

THE COMING KINGDOM



What Is the Kingdom and
How Is Kingdom Now Theology
Changing the Focus of the Church?

Andrew M. Woods

Foreword by Thomas Ice

The Coming Kingdom

Chapter 19



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Kingdom Study Outline



1. What does the Bible Say About the Kingdom?
2. The Main Problem with Kingdom Now NT interpretations
3. Why do some believe that we are in the kingdom now?
4. Why does it matter?



Response to Kingdom Now Problem Passages

1. Passages from Christ's ministry
2. Passages from Acts
3. Passages from Paul
4. Passages from the General letters
5. Passages from Revelation
6. Miscellaneous Arguments



Generic References to the Kingdom in Acts

(Acts 1:3, 6; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31)

- A. Lack of a definition of the kingdom
- B. Teaching about the unrealized does not necessarily make it realized in the present
- C. Kingdom mentioned 45x in Luke's prequel





Alva J. McClain

Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom: An Inductive Study of the Kingdom of God as Set Forth in the Scriptures* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), 424-26.

“The term ‘kingdom’ (Grk. *basileia*) occurs eight times in Acts as referring to the divine rule. . . . In the Book of Acts this ‘kingdom of God’ appears as something future, the term being used, as James Orr has observed, ‘in an almost exclusively eschatological sense.’ The Old Testament prophecies of the Messianic Kingdom, occasionally quoted by the apostles (cf. Acts 2:25–36; 3:22–36; 13:22–39) are used to show the regal rights of Jesus the Messiah. But nowhere do they ever assert that the Kingdom has been established. In passages about which there can be no dispute, this is a matter which belongs to the future when the King returns from heaven (cf. 1:6–11; 3:19–21; 15:13–16).”



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“The passage in 14:22, ‘we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God,’ is sometimes used to prove a present Messianic Kingdom established on earth in the church. But such a use would prove too much. . . . But in the Old Testament prophetic picture of the coming Messianic Kingdom, as every intelligent Jew understood, a period of terrible tribulation always precedes its establishment on earth. . . . Therefore the passage in 14:22 is in complete harmony with the historical situation and the progress of revelation. . . .”



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“The argument advanced by some, that since the apostles throughout the Acts period preached ‘the things concerning the kingdom of God’ (19:8), therefore the Kingdom must have already been established, is not very good logic. Most of us preach and teach many things in the Christian faith which are not yet realized in experience. No sensible person would argue that because the apostles continually preached the resurrection of the dead, therefore, it must have already taken place.”

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OT PROPHETS DESCRIBE THE KINGDOM



- Kingdom Characteristics
- Is. 2:1-4; 11:6-9; 65:17-25
 - ◆ Jerusalem = center of world spiritual and political authority
 - ◆ Perfect justice
 - ◆ World peace
 - ◆ Peace in the animal kingdom
 - ◆ Universal spiritual knowledge.

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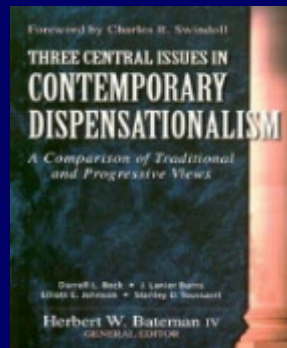
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Stanley D. Toussaint

“Israel and the Church of a Traditional Dispensationalist,” in *Three Central Issues in Contemporary Dispensationalism*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1999), 242.

“It is difficult to explain why Luke does not use the term if the kingdom is being inaugurated. He employs it forty-five times in the gospel. . . . [O]ne would expect Luke to use the word if such a startling thing as the inauguration of the kingdom had taken place. The fact that Luke uses kingdom only eight times in Acts after such heavy usage in his gospel implies that the kingdom had not begun but was in fact, postponed.”



Messengers of the Kingdom In Matthew



- John the Baptist – 3:2
- Jesus Christ – 4:17
- 12 Apostles – 10:5-7
- Seventy – Luke 10:1, 9

Matthew 12:24

“But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said,
“This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul
the ruler of the demons.”



Matthew Outline

Pedigree of the king (1–2)

◆ Preparation of the king (3–4)

◆ Pedagogy of the king (5–7)

• Power of the king (8–9)

– Program of the king (10)

– Progressive rejection of the king (11–12)

– Preparation of the king's disciples (13–20)

• Presentation & rejection of the king (21–23)

◆ Prophecies of the king (24–25)

◆ Passion of the king (26–27)

Proof of the king (28)

Transition from Public to Private Ministry

	Public	Private
Scripture	Matt. 1–12	Matt. 13–28
Focus	Nation	Remnant
Miracles	Proof to nation	Training for remnant
Kingdom Offer	Prominent	Disappears
Teaching	Discourse	Parabolic
Interim program	Not mentioned	Prominent
Crucifixion; Resurrection	Not mentioned (4:17)	Prominent (16:21)

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3. Passages from Paul's Writings



- a. Walk worthy of the kingdom (1 Thess. 2:12)
- b. Kingdom power (1 Cor. 4:20)
- c. He must reign until... (1 Cor. 15:23-28)
- d. Kingdom is not eating & drinking (Rom. 14:17)
- e. King of Kings & Lord of Lords (1 Tim. 6:15)
- f. Transferred into the Kingdom (Col 1:13)
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1 Thessalonians 2:12

¹² “So that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”



1 Thessalonians 2:12

¹² “So that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own **kingdom** and **glory**.”



E.R. Craven

“Excursus on the Basileia,” in Revelation of John,
J. P. Lange (New York: Scribner, 1874), 97.



“The preposition in the Greek is εἰς. But since believers on earth are not yet in *glory*, the whole expression is manifestly proleptical, and the E. V. gives the translation, *unto*.”

proleptical – *the representation of something in the future as if it already existed or had occurred.*

2 Peter 3:10-11

“¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. ¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.”



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1 Corinthians 4:20

“For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.”



1 Corinthians 4:5, 8, 20

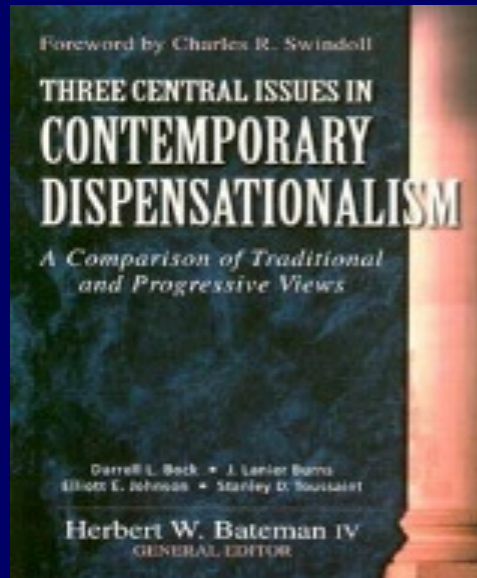
⁵“Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God... ⁸ You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you... ²⁰ For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.”



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“There is no verb in the Greek text, so it must be supplied. That Paul is anticipating the future is seen in verse five and eight of the same chapter.”





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“To interpret 1 Corinthians 4:20 as a present kingdom of the saints would make Paul contradict what he had already written in verses five and eight.”



1 Corinthians 4:20

“For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power power (*dynamis*).”



Hebrews 6:5

“and have tasted the good word of God and the powers (*dynamis*) of the age to come.”





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“The same Greek term is used to describe the great public miracles which, according to Hebrews 6:5, belong to ‘the age to come, i.e.,’ the Kingdom age.”



1 Corinthians 6:9-10

“⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.”



1 Corinthians 15:24

“then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.”



1 Corinthians 15:50

“Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.”



2 Peter 3:10-11

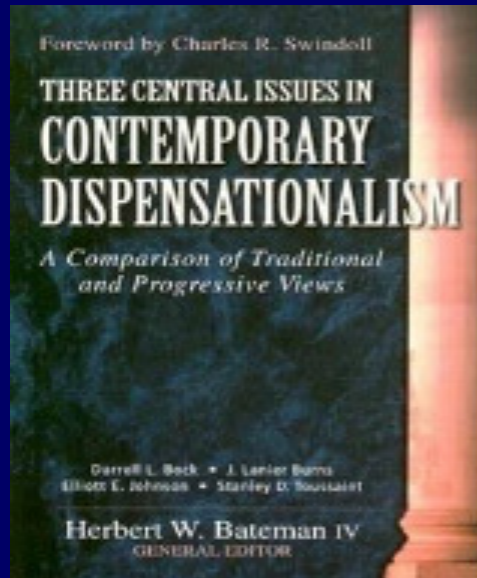
“¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. ¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.”



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“Paul’s ministry could demonstrate the authority of that future kingdom.”



CONCLUSION



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