

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD: DEFINITIONS AND INTENTS

WILLIS 11/1/09

Is9:6-7

I think it would be safe to say “The Church” we see and know today is not the same “Church” Jesus gave His life as a ransom for. O without a doubt it is the same Church in origin and definition but most definitely not the same in relationship to message and practice.

- **The composition of the Church at large has changed because the message of the Church has changed, the focus of the Church has changed and worst yet, the source of the Church has changed.**
- The Gospel of the Kingdom has been replaced with the gospel of salvation if not the gospel of self help. The kingdoms of this earth becoming the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ have been replaced with my personal kingdom getting built.
- The power of the Kingdom of God becoming “on earth as it is in heaven” has been replaced with the latent power of the soul and the natural power of ingenuity or personality.
- **As you well know, if you change the source you change the outcome; if you change the message you change the very nature of what gets built.**

So two weeks ago we began a series on the Kingdom of God. We lined out our intent in this series saying we would focus on:

1. **The Kingdom of God: What it is.** Its definition, its nature; its centrality in our lives.
2. **The Kingdom of God: When it is.** Its tension in time; its transcendence; its immanence.
3. **The Kingdom of God: Where it is.** Its comprehensiveness; its scope; its application.

I have entitled what I will share today “Definitions and Intents.” Our focus will be the “Kingdom of God: What it is” and how the Kingdom intends to interact with the will of man. **In God’s Kingdom, ultimately there is room for only one will and it’s not yours nor is it mine.**

Is9:6-7

Contained in this passage is the description of both who Jesus is and what He intends to do. To read it is to discover much about the person of Christ and the nature of His Kingdom...the two of which are inseparable.

- **To know the King is to understand the Kingdom; to understand the Kingdom is to know the King...to deny one is to deny both.**

Listed in these verses is what one commentator referred to as “The Throne Names of Christ.” These names are vital because they reflect the nature of the Kingdom and how the King will rule.

1. **Wonderful Counselor.** Wonderful comes from a root word meaning “astonishing.” In context it refers to the hope that Jesus is to convey...more than anyone else Jesus possesses the political skill to govern and it is that skill which produces hope.
2. **Mighty God.** Or as one commentator interpreted as “Divine Warrior” which represents Jesus as the invincible champion of the oppressed. Though merciful, Jesus is not a pacifist, He is a warrior.
3. **Eternal Father.** Jesus Christ and the Kingdom over which He rules is the unfailing source of love and protection. Being a Father He is “He who decides.” Being He is eternal He will decide forever. **To come into the Kingdom is to come under His right to decide.** (He is the determinator)
4. **Prince of Peace.** Jesus is the originator and controller of peoples well being and prosperity. In these verses we see “peace” is the result of government. Because God’s government is intact the people experience peace. The Hebrew word for peace is “shalom.” One of the definitions of “shalom” is “to have your foot on your enemy’s neck.” **Peace in God’s Kingdom is not the absence of conflict but victory in the midst of conflict.** Peace in the Kingdom of God is a “table prepared in the midst of your enemies.”

Please note the text doesn’t describe Jesus in religious terms but describes Him in governmental terms. Is. 9 describes Him governmentally because the Kingdom of God is exactly that, **the Kingdom of God is simply and at the same time most profoundly the government of God.**

- “And the government shall rest on His shoulders and of the increase of His government and of His peace there shall be no end.” The Kingdom of God is a godly government that keeps on coming.
- Being that it is godly or inherently good, the fact that it keeps on increasing is actually good news.

**By definition, the Kingdom of God is the government of God.** The Kingdom is more than the government of God but government gives the initial starting point. **Government is the Hebrew word “misrah” meaning “rule or dominion.”**

- **“Misrah” comes from the root word “sarah” which means “to contend with.”** The primary thing the Kingdom of God comes to contend with is the will of man.
- The government of God is the means by which Holy Spirit contends with mans fallen nature as described in Is53:6 “We are like sheep have gone astray we have turned each one to their own way.”

- We see this fallen nature described again in the book of Judges 21:25 “And everyone did that which was right in their own eyes. How many have discovered you have a government of you own that is not always in harmony with His?”

**The government of God consists of 3 vital expressions:**

- 1. The Realm of God:**
- 2. The Rule of God:**
- 3. The Ruler of God:**

So when we speak of seeking first the Kingdom of God...we are saying “Seek first the realm of God; seek first the rule of God; seek first the ruler of God. Jesus promised if we would seek first His realm, rule and ruler...everything else would be added to us.

- So in the next ensuing weeks we want to break these 3 expressions down so we can gain a greater understanding of what it means to seek first the Kingdom of God.

**The Realm: By definition the Kingdom of God is the realm or domain over which the government of God is extended.** The borders of the empire determine the boundaries of the Kings rule.

- So the realm of the Kings government is defined by the territory which he possesses.
- According to Ps24:1 “the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world and all who dwell in it.” **The territory possessed by the Lord is the earth and everything in it, so all people and all their possessions frame the borders of the Kingdom’s realm.**
- Fact of the matter is the universe is the Lord’s realm. The governmental realm of God’s Kingdom is without limit. It is not limited to Christian nor is it limited to religious. The government of God is an ever increasing all inclusive government.
- By its very nature, the Kingdom of God already extends over all and it is at the same time increasing to make that extension real. His government already extends to you, yet seeks to encompass more of you.
- The realm of His Kingdom has laid claim to your devotional life. Now it seeks to lay claim to your entertainment life. It has your family life now it seeks to extend to your business life. **The Kingdom comes and will keep coming until it is embraced by all.**

So if the realm of Christ’s Kingdom is the earth and all who dwell in it, then what did Jesus mean when He said in Jn18:36 “My Kingdom is not of this world?”

- What Jesus is referring to in Jn18 is the source of the Kingdom not the realm of the Kingdom.
- **The source of the Kingdom is heaven; the realm of the Kingdom is earth.**
- **The source of the Kingdom is heavenly; the function of the Kingdom is earthly.**
- **The origin of the Kingdom is heaven; the impact of the Kingdom is earth.**

So the tension we see is the tension of “My Kingdom is not of this world” (JN18:36) and “The Kingdom of God is in your midst.” (LK17:21) The first verse dealing with the source of origin the later verse dealing with the realm of enforcement.

- When Jesus taught us to pray “Thy Kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” He was in essence revealing His desire to see the source of the Kingdom in heaven join the governmental expression of the Kingdom on earth.
- Dispensationalism is the teaching that relegates certain teachings of the Bible or gifts of the Spirit to appointed times only.
- **What dispensationalism has done has been to relegate the realm of the Kingdom to a future heaven and offer only a “soon coming King” who rules over a future Kingdom.** But what the scriptures reveal is both. Jesus was the “child born King.” His Kingdom is now and at the same time not yet.
- Jesus is both King now, yet a broader expression of that Kingdom is yet to come. The scriptures reveal the Kingdom as both a seed and a mountain. It is small and at the same time big...it is an ever increasing Kingdom.

So the all important question is, **to what degree has the realm of the Kingdom conquered you? To what measure have you come under the rule of the King? To what depth have you surrendered your heart for the heart of this magnificent ruler?**