate,

<sup>22</sup> “Then the Lord God said, ‘Behold, the humanity has become like one of Us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest they reach out their hand and also take of the tree of life and eat, and live”

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<sup>3</sup> “Has Satan been given dominion over the earth until Jesus returns? If so, why was he given this authority?” <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/qas/has-satan-been-given-dominion-over-earth-until-jes/> (4<sup>th</sup> March 2020).

forever<sup>23</sup>, therefore, the Lord God sent them out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which they were taken.<sup>24</sup> He drove out humanity, and at the east of the garden of Eden, He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life” (Gen 3:22-24 ESV).

So, now the relationship between God and the first humans was damaged. In effect, when they disobeyed Him, the way they had been relating died to the way it had been. However, God was still willing to show His grace by separating humanity from the tree of life (Gen 3:22-24). If they had stayed in the garden in this corrupt state, they may have eaten from it and lived in this state forever. He then had to set a guard on the tree. Later it is recorded in chapter five of Genesis that Adam died, we do not know when Eve died, though,

<sup>1</sup> “This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.<sup>2</sup> Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man (Heb. *adam*) when they were created.<sup>3</sup> When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.<sup>4</sup> The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters.<sup>5</sup> Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died” (Gen 5:1-5 ESV).

The first humans believed the lie of satan, and humanity has continued to believe it to this day. Jesus brought up the matter of this lie when talking with the religious leaders. He had been trying to refocus them, Israel, and humanity concerning the truth that the Kingdom of God has always been present. One way that He was doing this was by going back to the beginning in Genesis. He brought up the lie and showed the deceiver and phony king for who he is, the liar. In referring to the enemy and the incident in the garden, Jesus pointed out,

“You are of your father, the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks the lie (*τὸ ψεῦδος*, *the lie*,<sup>4</sup> i.e., *the falsehood*, or *deceit*, is a singular and not plural, i.e., *lies*), he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (Jn 8:44 ESV).

It is crucial to notice that it has been translated as “the lie” singular and not plural ‘lies’ as in most English translations. It is written in Greek with the definite article “the” so, it is “the lie”, not ‘a lie’ or ‘lies.’ If that is the case, we may ask, what is the lie that satan used that Jesus was talking about? Jesus was talking about one lie, and one lie only in the beginning. It was the one in Genesis chapter three.

It is the lie that he used in the Garden of Eden from Genesis 3 and has been declaring to humanity ever since. That is, “You will not surely die... you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So, we have continued to believe satan and have desired the tree's fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. Since receiving a glimpse of this knowledge, which we were never meant to have, it has been this way. Things have been on a downward spiral to this day. The knowledge was only meant for God because humanity would not be able to manage this Kingdom knowledge. Satan’s motive to deceive humanity was to swindle us out of the rights to have dominion over creation given to them by God (Gen 1:26-30). His reason was that he wanted humanity to unknowingly hand over the God-given right to the power and authority given to them as recorded in Chapter one of Genesis.

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<sup>4</sup> It has been rightly translated as, “Whenever he is speaking the lie...” Wuest, Kenneth S. *The New Testament: An Expanded Translation*. (Iowa Falls, Iowa: Riverside Books and Bible House, 1984), 234.

### 3. Jesus came to refocus us on the ever-present Kingdom

**Q.** So, what is in a phrase?

The word kingdom is used over 160 times within the New Testament. Now that is a lot so, one would think that we could know everything that there is to know about it. Well, no, that is not the case because we have a limited understanding of the Kingdom. However, Jesus was sent to (amongst other things) refocus Israel and those who would follow Him concerning the consistency of the ever-present Kingdom of God. The nation of Israel had lost this focus as their kings had let them down. They never went to the nations to proclaim the Kingdom of God to them so that the nations might know their God. In addition to this, they had been continually ruled over by other kings from other nations and became introspective.

Jesus had come to refocus Israel as to their lost Kingdom citizenship. He had also come to draw non-Jews into the Kingdom of God as His citizens and children. The language that Jesus used for the Kingdom was that of entry into what has always been present. Likewise, they need to realise they were living in a false kingdom under a false king. So, they were to exit from the old false (earthly) kingdom into the sphere or realm of His Kingdom. There are three phrases that the Gospel writers recorded that Jesus used to deal with this matter. They are,

- The Kingdom of God
- The Kingdom of Heaven
- The Kingdom of Christ

So, do they mean the same thing, or are they different?

The Kingdom of God: generally has to do with the King, who is God, more than His realm. However, Matthew did use the phrases the Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven, interchangeably,

<sup>23</sup> “And Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the Kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup> Again, I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God” (Matt 19:23-24 ESV).

The phrase the Kingdom of God only appears four times in Matthew; he favoured the Kingdom of Heaven. He presumably did this in connection with his Jewish audience to unpack what Jesus’ perspective of the Kingdom was like. It has been said on this matter,

“The in-breaking of the kingdom of God that has come in the Lord Jesus is radically different from the way you and I naturally think and act and different from the way we structure human society. It is unexpected, shocking, and topsy-turvy to human sensibilities. The unexpected and radical nature of the kingdom is why Jesus spends so much time trying to explain what this kingdom from heaven is like (and why people so seldom understand).”<sup>5</sup>

God the King that He was writing about that is Jesus Christ (Matt 1:1). The other synoptic Gospels (Mark 15 times, Luke over 30 times, and John used it twice) preferred the phrase the Kingdom of God. For example,

“and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel’” (Mk 1:15 ESV).

<sup>20</sup> “Being asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, He answered them, ‘The Kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, <sup>21</sup> nor will they say, “Look,

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<sup>5</sup> Pennington, Jonathan T. *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009), 47-48

here it is!” or “There!” for behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst (or *inside*) of you” (Lk 17:20-21 ESV).

“Jesus answered him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God” (Jn 3:3 ESV).

The Kingdom of Heaven: Generally, it has to do with the realm or sphere of the King who is God, more than the King Himself. It was Matthew’s preferred phrase when speaking about the Kingdom, which he used some 32 times.

“I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt 16:19 NASB).

“and said, ‘Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of heaven” (Matt 18:3 NASB).

Jesus also used phrases of proximity and movement within the Kingdom of heaven, Matt 3:2; 4:17: “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” Matt 5:3,10: “theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” and Matt 5:19,20: “enter the kingdom of heaven.”

As already pointed out, Mark and Luke preferred the use of the Kingdom of God but did use the Kingdom of heaven.

There are some seemingly interchangeable terms used in the New Testament. For example, these are the Kingdom of the Father (Matt 26:29, Mk 14:25), the Son (Lk 22:30), and the Son of Man (Matt 13:41), Jesus etc. Jesus offered the dynamic Kingdom of Heaven to Israel, but the Jews refused it, while the Gentiles entered without preconceived expectations (cf. Rom 9-11).

The Kingdom of Christ/Son/Lord: This brings out Christ’s general idea of inheritance and shares with His own. So, the focus is more on the completed work of the cross and what comes after it.

“For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (i.e., *an idolater*), has no inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God” (Eph 5:5 ESV).

“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the Kingdom of His beloved Son” (Col 1:13 ESV).

“For in this way, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Pet 1:11 ESV).

It is important to notice that the writers of the gospels never tried to define the Kingdom of God. They highlighted the fact that Jesus had come to refocus people back on the Kingdom of God.

The reason was that humanity had lost its way and its Kingdom focus. They were still seeking a false kingdom set up by the enemy, i.e., religion. It is a kingdom where we can rule and be our own king/queen living according to our own rules. However, we have been unable to grasp that Jesus was putting things back into the correct order as part of God’s rightful Kingdom. Satan twisted humanities focus not to see his rule as the unlawful and deceitful overlord ruling the earth with deceit and an iron fist. Jesus came as the true King of kings to bring the correct order and refocus humanity again on how things were meant to be. He never came to fight satan, as some has claimed. Satan was a pseudo ruler and would not be a match for Jesus even if there was a fight. Remember that Jesus is the creator, and satan is a created being who fell from grace. He relentlessly falsifies the story regarding God and himself, and humanity continues to swallow the lie. It has been said that,

“Once you lose the kingdom theme, which is central to the gospels, everything else becomes reinterpreted in ways that radically distort, that substitute a subtly different “gospel” message for the one Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are eager to convey.”<sup>6</sup>

Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy to encourage him to continue to be faithful to the work that he has been called to do. As part of this letter, Paul wrote some songs to declare that God is the eternal King. Two of these bring out this proclamation about the King,

“To the King of the ages (eternal), immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Tim 1:17 ESV).

<sup>15</sup> “which He will display at the proper time, He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, <sup>16</sup> who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To Him be honour and eternal dominion. Amen” (1 Tim 6:15-16 ESV).

So, the King is eternal, and His Kingdom is, therefore, an everlasting dominion.

A helpful holistic model here to help understand our co-ruling with God, which Jesus was speaking about, is below. It was presented by the theologian Benjamin B. Warfield. He saw the Kingdom of God as made-up individual parts, which were divinely pulled together to function under God’s sovereign rule. It looks like this, it is,<sup>7</sup>

- God’s people
- God’s people in God’s place
- God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule
- God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule living God’s way

So, it has been said on the matter of a correct perspective of the Kingdom of God that,

“Our questions have been wrongly put because they haven’t been about the Kingdom. They haven’t been about God’s sovereign, saving rule coming on earth as in heaven. Instead, our questions have been about a ‘salvation’ that rescues people from the world instead of for the world. ‘Going to heaven’ has been the object (ever since the Middle Ages at least, in the Western church); ‘sin’ is what stops us from getting there; so, the cross must deal with sin, so that we can leave this world and go to the much better one in the sky, or in ‘eternity,’ or wherever. But this is simply untrue to the story the gospels are telling—which, again, explains why we’ve all misread these wonderful texts. Whatever the cross achieves must be articulated, if we are to take the four gospels seriously, within the context of the Kingdom-bringing victory.”<sup>8</sup>

So, hopefully, now we can see and understand that God’s Kingdom and His reign is all-encompassing, never-ending, and always present. It affects every area of our lives, whether we realise it or not. It has never ceased to exist and never will. It is despite the lie of satan and what those say who follow and promote his lie.

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<sup>6</sup> Wright, N.T. *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels*. (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2016), 183.

<sup>7</sup> “Taken down from the Lecture on Theology given by Cole, G.” (1997) Melbourne, Ridley College.

<sup>8</sup> Wright, *How God Became King*, 276.

## Some concluding thoughts

So, coming back to the opening question,

**Q.** Was the Kingdom of God established when Jesus came, or is there more consistency to it?

We need to know who we are and how to live to honour our Heavenly Father, the King of kings. It is vital to understand how to live from our Kingdom identity. As Christ-followers, we are God's children co-ruling in His ever-present Kingdom right now. It should make us more thoughtful in the way we live our life moment by moment. It does not state that we will not have our challenges and hard times, but it says that we have a basis for living as His children. In light of this truth, we need to live a life of reflective practice.

What you have read so far has been an attempt to try to answer this question. However, we need to go another set here, i.e., we need to apply what has been said within this paper. The reason is, as God's children, we need to live out a Kingdom lifestyle day to day. If we do not do this, then it is all merely an academic undertaking. So, this truth needs to be applied. On this matter, it has been said,

“Thus, the focus of the Kingdom of God is on the relationship between God and His people. Humanity is subject to God, while the rest of creation is subject to humans and exists for his benefit. The Kingdom means God is ruling over his people in the material universe. This basic understanding of the Kingdom is never changed in Scripture.”<sup>9</sup>

If that is the case, how do we live out a Kingdom lifestyle day to day? Considering this, let us ask this question from the perspective of putting it into practice. So,

- “How will we use what we have learnt today to help live a Kingdom lifestyle day to day?”
- What would it be like if we daily live out a Kingdom lifestyle before those around us?
- What would happen if we recognised that we are Kingdom representatives in our work/study/living place?
- What would we recommend to someone trying to live from a base of Kingdom values?

It has rightly been said that the Kingdom of God and live-in peace amid earthly kingdoms, we should start with an understanding that the God of the Bible is King, Emperor, and Lord.”<sup>10</sup>

So, today, we need to believe and apply the truth and reject the lie. That is, God is still reigning, and we are His people in His Kingdom. Stop and reflect; how will we use what we have learnt today to help live a Kingdom lifestyle? How would it be if we daily lived from a Kingdom perspective and lifestyle before those around us? What would happen if we recognised that we are a Kingdom representative in our communities? What would we say to someone who the lie has deceived? What is it that stands out to us today? We need to apply this; otherwise, it is merely all academic. Then we need to respond to what the Holy Spirit has been saying to us.

In response, we need to ask through this process:

- What personal application can be found in the passages?
- What is God teaching me today?
- That is, “What is God saying to me?”

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<sup>9</sup> Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan: The unfolding revelation of God in the Bible*. (Leicester, UK: IVP, 1998), 122

<sup>10</sup> Hood, Jason. “God Is King, No Matter What.” <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2016/november-web-only/god-isnt-just-our-friend-hes-also-our-king.html> (9<sup>th</sup> August 2021).

How should I respond to what is being said, or so what?

- What are you going to do about it?
- What do you need to do to respond?
- Pray and respond