

Kingdom Conclusions

Thinking from a Different Perspective

This book has presented only a small part of what might be considered a complete paradigm of kingdom thinking. All of us will be learning things about the kingdom of God for eternity. The paradigm builder concept presented at the end of each chapter is simply an attempt to present an important point in that chapter. The contemplative reader will be able to glean many more concepts from which to build a kingdom paradigm.

The purpose of the Kingdom Paradigm is to view the scriptures from a more practical perspective and therefore be equipped to draw relevant conclusions. Replacing an overly mystical view of the Kingdom of God with a more practical one results in a greater understanding of human responsibility and the ability to develop a structured approach to preparing the way for the Kingdom of God.

Kingdom Vision

For example, after meditating on these concepts for years, I have a much different vision of how the kingdom government of God will come to pass. I have concluded that the return of Jesus Christ to earth and the appearing of His Kingdom, though it will certainly involve the supernatural, will probably be much more natural than most of us have been led to believe.

Consider Jesus' first coming. He came operating in such a humble human way that even His own disciples, who witnessed nearly all His miracles first hand, had a difficult time accepting that He was the Messiah. Even after He was risen and appeared in His glorified body, He still interacted with people in a very down-to-earth way. He even prepared a meal for His disciples (see John 21:9). To the casual observer, Jesus' ministry probably looked like the same struggle between religious and civil power structures that had been going on for ages.

When He comes again, it is possible that He will also appear and work in a very practical way. To the casual observer it may at first look like more of the same Israel-centric political turmoil that has been going on for thousands of years. There won't be an instantaneous change where the whole world is suddenly at peace. Revelation Chapter 19 gives us a very different picture, one of an intense war that subdues the nations. The fact that there will be war indicates that many will simply see Christ as a political leader whom they must resist.

Yet to those who have put on immortality and have loved and longed for the coming of that day, it will be anything but more of the same. To them, He will not come the second time as a humble carpenter doing miracles, but as the leader of an army of invincible warriors. Jesus is building His army now, a people who will be called into combat at His coming. At the present

time, the powers of this world may seem impossible to resist, though resist them we must. But then, Christian disciples all over the world, along with those saints who return with the King, will put on immortality, receive marching orders and go into battle until every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Then peace and the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. The Kingdom of God is the replacement for the corrupt political systems of this world and should be seen as the ultimate goal and answer to the world's problems. It doesn't get any more practical than that.

Between Now and Then

Those who have embraced the Kingdom Paradigm have a love for the Kingdom and its appearing. This love for the Kingdom springs from a genuine love and commitment to Jesus Christ as one's personal Lord and Master. Between now and then, we are preparing. The hearts of the fathers are being restored to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (see Luke 1:17). Though we look for the appearing of the King and His Kingdom as the ultimate answer, we understand that the work of preparation can produce foretastes of the age to come in this present age. We should reject fatalism and know that what we believe and do now has consequences in this present age and in the age to come. The work of preparation boils down to making disciples, disciples with a vision of ruling the earth, not just making converts with a vision of getting to heaven.

I have sought to define what it means to win the war we are in, that we might have a "joy set before us" and thus be able to stand in the evil day. Our definition of victory in this war must be nothing less than to see the return of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom established to rule the earth. We are not called to watch and wait till the clock strikes twelve. We ARE the clock! We are called to keep ticking and preparing the way till all hands arrive at twelve.

It is my prayer that the concept of preparing the way has been imparted and that the idea of a dynamic link between our work and His return has been established. I also pray that this foundational truth will become a common cause around which a powerful unified church will take action. When there is a unified voice coming from a holy church proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom around the earth, Jesus will respond. The preparation will be completed and then the King and His Kingdom will appear.

As we continue to meditate on the insights presented in this book, new insights will continue to come into focus and the Kingdom Paradigm will continue to solidify, and give purpose and direction to our lives. We are engaging in the greatest purpose of all time and embarking upon the greatest adventure in human history.