

Kingdom Confusion

By

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There are various ways to in which the word "kingdom" is used in the Bible.

1. Worldly Power

2. Theocratic Kingdom

{A Jewish king ruling for God refers to as "his kingdom"} Is included with the Theocratic Kingdom

{Israel as a kingdom (10 Tribes)} Is included with the Theocratic Kingdom

3. Kingdom as a territory

4. God's Kingdom (from eternity past to eternity future)

5. Millennial Kingdom {includes the Kingdom offer by Jesus in the Gospels}

6. Satan's kingdom

The kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God as it was offered by Jesus.

Mt 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

The Kingdom was only offered to the Jews.

Mt 10:5 ¶ These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

There was a Gospel of the Kingdom

Mt 4:23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Mt 9:35 ¶ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Mt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Mr 1:14 ¶ Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Lu 8:1 ¶ And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,

The Sermon on the Mount is an example of the longer version of the Gospel of the Kingdom. That's why it is given in various forms and in different places in the Gospels.

Lu 3:1 ¶ Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, 2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; 4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. 7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? 11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. 12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? 13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. 14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. 15 ¶ And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; 16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: 17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. 18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

Signs and miracles were to authenticate the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Mt 4:23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Mt 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

Mt 10:1 ¶ And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Mt 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. 8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Lu 9:2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

Lu 10:9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

Why? John did no miracles. John 10:41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

Isa 29:18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. 19 The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Isa 35:4 Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. 5 ¶ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Isa 42:6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

Isa 61:1 ¶ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

Lu 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Mt 8:11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

Mt 8:12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mt 16:13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. First mention 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Withdrawing the Kingdom 20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. First Mention 21 ¶ From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Mt 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Mt 23:13 ¶ But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Mt 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! 39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Lu 19:41 ¶ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, 42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. 43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, 44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Matthew 24-25 is about Israel in the Tribulation. It is given because Israel had rejected the King and had refused His Kingdom.

Prof. Johan Malan, Middelburg, South Africa (Oct. 2006)

This article contains a short summary of James Sundquist's book, *Rick Warren's PEACE Plan versus Scriptural Teachings on Peace* (published in 2006 by Rock Salt Publishing; printed book version published by Bible Belt Publishing, Southwest Radio Church,

Kingdom-now theology

The blessings of the future kingdom of God that will be revealed on earth are wrongly applied to the present dispensation by Rick Warren. That accounts for his distorted ideas that Christianity has the potential, the capacity and a mandate to establish God's kingdom on earth. He completely lost sight of the fact that the King of kings has not yet come and that His enemies under the leadership of Satan have not yet been defeated and removed from their positions of power. Despite the humanly insurmountable problems caused by evil strongholds in society, he disregards biblical prophecies on the coming tribulation period under the leadership of the Antichrist and still attempts to establish God's kingdom of righteousness, peace, prosperity, and harmony on earth:

“Rick Warren's global PEACE plan is a dominionist, 'Kingdom Now' peace plan. He completely turns eschatology upside down... His PEACE plan contains no plan for destroying the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and for binding Satan... If Warren's plan succeeds, it will leave most of the population on earth intact, without the wrath of the Lamb... When the Lord returns, He will first make a global war before He inaugurates His global peace plan, better known as the millennial thousand-year reign of Christ” (p. 24-25).

After the destruction of the enemy forces by Christ during His coming (Rev. 19:19-21) Israel will also be fully restored when God's kingdom is revealed: “We are instructed in the Lord's Prayer to pray, 'Thy kingdom come.' Rick Warren promises us kingdom *now*. Jesus Christ told us that the time when He will set up His kingdom on earth is determined by the Father. Jesus Christ's global kingdom of peace cannot be set up until He restores the kingdom of Israel when He returns. Jerusalem will be the capital of the world, and Israel will be the preeminent nation on earth. It will not be determined by Rick Warren” (p. 27).

<http://www.bibleguidance.co.za/Engarticles/Peaceplan.htm>

Rick Warren says,

I believe people usually fall into one of two categories: Kingdom Builders and Wealth Builders. Both are gifted at making a business grow, making deals or sales, and making a profit. Wealth Builders continue to amass wealth for themselves no matter how much they make. Kingdom Builders change the rules of the game. They still try to make as much money as they can but they do it in order to give it away. They use the wealth to fund Gods church and its mission in the world. At Saddleback church, we have a group of CEOs and business owners who are trying to make as much as they can, so they can give as much as they can to further the kingdom of God. I encourage you to talk with your pastor and begin a Kingdom Builders group in your church.

Twila Paris song

http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/BibleStudyAndTheology/Discipleship/Warren_PurposeDrivenLife.aspx

The Church Becomes Kingdom Oriented

"The shift to a Kingdom emphasis from a church emphasis does not simply mean a new style of doing things or the addition of new programs. It entails a radical restructuring, redirecting, re-energizing of the church (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 95)."

"Emerging churches utilize the kingdom as a tool to deconstruct all aspects of life, including virtually all church practices. They understand that the kingdom gives rise to the church, not the other way around (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 96)."

"Utilizing the kingdom of God paradigm as a tool of deconstruction, emerging churches dismantled many forms of church that, although violent one time, increasingly represent a bygone era (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 96)."

"In the missional movement, the concept of the church is the church based to kingdom based. Leadership has to make the shift. Kingdom leadership is widely distributed (across all domains of culture----business, education, healthcare, and so on) and personal in its authority (the leader is the message). It is leadership for a movement, not for an institution.

Kingdom -- oriented leadership discussions conjure up results, not offices. These outcomes flow from the characteristics of Kingdom leadership that shows up in lives of Kingdom leaders. Kingdom leaders are spiritual leaders. To be around them is to be struck with their God dependence and Jesus centeredness (Cole 2009, 9 -- 10)."

"Many people feel the world cannot operate without the structure, and perhaps this is so. It seems the military needs such a chain of command to operate effectively, but the church, or the kingdom of God, does not. In the kingdom there are no people who ordered over others (Cole 2009, 88)."

Gospels Become the Primary Texts

"It will mean taking the Gospels seriously as the primary texts that define us (Hirsch 2006, 94)."

"Focusing the flow of information requires a good handle on theology and psychology, as well as sociology, because it will involve focusing information based on the church's primary narratives (the Scriptures, and particularly the Gospels), information about the core tasks of the church, and the essential data about our cultural and social context, etc (Hirsch 2006, 184)."

"The church has been overly dependent on the way to salvation in the epistles and has not paid enough attention to Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God in the Gospels. The critics say the good news is more than forgiveness from sins and a ticket to heaven; it is the appearance of the kingdom of God. Jesus invites people to enter it and thus live differently (Belcher 2009, 41)."

The Gospel of the Kingdom

"The focus of the emerging churches on the 'gospel of the kingdom' as distinct from a 'gospel of salvation' has produced a new ecclesiology. More accurately, it has signaled a return to ancient ecclesiology in which mission is integral to church (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 91)."

"The gospel of the kingdom should be countercultural, not conforming to our culture (Belcher 2009, 123)."

"The church has no separate mission of its own. God already has a mission, and the church has the opportunity of participating in God's mission (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 52)."

"Primarily to the work of the Anglican theologian NT Wright, emerging churches retrieved an ancient understanding of the gospel that dramatically transformed church practice. What is his gospel? Simply put, Jesus announced that the kingdom of God was arriving (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 53)."

"Roots in the work of NT Wright, emerging churches embrace the gospel of the kingdom has revealed in Mark 1: 15 -- 16. At the outset of the gospel narrative, the good news was not that Jesus was to die on the cross to forgive sins but that God had returned and all were invited to participate with them in this new way of life, in this redemption of the world. It is this gospel that the emerging church seeks to recover. As one leader confided privately, 'we have totally reprogrammed ourselves to recognize the good news as a *means* to an end -- that the kingdom of God is here. We try to live into that reality and hope. We don't dismiss the cross; it is still a central part. But the good news is not that he died but that the kingdom has come' (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 54)."

"Jesus was not a church planter. He created communities that embodied the Torah, that reflected the kingdom of God in their entire way of life. He asked his followers to do the same. The emerging churches seek first the kingdom. They do not seek to start churches per se but to foster communities that embodied the kingdom. Whether a community explicitly becomes a church is not the immediate goal. The priority is that the kingdom is expressed. Inherent to the kingdom activities is that the community will reflect the local contexts, and therefore forms vary greatly (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 61)."

"At times, the discussion of kingdom in emerging churches is frustratingly fuzzy because they are working out the very latest understandings of the gospel and culture from the likes of NT Wright, Leslie Newbigin, Dallas Willard, and others (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 63)."

"Believers must give up old loyalties in order to create a space for the kingdom to come. Nationalism, individualism, and consumerism are a few of the ideologies that must be reappropriated or completely abandoned in light of the coming reign of God. In addition, some of the most cherished church forms may be more of a hindrance than a help in regard to creating space for God. When such forms are removed, often what is left are simply tight-knit communities that hunger for the coming of God's reign (Gibbs and Bolger 2005, 91)."

"The goal is to establish many different Christ-centered groups of people who express their Christian spirituality within their local cultural context. So, rather than bringing people to church, they attempt to build church around the people where they are. The members of (re)verb therefore spend most of their time building relationships with people through social gatherings and time spent in local third places (Hirsch 2006, 146)."

"The emerging church is thinking deeply about how postmodernism and the gospel of the kingdom are to interact, and how Christians can create and transform culture. I appreciate what they are doing. And I find some of the thoughts extremely stimulating (Belcher 2009, 184)."

"What is still largely missing from this emergent phenomena is any sustained an explicit Pentecostal presence, with all his passion and fire (Hirsch 2006, 271)."

Unregenerate Membership

"These questions lead us to the emerging church's second protest against the traditional church. Simply put, the emerging church does not like the traditional church's insistence that belief (adherence to certain doctrines) must precede belonging (being part of the community). In the emerging church's experience in the postmodern environment, people come to faith after first belonging. Thus belonging precedes becoming (Belcher 2009, 94)."

"The emerging church is critical of the traditional view that a person must believe the correct theology before they are welcomed into the church. They reject using doctrine as a gatekeeper, which keeps seekers out of the church. They want an open-border mentality where people are free to come and go, ask questions, engage eternal issues, and get to know God and being a part of the community. They believe that the traditional church has eclipsed the mission of the church by setting up all kinds of boundaries to keep people in and keep other people out. They are calling for a new way of doing evangelism that includes the importance of community. For the emerging camp, belonging precedes belief (Belcher 2009, 41 -- 42)."

CHURCH PLANTING AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

by Glenn Smith

"Jesus had one basic message, 'The time has come,' he said, 'the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!'" (Mark 1:14-15). He repeatedly spoke about the kingdom. (Note: Only twice do the gospels record Jesus mentioning the church! However, he spoke constantly about the kingdom! e.g. parables, Sermon on the Mount, etc.)"

"Why aren't more pastors and church leaders rabid about church planting? I think the answer is that they do not have Jesus' vision for the kingdom! I'm not really about church planting; I'm about the kingdom! But when you're about the kingdom, no one will be able to stop you from planting churches!"

<http://www.newchurchinitiatives.org/notebook/CPN%20Kingdom.pdf>

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