

# **AN ANALYSIS OF THE** **POSTPONEMENT THEORY**

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# INTRODUCTION

I write these words with a grateful heart to our Father Who has surrounded me with such great examples to follow in their genuine pursuit of Christ. One of the greatest benefits of being trained and grounded in the Word of God through the ministry of Applegate Christian Fellowship is a love and hunger for the truth. Not only that of hearing the truth, but diligently seeking the truth as a Berean, finding out if what we are being taught is Biblical.<sup>1</sup> As a Bible teacher, the sobering weight of presenting accurate interpretation of doctrine and practice to the Body of Christ has been settling upon my heart as one who will give account for the souls of those I am overseeing.<sup>2</sup> Through the Scriptures, I am learning that becoming a teacher should not be something desired for any other reason than that Christ has called you to it, and it is your joy to obey His calling.<sup>3</sup> Because I believe that Christ has called and anointed me by His grace to feed His sheep by presenting them the Word of God, I submit the meditations of both my earnest prayers and studies for the consideration of those who are “fathers” to me in the faith.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Acts 17:11** These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

<sup>2</sup> **Hebrews 13:17** Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

<sup>3</sup> **James 3:1** My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

<sup>4</sup> **1Co 4:15** For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

As a brief study of church history or a few minutes spent in the local Bible book store will plainly reveal, there are multiple subjects in the Bible in which various devout men of God (whose names are in the Lamb's book of life) have arrived at different, and even polar opposite conclusions. These variations of theological conclusions range from minor to major doctrinal issues. As I have been taught, and heartily agree, it is foolish to "major in the minors." Also, I have heard it said, "In the essentials UNITY, in the non-essentials LIBERTY, and in all things CHARITY." I see the wisdom in these words, and the heart displayed in them has prevented me from following needless divisive doctrinal rabbit trails of my analytical mind that will not be a determining factor of one's eternal destiny. I preface my words with these thoughts because I want you to know that the subject of concern about which I am now writing is not merely the splitting of doctrinal hairs but rather, in my opinion, of utmost importance, and the conclusion at which one arrives may have a direct effect upon one's eternal destiny. I also realize that the subject I am writing about is not a new debate, and the very fact that I am writing on the subject may prove either my youthful ignorance or lack of full understanding of these matters. It is with the right hand of fellowship extended, the Bible in my other hand, and a teachable heart that I present my earnest prayers and studies before you here. May the Lord's matchless grace be upon both reader and writer.

# What the Postponement Theory states:

*“...when Jesus Christ came as the anointed Messiah to offer the covenanted kingdom to Israel, He called on the people to repent, to put faith in his person, and to show the genuineness of their faith by their works. This the nation as a nation refused to do with the result that Messiah’s offer of the kingdom was withdrawn and its establishment postponed until some future time when the nation would repent and place faith in Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup>*

## My main point of writing

I would like to simply hold the Postponement Theory up to the light of Scripture to see if it is true or not. Also, I will endeavor to show that Jesus, the Prophets, John the Baptist, and Christ’s Apostles had one message from the beginning of the Gospels throughout the entirety of the New Testament. In anything that follows, I sincerely pray that there is no misunderstanding of both my heart and words. Therefore I would like to make a few statements of what this analysis of the Postponement Theory is *not saying*.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost as quoted by Mal Couch in his book ‘Classical Evangelical Hermeneutics’ Ch.18 p. 221

# This analysis of the Postponement Theory is not.....

- A critique of Dispensationalism<sup>1</sup> as a whole
- A critique of C.I Scofield's scholarly contributions to the body of Christ, but only as they pertain to the Postponement Theory
- An implication that the Lord will not physically reign on the earth in the future for a thousand years with the Jewish people being central in His plan and economy.
- A case for Preterism<sup>2</sup> or Covenant Theology or Replacement Theology
- A suggestion that sinless perfection can be attained in this life or that one can live out the teachings of Christ practically in the power of the flesh but only in the Power of the Spirit.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Dispensationalism** is a Protestant evangelical theology and interpretive framework for understanding the overall flow of the Bible

<sup>2</sup> **Preterism** is a variant of Christian eschatology which holds that some or all of the biblical prophecies concerning the Last Days or End Times refer to events which already happened in the first century after Christ's birth

<sup>3</sup> **Zech. 4:6** Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This *is* the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

**John 15:5** I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

**Phil. 4:13** I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

- An implication that the Jews and even Christ's Apostles at times did not expect or misunderstand Christ as speaking of a physical kingdom
- An attempt to bind people up in legalism, but to exhort believers to simple obedience.

# Why I believe writing this is important

Though I suppose to some this may seem trivial, the conclusion at which we arrive concerning the Postponement Theory affects how we view the Gospels and to what dispensation they belong (whether Law or Grace). This in turn has a huge effect on how we view the commandments of Christ as delivered in the Gospels. I believe that there are too many precise statements of the Lord Jesus Christ and the New Testament authors concerning His commandments to arrive at vague conclusions in this matter. As teachers, we are commanded by Christ to teach new believers to observe *all things* He has commanded us.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not we even *know* the Lord<sup>2</sup>, our *friendship* with Christ<sup>3</sup>, our very *love* for Christ<sup>4</sup>, as well as us *abiding* in that love<sup>5</sup> depend upon us *keeping* His commandments. Whether or not the Lord *lives in our heart* is determined by keeping His Word<sup>6</sup>, for He has become the Author of *eternal salvation* unto those who *obey*

<sup>1</sup> **Matt. 28:20** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you *always, even unto the end of the world.* Amen.

<sup>2</sup> **1John 2:4** He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him

<sup>3</sup> **John 15:14** *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

<sup>4</sup> **John 14:15** *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

<sup>5</sup> **John 15:10** *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

<sup>1</sup> **John 2:6** He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

<sup>6</sup> **John 14:23** Jesus answered and said unto him, *If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

<sup>1</sup> **John 3:24** And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Him<sup>1</sup>. The Gospel we are told is preached for the *obedience of faith*<sup>2</sup> and, furthermore, that the Lord's *fierce wrath* will fall upon those who *don't obey* the Gospel,<sup>3</sup> for they are not children of His, but *children of disobedience*.<sup>4</sup> Are we mistakenly building our house on the sand of disobedience, or are we doing that which we hear?<sup>5</sup> As those entrusted with feeding His sheep, are we unknowingly encouraging others to only be hearers of the exhortations and commandments of Christ and not doers of them, deceiving both ourselves and our hearers?<sup>6</sup> Do we view *obedience* as an essential part of our salvation and take Christ's call to radical and revolutionary discipleship seriously, or do we see it more like an invitation to a select few and His commandments as only suggestive advice?

I am aware that these Scriptures compiled like this may seem legalistic or that I am suggesting a works based salvation, but that is not my heart at all. I believe that

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<sup>1</sup> **Heb. 5:9** And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

<sup>2</sup> **Rom. 16:26** But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

**Rom. 1:5** By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

<sup>3</sup> **2 Thess. 1:8-9** In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

<sup>4</sup> **Eph. 5:6** Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

<sup>5</sup> **Matt. 7:26-27** And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

<sup>6</sup> **James 1:22** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

**Matt. 5:19** Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven

obedience to the commandments of Christ is both the privilege and inheritance of the child of God alone because he is indwelt by the power of the Holy Spirit. As children of God, the commandments are not burdensome<sup>1</sup> because the indwelling Christ now empowers us with both the will and ability to do that which is pleasing in His sight.<sup>2</sup> I believe that when the Word speaks of obedience, God is describing the supernatural life of one who now has a new nature and ability to practice righteousness and, therefore, to be righteous just as He is righteous.<sup>3</sup> This practice of righteousness, in turn, is evidence that one is no longer the child of the devil but a child of the living God.<sup>4</sup> It was an act of disobedience that caused the Fall in Eden and Christ's life of total obedience that restored us.<sup>5</sup> Obedience from the heart has always been that which God desired from man<sup>6</sup> but was not made possible until the coming of the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

<sup>2</sup> **Phil. 2:13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

<sup>3</sup> **1 John 3:7** Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

<sup>4</sup> **1 John 3:10** In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

<sup>5</sup> **Rom. 5:19** For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous

<sup>6</sup> **1Sam. 15:22** And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams.

**Deut. 30:2** And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

**Rom. 6:17** But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you

<sup>7</sup> **Ezek. 36:25-27** Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and

One needs to understand very clearly the heart behind all the words that follow. My contention is not necessarily with a particular doctrine or person. Neither do I have any animosity toward those who hold to this theory. The motives of my heart spring from the conviction that (whether realized or not) the Postponement Theory has a direct influence upon whether or not specific commands of Christ are to be followed by the Church. As with any teaching that would touch on such a serious subject, I believe it is of utmost importance to expose this theory to the light of Scripture so that we can know how we are to walk in a genuine love relationship with our Lord through obedience.<sup>1</sup>

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I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*.

**Psalm 40:7-8** Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart.

<sup>1</sup> **John 14:15** *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

# **WHEN DID THE** **DISPENSATION OF LAW** **END AND THE** **DISPENSATION OF GRACE** **BEGIN?**

*“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.” Luke 16:16*

Determining the answer to this question is very important in order to come to accurate conclusions as the Church since it determines in what light we see the Gospels. C.I. Scofield teaches in His reference Bible that the dispensation of Law “*began with the giving of the Law at Sinai and was brought to a close as a time-era in the sacrificial death of Christ*”.<sup>1</sup> This of course means that the four Gospels would all be within the dispensation of the Law.

Whether or not there are seven dispensations of time in which the Bible ought to be divided is not the present issue of concern, but the division between the period of Law and Grace. No student of the Word can miss the clear distinction

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<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note on Exodus 19:1 (1917 version) \*All references will be taken from the 1917 version unless otherwise noted

made in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible neatly divides itself for us with a 400 year gap of prophetic silence between the two Testaments as well as presenting them in different original languages. In fact, John tells us of this great division in the words, “*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*” Therefore, Law and Grace will be the dispensations of my attention.

“*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.*”<sup>1</sup> These opening words of Mark’s Gospel seem to put a special emphasis on the “*beginning*” of the message of good news being linked with the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. From this verse we gather that Isaiah foretold the crying out of John in the wilderness<sup>2</sup> as *initiating* “*the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*” Jesus later would confirm this in His words, “*The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.*”<sup>3</sup> The phrase, “*Law and the Prophets,*” of course, is often used to represent the Old Testament Scriptures.<sup>4</sup> Jesus, therefore, makes a distinction as well at the *beginning* of the ministry of John the Baptist that the Law and Prophets had ended and that the preaching of the Kingdom of God had *immediately* commenced.

<sup>1</sup> Mark 1:1-2

<sup>2</sup> Is. 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 16:16

<sup>4</sup> Matt 5:17; Act 28:23; Rom. 3:21 etc.

Jesus then picked up the message of His forerunner after John was thrown into prison declaring that *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.”*<sup>1</sup> Some amount of time had been fulfilled at the period that the Gospel of the Kingdom was being preached, yet Dispensational Theology as commonly taught, has no division, where, according to my reading of Scripture, the Bible clearly inserts one. Paul also links Christ’s coming with the fulfillment of a certain amount of time. Writing to the Ephesians he says, *“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,”*<sup>2</sup> Also, the author of Hebrews declares that *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”*<sup>3</sup> It can be seen that the *“last days”* spoken of here were a time when God *had spoken* through His Son. Furthermore, this term *“last days”*<sup>4</sup> and statements such as *“the end of the worlds,”*<sup>5</sup> *“end of the world,”*<sup>6</sup> and *“last times”*<sup>7</sup> have their reference to this present time of Grace. If Christ has spoken to us, I think it is absolutely necessary that we take His words very seriously and make sure that our doctrinal stance on the primary application of those words is not in error. This is

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 1:15

<sup>2</sup> Gal. 4:4

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 1:1-2

<sup>4</sup> Acts 2:17

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 10:11

<sup>6</sup> Heb.9:26

<sup>7</sup> 1 Peter 1:20; 1 Jn. 2:18

especially true in light of the Father's audible words from heaven unto His Son's Apostles, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; **hear ye him.***"<sup>1</sup>

I realize the main reason Dispensational Theology teaches that the era of Grace did not begin until the death of Christ is because it was previously impossible to enter into a saving relationship with Christ until sin was atoned for by Christ on the cross. But to say that "*the Sermon on the Mount is law, not grace*" and that "*the doctrines of grace are to be sought in the Epistles, not in the Gospels,*"<sup>2</sup> is, in my estimation, a very dangerous error. The writers of the Epistles had very exhortative things to say about the commandments and teachings of their Lord. Paul said to Timothy that Christ's words were "*doctrine according to godliness*" and "*wholesome,*" going on to warn him to "*withdraw*" himself from those who teach anything else.<sup>3</sup> John knew that the words of Christ were for the Church as well. He declares that a Christian's salvation is dependent on whether or not they abide in the "*doctrine of Christ.*"<sup>4</sup> Of course, the author of the book of Hebrews puts it as clearly as possible in his direct and sobering warning concerning the words of our Master: "*Therefore we ought to give the more*

<sup>1</sup> **Matt. 17:5** While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

<sup>2</sup> **Scofield** Ref. Bible (1909, p. 989).

<sup>3</sup> **1Tm.i 6:3-5** If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

<sup>4</sup> **2 John 1:9** Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

*earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; **which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord**, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?*<sup>1</sup> This great salvation began to be spoken by Christ, was *confirmed* by His disciples and then by God Himself.

The conclusion I see personally in the Scriptures is that the entirety of the Gospels should be included in the dispensation of Grace. The “*law and prophets*” find their completion in the message and ministry of the final Old Testament prophet, John the Baptist. And at the very least, if one does hold to the Dispensational view that the era of Grace didn’t begin until after the cross, then it remains imperative that one still fully embrace the exhortations and commandments of Christ as the final authority and expectation of what our King desires the Spirit-filled subjects of His Kingdom to walk in. How do the lives and teachings of the disciples reveal to us how they understood the applications of their Master’s words? How does a study of History show that genuine followers of Christ throughout the ages of time have followed the words of our Master?<sup>2</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Heb 2:1-4

<sup>2</sup> Early church writers who wrote before the time of Constantine such as Hermas, Tatian, Clement, Tertullian, and Origen among many others had revolutionary life styles and messages that held very literally to the

testimonies are clear that Christ not only implores us to walk in His commandments, but empowers us as well.

# WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

*“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son” Col.1:12-13*

In His first coming, did Christ come to preach a *physical Kingdom* and establish the throne of David, or was the very nature of the Kingdom He preached *spiritual* from the very beginning? Did Jesus’ message concerning the Kingdom of God “*change*” at some point during His ministry<sup>1</sup>, or was it *always the same*? Did Christ *cease teaching the kingdom*, and then begin teaching a “*new message*”<sup>2</sup>? Did the disciples *cease to preach the Kingdom of God*?

I am aware that most who are reading this agree that there is a legitimate *spiritual aspect* to the Kingdom Christ came to establish. Dispensational Theology holds to the truth of a *spiritual kingdom*<sup>3</sup>. Scofield refers to the

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 11:28

<sup>2</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 11:28

<sup>3</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 6:33 (In this note Scofield recognizes the spiritual aspect of the Kingdom, though he is in error in the main point of the note which is to try to show that the “Kingdom of Heaven” and

secondary aspect of the Kingdom as a “*mystery-form of the Kingdom.*”<sup>1</sup> Too many Scriptures would have to be ignored in the Bible to completely ignore at least a spiritual *aspect* or *form* of the Kingdom. The question I am posing is whether one believes that the Kingdom Jesus taught that was to govern this entire age of Grace was *only* spiritual. The Postponement Theory naturally gives a *secondary application* to the spiritual aspect of the Kingdom. This is because the Theory teaches that all of what Christ taught in the Gospels concerning His Kingdom prior to the “change” of His message<sup>2</sup> had its *primary* reference to a physical Kingdom that was rejected and, therefore, postponed until the Millennium. This, in turn, is the reason that those who hold to the Postponement Theory believe and teach that Christ’s teachings on the Kingdom of God are not commandments by which He expects His people to live by today. It is this that concerns me in light of all the exhortations unto obedience of Christ’s commandments that are linked with one’s salvation. I would like to point out from the Scriptures that the Kingdom that Jesus preached during His earthly ministry was *not particularly for the Jews* as a nation during this age, nor does His revelation of the Kingdom of God merely have a *secondary application to us as the Church*, as the Postponement Theory states. I will often make reference to

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the “Kingdom of God” are **not** references to the same thing. The fact that they **do** refer to the same thing can be easily proven by comparing certain Scriptures in the Bible such as: Matthew 11:11-12 and Luke 7:28. Also Matt. 13:11 and Mark 4:11

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 4:17

<sup>2</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 11:28

the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>1</sup> In this Sermon is contained the most comprehensive revelation of the message of the Kingdom. It not only shows the carnal man his great need, driving him to the mercy of Christ, but reveals how Christ desires His people to live in grace as subjects of His Kingdom now, from the overflow of a Spirit-filled, regenerated heart.

## **What was the nature of the Kingdom Jesus taught.....**

# **ACCORDING TO THE PROPHETS?**

I must admit that I feel much inadequate in my Bible knowledge in writing this paper, but especially as it pertains to Old Testament Prophecy. I have studied Prophecy enough, however, to come to two main conclusions: 1)- Many sincere men who have been dynamically used by God both in the past and present have come to very different conclusions in their interpretation of Prophecy, and 2)- many saddening divisions have resulted because of different perspectives. In the same breath, I have come to understand that Bible Prophecy is one of the key distinctions of the Bible's divine authorship. It is obviously an important subject in the Bible because, as I have been taught, "*a full*

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 5-7

*third of it deals with prophecy.*"<sup>1</sup> So, I do believe that there are appropriate times to lovingly divide over some prophetic issues that begin to greatly influence major biblical doctrines such as *salvation* and the *deity of Christ*. We ought to contend for the truth of God's prophetic revelation with fear and trembling asking for wisdom and insight into many of the mysterious portions of Biblical prophecy.

If the Apostles Peter, John, or Paul could come back to earth to hold a prophetic conference here in Oregon next summer, I bet the tickets would be sold out in the first hour no matter how large the auditorium was. And still, no doubt, people who couldn't purchase a ticket would fly in from every corner of the earth to camp out in the parking lot to sneak a glimpse of these men who walked so closely to Christ and received such pure revelation from Him. If I was one of the blessed ones that was able to attend, I would not forget my Bible and notebook. As Peter commented on the prophecies of the Old Testament and what they meant, I would write every word down to study later. The beautiful reality is that we do have those comments! And not taken in my short-hand notes, but divinely inspired by the very Spirit of God in the pages of the New Testament. I know no better place to receive insight into the nature of prophecy than in the Scriptures themselves. Let's look at some Biblical interpretation from the Apostles perspective of some key prophecies concerning the Kingdom.

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<sup>1</sup> Courson, Jon Jon Courson's Application Commentary Vol.1, note on Leviticus Chapter 12, page 393

**In determining the nature of the Kingdom which Christ came to establish, *through the prophets* it can be seen that:**

## **His Kingdom required His death and resurrection.**

Because some of His disciples shared the same misunderstanding of the Rabbis of Christ's day, they were saddened when they realized that Jesus did not "succeed" in setting up a physical Kingdom. Following Jesus' death, two of them walked hanging their heads, heavy of heart that Christ had died and failed to "redeem" Israel in the political way they thought He would. As the risen Christ came up to them and found out why they were sad, He lovingly rebuked them for being *foolish and slow of heart to believe all the prophets had spoken*.<sup>1</sup> He then went on to expound beginning at the five books of Moses and traveling through *all* the prophets, revealing to them those things concerning Himself.<sup>2</sup> No doubt, Jesus' focus was on the statement He had just made to them: "*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*"<sup>3</sup>

Peter also speaks of the requirement of Christ's suffering in His first coming. He mentions that in his understanding

<sup>1</sup> **Luke 24:25** Then he said unto them, *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:*

<sup>2</sup> **Luke 24:27** And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

<sup>3</sup> **Luke 24:26** *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*

of prophecy, the prophets were inquiring and searching carefully throughout their lives about the subject of *salvation*, not from physical enemies, but salvation based on *grace* they predicted would come to us. He then goes on to say that The Spirit of Christ was in them testifying beforehand of *the sufferings of Christ* and the glories *that would follow*.<sup>1</sup> Again, it is clear that Christ came not to offer or set up a physical Kingdom, but one that would be rooted in His death and Resurrection. Prior to Peter's understanding of these things, Peter was once rebuked as harshly as one could be by Jesus when he tried to discourage Christ from embracing the cross.<sup>2</sup> Peter fell into the same trap as the Rabbis of the day, that Christ would come and set up an earthly Kingdom in an earthly way. After calling Peter "*Satan*," He told him the root of his error: "*For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.*" By the grace of God, let us not fall into the same trap.

Paul agrees. While Preaching at a synagogue in Antioch, Paul pointed out that the Jews "*fulfilled all that was written of Him*" by condemning Him to death on the cross. He then made clear the reasons why they had Christ killed: "*For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which*

<sup>1</sup> **1 Pet. 1:10** Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

<sup>2</sup> **Mark 8:33** But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get *thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.*

are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.”<sup>1</sup>

These truths prove that Scofield is in error to think that “when Christ appeared to the Jewish people, the next thing in the order of revelation as it then stood, should have been the setting up of the Davidic kingdom.”<sup>2</sup> The next event on the prophetic list was that the Lamb of God was to come and take away the sin of the world!<sup>3</sup>

**In determining the nature of the Kingdom which Christ came to establish, through the prophets it can be seen that:**

**Christ, in His first coming,  
was the promised Seed of  
David**

Peter in Acts chapter 2 preaches one of the most powerfully anointed messages of all time. In that message, Peter quotes Psalm 16 and explains that David was not speaking of himself when he said, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see

<sup>1</sup> Acts 13:27

<sup>2</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 4:17

<sup>3</sup> John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

*corruption,*"<sup>1</sup> but was speaking of Christ. And then he further explains that David *"being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ."*<sup>2</sup> According to what the plain text seems to be saying here, Peter is giving the correct understanding of what God meant by the establishment of the Davidic Kingdom. It was in the resurrection of Christ that He was exalted to the right hand of God to be made both Lord and Christ, as Peter goes on to say.<sup>3</sup> The throne which He was to occupy in resurrection, according to God's oath to David, was the throne of God in heaven where He is both "Prince and a Savior."<sup>4</sup> Though Christ came as a Savior, which was a way that most Jews didn't expect, He did indeed come as the promised Seed of David.

Paul presents the Heir to the throne of David as a Savior as well while preaching in a synagogue in Antioch. Speaking to the Jews and God fearing Gentiles concerning the people of Israel, he recalled that God, after removing Saul from the throne, had *"raised up unto them David to be their king,"* and he said: *"Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus."* It was, in His first coming, a dying Savior that God had promised to Israel through David's line, not a concurring King Paul goes on to

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 2:27; Psalm 16:10

<sup>2</sup> Act 2:30-31a

<sup>3</sup> Acts 2:33,36

<sup>4</sup> Act 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

declare that God fulfilled His word to them by giving them *"the sure mercies of David"*<sup>1</sup> by raising Christ from the dead. Paul often connected the Seed of David with the salvation of mankind and in his epistle to the Romans, he unfolds *"the gospel of God; which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,"* telling us that the promised gospel of God was *"concerning His Son, which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh."*<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Paul exhorted Timothy with the following words: *"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel".*<sup>3</sup>

In light of these Scriptures, it is clear to see why Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and declared that God *"hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began".*<sup>4</sup>

## **What was the nature of the Kingdom Jesus taught.....**

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<sup>1</sup> **Is. 55:3** Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.

**Acts 13:34** And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

<sup>2</sup> **Rom. 1:1-3**

<sup>3</sup> **2 Tim. 2:8**

<sup>4</sup> **Luke 1:69-70**

# ACCORDING TO HIS FORERUNNER?

Freshly filled with the Holy Spirit, Zacharias held his miraculously born baby boy in his arms and for the first time in nearly a year, he spoke. Among the words inspired by the Spirit, he declared, “*And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins...*”<sup>1</sup> Clearly, the message of Christ’s forerunner was that of “*preparing the way of the Lord*”<sup>2</sup> and his father under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit some thirty years before his son would come on the scene of public ministry tells us that the message of preparation would be by giving “*knowledge of salvation*” unto the people by the remission of sins. As John spent devoted time in the deserts, it was a proclamation of a Kingdom that God birthed in His heart. The first words we hear John preaching publicly is that there was a Kingdom at hand and that repentance was required to enter into it.<sup>3</sup> In fulfillment to His father’s prophecy that he would give the knowledge of salvation to the people by the remission of their sins, John begins to preach of “*the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.*”<sup>4</sup> This does not sound like an earthly Kingdom

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 1:76-77

<sup>2</sup> Is. 40:3; Matthew 3:3

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

<sup>4</sup> John 1:29

or an earthly King. The religious leaders of Israel were looking for the physical Davidic kingdom to be established; in this I agree with Dr. Scofield.<sup>1</sup> But the Jews of Christ's day were obviously wrong in that they misunderstood the prophets.<sup>2</sup> To make sure that the Jews were not trusting in their lineage (which would be the very claim that would entitle one to be included in the Davidic Kingdom) John clearly told them, "*And think 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.*"<sup>3</sup> Instead of physical birth, John called for fruits worthy of *repentance*, which is linked in the message of the Gospel of the Kingdom with the new birth.<sup>4</sup> This seems to be the point the apostle John also is making when he says in the opening verses of his Gospel that those who exercise faith in Christ have become children of God, "*which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*"<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 4:17

<sup>2</sup> Acts 13:26-27 Men *and* brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*.

Luke 24:25-27 Then he said unto them, **O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?** And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Also Acts 3:22-26; Acts 26:22-23 and 1 Pet. 1:9-12

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 3:9

<sup>4</sup> Luke 13:3 **I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

Act 3:19-20 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent

Acts 26:20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

<sup>5</sup> John 1:13

(It should be noted that all these things took place before Scofield teaches that Jesus “changed” His message from that of offering the physical Kingdom to a message of rest and service).<sup>1</sup>

## What was the nature of the Kingdom Jesus taught.....

# ACCORDING TO JESUS HIMSELF?

Preaching the Kingdom of God was the primary subject of Christ’s discourses.<sup>2</sup> Jesus also did not shun declaring the spiritual way by which one enters into His Kingdom. Approached by a member of the Sanhedrin by night, Jesus totally blows passed Nicodemus’ initial statements concerning His miracles by directly confronting his preconceived idea that the Kingdom of God can be entered by physical birth.<sup>3</sup> Jesus went on to explain that, *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”*<sup>4</sup> (Again, this incident happened prior to the Jews supposed “rejection” of Christ’s “physical

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 11:28

<sup>2</sup> Luke 4:43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

<sup>3</sup> John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

<sup>4</sup> John 3:6

Kingdom”). Later, Christ would speak similar truth to the heart of a group of Jews who had just claimed Abraham as their father and were confronting the legitimacy of His birth. This time, His words had a needed sharp edge to them: *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.”*<sup>1</sup> There seems to be a very direct emphasis placed upon the spiritual aspect of entering the Kingdom of God from the very beginning of the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom. No wonder, as Paul continued preaching the message of the Kingdom<sup>2</sup> that he made statements like *“flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom”*<sup>3</sup> and *“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God,”*<sup>4</sup> and *“And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*<sup>5</sup> Jesus went on to say that one had to be *“converted”* as a child to enter His Kingdom.<sup>6</sup> Numerous other scriptures could be quoted in reference to the fact that the Kingdom Jesus, His forerunner, and His Apostles preached, was not “Jewish” at all, but from the very

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<sup>1</sup> **John 8:44a**

<sup>2</sup> **Acts 20:25** And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

**Act 28:31** Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

<sup>3</sup> **1 Cor. 15:50**

<sup>4</sup> **Rom. 2:28-29**

<sup>5</sup> **Gal. 3:29**

<sup>6</sup> **Mat 18:3** And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

beginning, open to all who would exercise saving faith in Christ.

Other statements Jesus made concerning the nature of His Kingdom must also be taken into consideration. Jesus says that *“The kingdom of God cometh not with observation”* and that the Kingdom is *“within you.”*<sup>1</sup> According to Christ, His Kingdom is *“not of this world,”*<sup>2</sup> has a different form of government<sup>3</sup>, is filled with those who are poor in spirit<sup>4</sup>, and persecuted for righteousness sake<sup>5</sup> (a righteousness which exceeds the hypocritical righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees).<sup>6</sup> This spiritual Kingdom Jesus Jesus preached is entered into by those who do the will of the Father in Heaven<sup>7</sup>, who put their hand to the plow and don't look back<sup>8</sup> and seek it as their first priority.<sup>9</sup>

Jesus, realizing the inability of the natural man to comprehend spiritual things<sup>10</sup> and anticipating that the nature of His Kingdom would be misunderstood, anticipated

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<sup>1</sup> **Luke 17:20-21**

<sup>2</sup> **John 18:36**

<sup>3</sup> **Luk 22:25-26** And he said unto them, *The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.*

<sup>4</sup> **Mat 5:3** *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*

<sup>5</sup> **Mat 5:10** *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>6</sup> **Mat 5:20** *For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>7</sup> **Mat 7:21** *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

<sup>8</sup> **Luk 9:62** *And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*

<sup>9</sup> **Luk 12:31** *But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

<sup>10</sup> **Rom 8:7** *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

their carnal minds by repeatedly declaring *“The Kingdom of heaven is like.....”*<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom parables make it clear that that the Kingdom Jesus was revealing and establishing was neither to National Israel nor was it of this world. His Kingdom involved the sowing of the *word of the kingdom into the hearts of His hearers.*<sup>2</sup> It was to reveal the generosity of God by bringing *equal blessing* on those who had not labored in the heat of the day.<sup>3</sup> This Kingdom was to be like a net gathering not just the physical sons of Abraham, but *all kinds* of fish.<sup>4</sup> Jesus was sure to include a parable that involved the killing of the vineyard owner’s son to seize his inheritance,<sup>5</sup> so His audience might understand the necessity of Him, not reigning without first dying. I am so excited that I am involved in this spiritual Kingdom that has always been *“like a certain King which made a marriage for His Son”*<sup>6</sup> which culminates in the great wedding feast and marriage supper of the Lamb!

Jesus actions and lifestyle spoke radically of the nature of the Kingdom He came to establish. Living in

<sup>1</sup> **Matt.13:31,33,44,45,47,52** etc.

<sup>2</sup> **Mat 13:19** *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.*

<sup>3</sup> **Mat 20:1** *For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.*

<sup>4</sup> **Mat 13:47** *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:*

<sup>5</sup> **Luk 20:13-15** *Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?*

<sup>6</sup> **Mat 22:2**

poverty by choice, He had no home or land.<sup>1</sup> He came not to be served as a physical King, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.<sup>2</sup> In presenting Himself to Israel as their King, Jesus chose a donkey to carry Him, meekly riding down the streets of Jerusalem, not having national power or an army with which to concur, yet having “*salvation.*”<sup>3</sup> This is not to say that others didn’t think He was<sup>4</sup> or claimed to be<sup>5</sup> the King of the Jews, for this was the very “*accusation*” written above His head while He lovingly suffered on the cross.<sup>6</sup> When personally asked by Pilate if He was a king, Jesus replied, “*Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*”<sup>7</sup> Jesus came to testify to the truth that those who received the truth would be saved<sup>8</sup> and set free from sin.<sup>9</sup> Christ knew that He was born for the purpose of being the King of Kings and Lord of Lords physically, but that was never meant to be a Kingdom of physical force and

<sup>1</sup> **Mat 8:20** And Jesus saith unto him, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

<sup>2</sup> **Mar 10:45** *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

<sup>3</sup> **Zec 9:9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

<sup>4</sup> **Mat 2:2** Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

<sup>5</sup> **Joh 19:21** Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

<sup>6</sup> **Mat 27:37** And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

<sup>7</sup> **John 18:37**

<sup>8</sup> **1Tim. 2:4** Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

<sup>9</sup> **John 8:32** *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

earthly power until His Millennial reign.<sup>1</sup> The reality that Jesus understood this from the very beginning of His ministry is seen in the fact that He refused the temptation of an earthly kingdom through any other means but the cross, whether it was offered to Him by Satan<sup>2</sup> or by those who followed Him.<sup>3</sup> The fact that the vast multitudes who followed Christ tried to make Him King by force shows that there were multiplied thousands of Jews that accepted and expected Him to be their King. Jesus would have had to simply say the word, and He would have been their King. As I search the Scriptures, I do not see one place where Jesus makes a clear “offer” to the Jews to set up a physical Kingdom. However, suppose Jesus did offer a physical Kingdom and they received it? A very sobering question faces all of us: **What would have become of the cross and the redemption of all mankind?**

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<sup>1</sup> **Rev. 19:16** And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

<sup>2</sup> **Matt. 4:8-10** Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, **Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

<sup>3</sup> **John 6:15** When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

# ARE THE KINGDOM AND THE GOSPEL THE SAME THING?

From my studies, I have come to the conclusion that the message of the Kingdom is the same message as the Gospel. After John was put in prison, Jesus comes on the scene *“preaching the **gospel of the kingdom of God**, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.’”*<sup>1</sup> There are numerous places that Jesus’ message is called *“the Gospel of the Kingdom.”*<sup>2</sup>

When speaking to the Ephesian elders, Paul says that his ministry could be described as *“testifying of the grace of God,”* which he equates to *“preaching the Kingdom of God”* in the very next verse.<sup>3</sup> Paul also describes how God saved us by saying, *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”*<sup>4</sup> The disciples knew that *“entering the Kingdom”* and *“being saved”* was the same idea. When Jesus says that *“it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for*

<sup>1</sup> Mark 1:14b-15

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; Mark. 1:14

<sup>3</sup> Acts 20:24-25 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

<sup>4</sup> Col. 1:13

*a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God<sup>1</sup>,*” the disciples were amazed and asked, *“Who then can be saved?”<sup>2</sup>* We also know that one is saved and sealed by the Spirit of God when genuine faith is put in *“the gospel of salvation.”<sup>3</sup>* Also, Peter says that we are *“born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”<sup>4</sup>* This very *“word”* that saves is described by Christ as the *“seed”* of the Sower. When asked what this parable meant, Jesus informs them that the seed represents *“the word of the Kingdom”<sup>5</sup>*. Jesus also spoke clearly to Nicodemus that being born again was how one would both see and enter the kingdom of God.<sup>6</sup> Upon leaving this earth, Jesus told his disciples *“preach the gospel to every creature.”<sup>7</sup>* The disciples knew that this gospel was to be preached to the ends of the earth was the very same gospel their Master had talked about on the Mount of Olives: *“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.”<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> **Matt. 19:24b**

<sup>2</sup> **Matt. 19:25b**

<sup>3</sup> **Eph. 1:13** In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

<sup>4</sup> **1Pet. 1:23** Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

<sup>5</sup> **Matt. 13:18** Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

**Matt. 13:19** When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

<sup>6</sup> **John 3:3-7**

<sup>7</sup> **Mark. 16:15** And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

<sup>8</sup> **Mat 24:14**

# DID JESUS CHANGE HIS MESSAGE AT SOME POINT?

Another important aspect that is involved in the postponement theory that needs our attention is whether or not Christ's message changed at the point His offer was supposedly rejected by the Jews. Commenting on the beautiful words of our Lord in Matthew 11, "**Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden....**", it is taught in Scofield's reference Bible that this is a "*pivotal point in Jesus ministry*" and that He begins to teach a "*new message*" in which He, as "*the rejected King now turns from the rejecting nation and offers, not the kingdom, but rest and service to such a nation as are conscious of there need.*<sup>1</sup>" It is summarized then by Scofield that during this supposed "*offer*" of the physical Davidic Kingdom, the offer of this kingdom is rejected "*morally*" in Matthew 11:20 and His "*final rejection is later*" (Matthew 27:31-37)<sup>2</sup> .

If Christ changed His message from that of "*pure law*"<sup>3</sup> to that of "*rest and service,*"<sup>4</sup> then we should indeed, find some place in the Gospels where this change is made obvious. One may search in vain for such a place. Because the Postponement Theory requires that there be a change in the message of the Kingdom of Christ, Scofield has chosen

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 11:28

<sup>2</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note Matthew 11:20

<sup>3</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note on Matt. 5:2

<sup>4</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note on Matt. 11:28

Matthew 11:20 to be the place of “*moral*” rejection<sup>1</sup> and, therefore, a few verses later (v. 28) Christ begins proclaiming His “*new message*.” If this theory be true, we ought to find drastically different messages on either side of this “*pivotal point*.” Prior to Matthew chapter 11, however, we see many aspects of Christ’s message that are exactly the same as after His message is said to have changed. The Kingdom was always “*at hand*,”<sup>2</sup> and entrance into it required repentance<sup>3</sup>. The message of Christ’s Kingdom has always been rooted in the atoning death of Christ.<sup>4</sup> We also have a statement that Jesus makes that encompasses both before and after Scofield’s estimation of the transition of Christ’s message in these words: “*The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.*”<sup>5</sup> This means that the Kingdom *was* preached prior to Matthew 11 by John, and the fact that Christ says the Kingdom *is* preached and that people were then *pressing* into it shows that it was still being preached at the time He said that (which was . It takes pure speculation to infer that from the time of John to the time Christ spoke those words that the message of the Kingdom somehow changed. Christ had sent out the twelve Apostles

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note on Matt. 11:20

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Luke 21:31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Luke 13:5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Luke 24:47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

<sup>5</sup> Luk 16:16

to preach the imminence of the Kingdom of God prior to Matthew chapter eleven. If Christ had changed His message, why do we see Him sending out seventy of His disciples to preach that very same message of the Kingdom of God being at hand?<sup>1</sup> Jesus seems to be even more in earnest in that he tells the seventy to shake the dust from their feet if they are rejected with the added words, *“Be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you .”*<sup>2</sup>

The “pivotal point” (Matt.11:28) at which Scofield insists that Jesus “changed” His message is actually quite insightful as to why He *didn’t* have to change it at all. Jesus had grown up around the false piety of the Pharisees all His life. He had already formed the clear understanding that He would later voice about them concerning their use of the Law. He later declared, *“they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.”*<sup>3</sup> In the section Scofield sees a change, the Lord is offering the great truth that He too has a burden to be carried by us- His commandments. The difference is that He will do more than lift a finger; He will so empower us by His own Spirit that the commandments will not be burdensome, but light, for He is yoked with us! The life of the burdened and heavy laden is not reserved for those who endeavor to simply obey Christ in

<sup>1</sup> **Luke 10:1-** After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

<sup>2</sup> **Luke 10:11** *Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*

<sup>3</sup> **Matt. 23:4** *For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*

the power of His Spirit but to those who are outwardly compelled to obey in spite of the futility of their flesh.

For the Postponement Theory to remain true, it must appear from the Scriptures that Christ ministered *only* to the Jews prior to His “rejection” by them. Scofield, aware of this fact, comments on Jesus’ encounter with the Syrophenician woman which took place after His “offer” was rejected. He comments that “*For the first time, the rejected Son of David ministers to a Gentile.*”<sup>1</sup> This is a necessary point to prove to establish the Postponement Theory; for if Christ should be found ministering to a Gentile prior to Matthew, chapter 11, that action would contradict the purely “Jewish” invitation to the Kingdom during that period of time; and would demolish the theory completely. But what do the Scriptures tell us? Prior to this time the Lord ministered to numerous Gentiles. There was the centurion’s servant whom Christ healed,<sup>2</sup> during which encounter the Lord commented on the faith of this Gentile as compared to the Israelites.<sup>3</sup> Also, prior to the suggested rejection, Jesus’ fame spread throughout all Syria and they brought to Christ all sick people who He lovingly healed.<sup>4</sup> There was also the powerful encounter Jesus had with the woman at the well, which resulted in the many of that city being saved after Jesus ministered His Word among

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note on Matthew 15:21

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 8:5-10

<sup>3</sup> Mat 8:10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

<sup>4</sup> Mat 4:24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

them for a period of two days.<sup>1</sup> It seems that the Postponement Theory is held up on some pretty weak and false assumptions which require but a brief look into the Scriptures to expose. *“The word of the kingdom”*<sup>2</sup> was originally sown when Christ began to preach, and *“the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations”*<sup>3</sup> prior to the great harvest. Our Christ is *“the same yesterday, and today, and forever.”*<sup>4</sup> Christ’s message not only remained the same, it was straightforward and had ever increasing earnestness to it throughout His life.

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<sup>1</sup> John 4

<sup>2</sup> Mat 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

<sup>3</sup> Mat 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.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. 13:8

# DID THE APOSTLES CEASE TO TEACH THE KINGDOM?

The Kingdom teachings of Christ didn't end upon His death. It was during the forty blessed days on earth following His resurrection that He spoke "*of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.*"<sup>1</sup> Christ had full intention that the message His disciples were to bring to the world was that very same Kingdom he proclaimed to them. And that they did. It is said of Phillip that he went to minister to the people of Samaria and there he was "*preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God*".<sup>2</sup> When Paul carried into Europe the message that "*turned the world upside down*"<sup>3</sup>, he came to Corinth, and spake in the synagogue, "*disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God.*"<sup>4</sup> When someone entered into a walk of salvation with the Lord, Paul described this experience as being *delivered...from the power of darkness, and [being] translated...into the kingdom of his dear Son.*"<sup>5</sup> As many other references could be sighted<sup>6</sup> concerning Kingdom Paul preached, but needless needless to say, he continued preaching the Kingdom of God

<sup>1</sup> **Act 1:3** To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

<sup>2</sup> **Act 8:12** But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

<sup>3</sup> **Acts 17:6,7**

<sup>4</sup> **Acts 19:8**

<sup>5</sup> **Col. 1:13** Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

<sup>6</sup> **Act 20:25; 1Co 4:20; 1Co 6:9; 1Th 2:12**

from his own rented house as the closing verses of the book of Acts tell us.<sup>1</sup>

Did Jesus message change? Did His disciples preach a different message than their Master? It would be with great fear and trembling that I would receive a theory that suggests that Jesus or His disciples preached two different messages to two different groups of people. Coming to the conclusion that the commands of Christ in certain places of the New Testament do not directly apply to me and do not require a full adherence by me is a decision accompanied by sobering ramifications, especially in light of the eternal significance placed upon obedience to the commands of Christ. And there is absolutely no way that I, as a teacher, can ignore the words of Jesus moments before bodily ascending to the throne of His Kingdom: *“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:** and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”*<sup>2</sup> The disciples obeyed their Master in their lives and in their words, ought it to be any different for us?

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<sup>1</sup> **Act 28:30-31** And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

<sup>2</sup> **Matt. 28:18b-20**

# **SO WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?**

Though to some it may seem trivial whether Christ changed His message or not, I believe the implications to us as believers are huge. John says, *“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.”*<sup>1</sup> We are unwise to read over words like these too hastily. If John the Apostle were to come over to my house and say that to my face, a wise response would be to ask, “What is the doctrine of Christ?” John might reply, “Let’s put it this way, *he that saith, ‘I know him’, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*”<sup>2</sup> As I would stand there looking rather shocked at the blunt words of the Apostle of love, he might comfort me by saying, *“And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him.”*<sup>3</sup> As this aged Apostle whom Jesus loved left my house and started down the road that day after fellowship, he might turn around and add one last exhortation with a smile: *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”*<sup>4</sup> After an encounter like that, I would go back inside and grab my Bible and read the Gospels through and through with the constant prayer going through my mind, “What are Your commandments Oh Lord, that by Your strength I might do them?”

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<sup>1</sup> 2John 1:9a

<sup>2</sup> 1Jn 2:4

<sup>3</sup> 1Jn 3:24a

<sup>4</sup> Rev 22:14

# THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

I must say that those who hold to the Postponement Theory, including Scofield, see great value in the Kingdom teachings of Christ in the Gospels. Scofield himself wrote that the Sermon on the Mount has “*beautiful moral application to the Christian.*”<sup>1</sup> Also, relating to the Sermon on the Mount, Charles Ryrie states, “*All dispensationalists that I have ever read say, even insist, that the Sermon contains teachings whose principles apply to the church.*”<sup>2</sup> Chafer also agrees: “*A secondary application to the church means that lessons and principles may be drawn from [the Sermon on the Mount]*”<sup>3</sup> I commend these men for informing us that Christ’s Sermon has *some* application to the believer. However, because these brothers in Christ insist that the primary purpose of the Sermon on the Mount is to present the expected economy and lifestyle of a physical Kingdom to the Jews, the result is a very unclear standard of Christ’s expectation for us as His disciples. Because, in the view of these men, the church only has “secondary” importance in all that Jesus said, we see words used like *moral application, principles that apply* which are only *ethical*.

Though I don’t see a “primary” and “secondary” application of the Sermon on the Mount, it is clear that there

<sup>1</sup> Scofield Ref. Bible note on Matt. 5:2

<sup>2</sup> Ryrie, Charles Dispensationalism p.99

<sup>3</sup> L.S. Chafer Systematic Theology (Dallas: Seminary Press, 1947) 5:97

is a *dual purpose* to it. Just like much of the teachings of our Lord, there was a dual purpose in what He said, not because He meant us to come to two separate conclusions about what He said, but because of the different *condition of the hearts* of those who heard Him. To some, His sayings were words of eternal life<sup>1</sup> and to others His exact same words were “hard sayings” that caused them to stop pursuing Him.<sup>2</sup> When a carnal minded Pharisee hears Christ say, “**I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance**”<sup>3</sup>, he thinks, “Oh, that explains why you are eating with such filth, they are the sinners you came for, not us.” If a repentant sinner whom Jesus was eating with overheard Jesus say these same words to the Pharisee, his broken heart would be filled with joy as he thought, “I am so glad Christ came for me, though I am the least worthy soul to receive His matchless grace!” The knowledge of Christ is, to the *hardened* sinner, “the savour of death unto death;” and to the *broken* sinner, “the savour of life unto life.”<sup>4</sup> The reality that the Father has the ability to hide the beautiful truth of His kingdom from the wise and learned and in the same breath, reveal it unto babes, did not cause frustration in the heart of our Master, but rather joy in the depth of His Spirit that caused Him to lift up His voice and rejoice in the

<sup>1</sup> **John 6:68** Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

<sup>2</sup> **John 6:60** Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

<sup>3</sup> **Luk 5:32**

<sup>4</sup> **2Co 2:14-16** Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

streets!<sup>1</sup> Christ's words to the multitudes were spoken as "dark sayings"<sup>2</sup> and "parables"<sup>3</sup> for the primary reason of testing the condition of the hearts that heard Him. This is why Christ often followed a parable with the declaration, "**He who hath ears to hear, let him hear!**"<sup>4</sup> This truth is made clear in that Christ told His disciples that the understanding of the parable of the Sower<sup>5</sup> was the key to understanding all parables.<sup>6</sup> This parable, of course deals with the *condition of the heart* of one who hears the word of the Kingdom.<sup>7</sup> There is a dual aspect to all His parables, to some they may sound foolish or hard to understand, but to those with honest and good hearts who see value in Christ's Words, there comes rich understanding and fruitfulness.

I believe that the dual purpose of the Sermon on the Mount is 1) to reveal the Holiness of Almighty God thus heavily convicting the heart of the *unregenerate carnal sinner*, that their mouth might be stopped, that they might become guilty before God<sup>8</sup> and be prepared to receive Christ,

<sup>1</sup> **Luke 10:21** In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

<sup>2</sup> **Psalm 78:2** I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

<sup>3</sup> **Matt. 13:34-35** All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

<sup>4</sup> **Matt. 11:15; 13:9; Mark 4:9; 4:23** etc.

<sup>5</sup> **Matt. 13; Mark 4; and Luke 8**

<sup>6</sup> **Mark 4:13** And he said unto them, **Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?**

<sup>7</sup> **Matt. 13:19** **When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.**

<sup>8</sup> **Rom. 3:19-20** Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Christ, and 2) to display before the *regenerated Spirit-filled* saint the radical calling and lifestyle of Christ that must be the increasing desire and experience of the subjects of His Kingdom. This dual purpose of the law described by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount is mentioned by Melvin E. Dieter: “Although it unmasks us in our self-righteousness and is the severe taskmaster that brings us to Christ, behind all the apparent severity of the law is the love of God, driving and luring us to a life of love, which is the end of the law.”<sup>1</sup> I and multiplied thousands of others have been so blessed (through ministries like Calvary Chapel) with powerful teaching on the first purpose of this Sermon. I have heard many encouraging messages from the Sermon on the Mount (including the statement that “His commandments are our enablements.”) Nevertheless, in my opinion, this second purpose of Christ’s Sermon has been sadly neglected, due in part to the embracing of the Postponement Theory. Much focus has been rightfully and beautifully placed upon what Christ has done **for us**. A renewed desire for holiness and uncompromised living would spring up among us as a Church if equal focus was placed upon what Christ is presently doing **in us**. Without dismissing for a moment, the importance of the first purpose of the Sermon, I would like to make a few comments about the second.

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<sup>1</sup> Melvin E. Dieter, *Five Views on Sanctification*, The Zondervan Corp. page 26

# HEARING THE WORD

## RIGHTLY

It is my opinion that the condition of heart, which we as listeners have, is at the root of whether or not we believe or disbelieve that Christ actually meant for His teachings in the Sermon on the Mount to be practically lived out in our lives by the power of His Spirit. Christ's doctrine is apprehended by those who have a will to obey what they hear. This is what Christ meant when He said, *"If any man **will do his will**, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."*<sup>1</sup> Also, in Christ's private explanation of the parable of the Sower to His disciples, He said that the ones who heard and received the word of God *"on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, **keep it**, and bring forth fruit with patience."*<sup>2</sup> Again, He connects a desire to *obey the word* with *hearing it*. Just a few verses later, He went on to exhort them to *"Take heed therefore how ye hear; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."*<sup>3</sup> What makes up this honest and good heart that causes the word we hear to produce fruitful obedience and become profitable? The book of Hebrews tells us negatively: *"...the word*

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<sup>1</sup> John 7:17

<sup>2</sup> Luk 8:15

<sup>3</sup> Luke 8:18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

*preached did not profit them, not being **mixed with faith** in them that heard it.”<sup>1</sup> Again, Paul confirms that *faith* is a must for the Word of God to be profitable to us. Encouraging the saints in Thessalonica, he says positively, “*when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you **that believe.**”<sup>2</sup> Their Master lovingly revealed to them that His teaching finds root in a *heart of faith* and brings forth fruit in the lives of those who will be *obedient to that which they hear*.**

## **HEARING WITH THE CARNAL MIND**

“*And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*”<sup>3</sup> As Christians, Paul reveals that we are still subject to the danger of being carnally (or fleshly) minded.<sup>4</sup> The carnal minded are those who mind the things of the flesh”<sup>5</sup>, and endeavor to follow after Christ in their own strength. The challenging thing about following Christ as a disciple in our

<sup>1</sup> **Heb. 4:2** For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*.

<sup>2</sup> **1Thess. 2:13** For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

<sup>3</sup> **1Cor. 3:1**

<sup>4</sup> **Rom. 8:6** For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

**1Cor. 3:3** For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

**1Cor. 3:1** And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ.

<sup>5</sup> **Rom. 8:5** For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

lives practically is that when we hear His radical exhortations and commands from the Word ***with the carnal mind***, our only conclusion is to say, “*I can’t obey that, it’s just plain impossible!*” Failing to believe in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Who both authenticates our salvation and is available to empower the life of every genuine child of God, we are then left with two options: feeling condemned constantly for failing (and therefore *knowingly* settling for lukewarm lives) or trying to come up with the best logical reason why Christ’s exhortations and commands don’t really mean what they say (and *unknowingly* settle for lukewarm lives). In regard to the latter option, we find pastors, commentators, and churches who agree with our theory of what Christ’s Word “*really*” means. “*Let’s all admit it,*” the carnal man concludes, “*‘Be holy for I am holy’ can’t mean what it says, who could do that?*” And so Christ’s exhortation to be holy, found all over the New Testament<sup>1</sup>, tests the condition of the soil of the heart, to see if the hearer has *faith* to believe and is willing to *obey* what he hears. The Word is unprofitable in bringing forth the fruit of holiness in the hearer’s heart and actions because the heart either: a)- lacks understanding and Satan steals the Word away so that they cannot believe and obey it,<sup>2</sup> b)- Is hard and lacking depth to endure persecution and tribulation that

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thess. 4:7; Heb. 12:14; 2 Pet. 3:11; Matt. 5:48; Rom. 12:1-2 etc.

<sup>2</sup> Mat 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

accompanies believing and obeying the Word,<sup>1</sup> or c)- the heart is too cluttered with the riches and worries of this life to truly believe and obey the Word.<sup>2</sup>

The result is that **for the carnal man**, the powerful and revolutionary teachings of our dear Master are categorized in a hundred different ways to mean anything but what they actually say. These are only natural conclusions at which the carnal mind can arrive. He is then left with a hazy idea of what Christ expects and empowers his life to look like. He endeavors to follow the words of the Bible that he logically concludes are more “humanly possible” and therefore settles for a life that operates primarily in the realm of the natural. His witness to the world isn’t dynamic, but to the unbeliever, his life looks much like any devoted person of any other religion. He may deny a few pleasures and set aside disciplined times to do “spiritual things” but the revolutionary words of our Master find themselves written decoratively on a framed picture on his wall or in a biography describing the life of some radical saint of the past which makes his heart race to read. The carnal man cannot embrace all that the Word holds out to be appropriated through *simple faith* because *“the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually*

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<sup>1</sup> **Matt. 13:20** But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

**Matt. 13:21** Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

<sup>2</sup> **Matt. 13:22** He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

*discerned.*"<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, there is a particular resistance to *obeying* the commandments in the New Testament "*because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*"<sup>2</sup> His life is characterized by much sin because he has come to the defeated conclusion that he is "*carnal, sold under sin.*"<sup>3</sup> The will to obey might even be present within the carnal man, but because he has not the faith to believe that the Spirit of God will empower him to obey<sup>4</sup> even the most "foolish" commands, he settles for the life of the lukewarm.

Listening to the Word of God without the *simple faith* to believe and desire to *obey* it is a major cause of the lukewarmness that is so prevalent within the recognized church. This ought to sober us as teachers of Christ's Word because there are too many serious warnings within the Scriptures to come to the conclusion that those whose "Christian" lives are characterized by lukewarmness and open disobedience are in a relationship of salvation at all.<sup>5</sup> Hearing the Word with a primarily rationalistic, logical, fleshly mind is a major root, I believe, as to why there are so many theories and false doctrines which seek to remove

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<sup>1</sup> **1Cor. 2:14**

<sup>2</sup> **Rom. 8:7** Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

<sup>3</sup> **Rom. 7:14** For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

<sup>4</sup> **Rom. 7:18** For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not

**Phil. 2:13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

<sup>5</sup> **Rev. 3:16** So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

**2Thess. 1:8** In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

**Phil. 2:13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Also **Rom. 2:4-9; 1Pet. 4:17; Heb. 10:28-29** etc.

certain portions of the Word of God from the duty and experience of the church. This is a serious matter.

## HEARING WITH THE SPIRITUAL

**MIND-** Though so much of those the world recognizes as the church are fleshly minded, God is not without servants who are “*spiritually minded.*” The Word declares that, as children of God, we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit because the Spirit of God dwells in us.<sup>1</sup> One of the major evidences of a genuine believer is that they are “*led by the Spirit of God.*”<sup>2</sup> Paul describes what it is to “*walk in*”<sup>3</sup>, or be “*led by*”<sup>4</sup> the Spirit of God: “*For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.*”<sup>5</sup> It appears that what the mind is focused on consistently determines whether a man is fleshly (carnal) or spiritual. It is an unfathomable blessing to realize that, as a child of God, “*we have the mind of Christ.*”<sup>6</sup>

Paul, in his passion to present the saints perfect in Christ,<sup>7</sup> prayed for them that they might have a *heart of faith*

<sup>1</sup> **Rom. 8:9** But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

<sup>2</sup> **Rom. 8:14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

<sup>3</sup> **Gal. 5:16** *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

<sup>4</sup> **Rom. 8:14**

<sup>5</sup> **Rom. 8:5** For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

<sup>6</sup> **1Cor. 2:16** For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

<sup>7</sup> **Col. 1:28** Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

*faith* and a *desire to obey* the truth of God's Word. As to faith, Paul bowed his knees and prayed that the saints "*would be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in [their] hearts by faith;*"<sup>1</sup> Paul knew that the secret of faith is not confidence in our flesh, but in "*Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us;*"<sup>2</sup> His heart cry was for them to embrace by faith "*the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe,*"<sup>3</sup>

Paul also prayed that the saints might know God's will and have a heart of obedience to it. He besought God that they might "*be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*" with the result that they "*might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing..*"<sup>4</sup> Paul Paul described the spiritual battle to obey Christ as an intense warfare within the mind. He said that this battle consisted of "*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*"<sup>5</sup> As a spiritually minded believer being "*renewed in*

<sup>1</sup> **Eph. 3:16-17** That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

<sup>2</sup> **Eph. 3:20** Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

<sup>3</sup> **Eph. 1:19** And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

<sup>4</sup> **Col. 1:10-11** That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

<sup>5</sup> **2Cor. 10:5** Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

*the spirit of his mind*”<sup>1</sup> continually thinks on the things of the Spirit and desires to work out his salvation with a reverent heart of fear and trembling at the exceedingly great and precious promises of God’s word,<sup>2</sup> he embraces by faith that the Spirit is working in Him both the *desire to obey* and the *ability to do* what is pleasing in God’s sight.<sup>3</sup> A deep desire to walk in an authentic love relationship with Christ through obedience to His commandments<sup>4</sup> becomes the passion of his regenerated heart. A spiritually minded believer such as this, desires to embrace, with child-like simplicity even the most demanding sayings that are contained within the doctrine of Christ. Not being “*a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*”<sup>5</sup> He sees that Christ lived out His own teachings, that His disciples lived them out and it is his heritage and privilege as a child of God by the empowering of the Holy Spirit to mark them that so walk as an examples to follow.<sup>6</sup>

When the spiritual man hears the exact same words as the carnal man, to “be holy as He is holy”, the condition of his heart is tested by these words radically. Will he with an honest and good heart have the faith to obey the word, or

<sup>1</sup> **Eph. 4:23** And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

<sup>2</sup> **Phil. 2:12** Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

**Is. 66:2** For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

<sup>3</sup> **Phil. 2:13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

<sup>4</sup> **John 14:15** *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

**John 15:14** *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

<sup>5</sup> **James 1:25** But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

<sup>6</sup> **Phil. 3:17** Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

will it remain unfruitful? In one point he readily agrees with the carnal man that this is impossible to obey. But the spiritual man does not stop there! He, *being compelled by love to obey*, embraces the empowering of the indwelling Christ, and steps out on the water of seeming impossibility to meet the Lord who beckons him. As with Peter on the raging sea, Christ does not rebuke this man for being too “idealistic” or “fanatical,” but rather lovingly rebukes “*doubt*” and “*little faith*” when he falters.<sup>1</sup> This man may be seen as “foolish” and even “legalistic” for endeavoring to live out the commandments of Christ practically and in simple faith, but he would rather not be conformed to this world but transformed by the renewing of his mind.<sup>2</sup> He takes the command to “*be holy*” to mean exactly what it says and being “*renewed in the spirit of [his] mind*” he simplistically puts “*on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*”<sup>3</sup> This man sees the commandments and exhortations, not as grievous,<sup>4</sup> but light, and embraces his side of the yoke with Christ.<sup>5</sup> He sees every word as exceedingly precious, and the very

<sup>1</sup> **Matt. 14:31** And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

<sup>2</sup> **Rom. 12:1-2** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

<sup>3</sup> **Eph. 4:23-24** And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

<sup>4</sup> **1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

<sup>5</sup> **Matt. 11:29-30** Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

pathway to partaking of the divine nature<sup>1</sup> and walking as Christ walked.<sup>2</sup>

How are we hearing the Christ's Word? Is our mind instantly filled with man's commentary and rational questions?<sup>3</sup> Do we instantly draw up hypothetical situations as to *when* we are supposed to love our enemies? Do we combat "hard sayings" with what we consider to be "easier sayings" within Scripture, and settle for the "easier" ones instead of allowing Scripture to interpret itself? Is our goal to get to heaven or to live a radical godly life on the way there?<sup>4</sup>

These truths pertain directly to the subject at hand because again, I believe that the root of much of the watered down version of the Gospel, which is so prevalent among us, is the error of isolating the "full following" of Jesus' words to a dispensation of time that only involves the physical nation of Israel as many dispensationalist teach today.<sup>5</sup> Instead of the *simplicity of obedience* which Christ's early disciples walked in, we have been taught by some who hold to the Postponement Theory that merely "lessons and principles are to be drawn from it" (i.e. the Sermon on the Mount) .<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **2Pet. 1:4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

<sup>2</sup> **1 John 2:6** He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

<sup>3</sup> **1 Tim. 6:3-4** If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

<sup>4</sup> **Tit. 2:11-12** For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

<sup>5</sup> **Ryrie, Charles** "DISPENSATIONALISM" P. 100

<sup>6</sup> **L.S. Chafer**, Systematic Theology (Dallas: Seminary Press, 1947), 5:97.

Though the notes of Dr. Scofield have been revised and removed many times from His original writings, his perspective has most definitely had an effect upon how we view Christian doctrine and practice. For example, in the Scofield's original writings,<sup>1</sup> it is written that *"it is evident that the really dangerous sect in Corinth was that which said 'I am of Christ.' They rejected the new revelation through Paul of the doctrine of grace; grounding themselves probably on the kingdom teachings of our Lord"*.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not we are to view following the teaching of Christ as *contrary* to Paul's "new teachings" of grace, and determining whether or not we are part of a "dangerous sect" in following the kingdom teachings of Christ, is of the utmost importance. The effect this perspective has had upon much of the Church that I associate with can be seen by the fact that when a person, or group of people, get "so radical" as to take Jesus at His word and endeavor to live out His commands in single-minded obedience to Him, they are labeled as a "dangerous sect" who have "rejected" the doctrine of grace which came through Paul and have fallen into legalism.

Is it true that, *"The Sermon on the Mount in its primary application gives neither the privilege nor the duty of the church"*, as Scofield says?<sup>3</sup> Or is Ryrie sure that the Sermon on the mount *"relates both to any time the [physical, Davidic] kingdom is offered (that is during the lord's earthly ministry as well as during the coming tribulation period) and to the*

<sup>1</sup> 1909 Scofield Ref. Bible p. 1,230

<sup>2</sup> As quoted by Philip Mauro, The Gospel of the Kingdom, Chapter 11 (1927)

<sup>3</sup> Scofield p.1,000 as quoted by Philip Mauro, The Gospel of the Kingdom, Chapter 11 (1927)

*time when the millennial kingdom is functioning on earth*”<sup>1</sup> These “times” suggested by Charles Ryrie (who is representing modern dispensational thought) to which the numerous commands of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount apply include all time after the coming of Christ, *except the era of the Church*. Yes, Christ’s commandments are the condemnation of the unbeliever, but dear brothers let’s not, under the guise of “*rightly dividing the word of truth*”<sup>2</sup>, remove the necessity and ability of obeying the commandments of Christ from the Spirit-filled believer! If Scofield and Ryrie are right, then we have no real obligation to follow the teachings of Christ set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. Our lives then could look in many aspects quite contrary to Christ’s sermon and yet we would find ourselves standing on in the glory of heaven upon our death. It then would also hold true that to what degree we decide to follow or not to follow these sayings of Christ is only a matter of personal choice and only effects potential rewards in heaven, having no real determining factor of our salvation. We then can put Christ’s words into a theory of Biblical interpretation, and hope our interpretation is true.

If, however, this statement is false, the climactic words of everything Jesus declared in that Sermon delivered on the mountain that day<sup>3</sup> settle down upon our hearts and we believe that fruitlessness means being cast into the fire,<sup>4</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Ryrie, Charles DISPENSATIONALISM p.100

<sup>2</sup> 2Ti 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 7:13-27

<sup>4</sup> Mat 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

profession of Christ as Lord while working lawlessness is departure from Him for all eternity.<sup>1</sup> Hearing but not doing what Christ just had said would mean that the entirety of our lives were *not* built upon Christ at all but sand and are destined to end in destruction.<sup>2</sup> In one point, we must all agree, this is no trivial matter!

Two questions cannot leave my mind when considering these things: If Christ did not desire for the church to follow the Sermon on the Mount, why would He tell the apostles after their salvation to teach their converts to “observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”<sup>3</sup>? And in obedience to Christ, why did the apostles both live and teach the same principles to their converts? Because of the fact that the word “commandment” has become so distasteful within the Church because of true legalism and dead religion, I admit I have been ignorantly reluctant in the past to use that word in my teaching. A wrong view of Christ’s commandments have culminated, however, in a far more destructive way in modern movements such as the “emergent church” into which multiplied thousands (perhaps millions) of my generation have been engulfed. Exhorting a Christian unto holiness,<sup>4</sup> calling upon them to yield their members as instruments of righteousness,<sup>5</sup> and flee from

<sup>1</sup> **Mat 7:23** And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

<sup>2</sup> **Mat 7:27** And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

<sup>3</sup> **Matthew 28:20a**

<sup>4</sup> **1 Peter 1:15-16** But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

<sup>5</sup> **Rom. 6:13** Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

idolatry,<sup>1</sup> purifying their souls through obedience of the truth,<sup>2</sup> have become labeled as “legalistic,” “judging” and “impossible attainments.”

I am not specifically burdened for those that are walking in the light of God’s Word, confessing their sins daily, and being cleansed from all unrighteousness.<sup>3</sup> The sobering convictions of my heart don’t have particular reference to those that are continually casting off the weight and sin that so easily entangles them to run with endurance the race that is set before them,<sup>4</sup> nor to those who have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.<sup>5</sup> This message is not directed primarily at those who have abandoned the bondage and desire of the self-life<sup>6</sup> and, though they still struggle with sin, sin, are presenting themselves as living sacrifices holy and acceptable<sup>7</sup> and purifying their souls through obedience of the truth through the Spirit.<sup>8</sup> It is with a heart of love and deep concern with which Christ has burdened me, that this

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<sup>1</sup> **1 Cor. 10:14**

<sup>2</sup> **1 Peter 1:22** Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

<sup>3</sup> **1 John 1:8-9** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

<sup>4</sup> **Heb. 12:1** Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

<sup>5</sup> **Gal. 5:24** And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

<sup>6</sup> **Matt. 16:24-25** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*

<sup>7</sup> **Rom. 12:1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service

<sup>8</sup> **1 Peter 1:22** Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

**Rom. 8:13** For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live

message comes to those who are using grace as a license to sin;<sup>1</sup> those who do not desire nor believe that it is possible to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.<sup>2</sup> These words have specific and eternal implications upon those who call themselves followers of Christ but are not actually following Him. And not only these poor souls, but those that teach a gospel to them that implies or directly states that *believing in* and *obeying* Christ and His commandments are two separate issues.<sup>3</sup> It is time that we return to the Biblical truth that obedience is vital to our ultimate and eternal salvation.<sup>4</sup> The Scriptures are clear that only “those who through patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality [will inherit] eternal life. But those that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, [they will receive] indignation and wrath.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Rom. 6:15** What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

<sup>2</sup> **2Cor. 7:1** Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

<sup>3</sup> **Rom. 1:5** By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

**Rom. 16:26** But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

**James 2:17** Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

**James 2:18-20** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

<sup>4</sup> **Heb 5:9** And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

**Mat 7:24-27** Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

<sup>5</sup> **Rom 2:4-9** Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest

Our Lord will not be pleased upon His return with those who have buried their Masters money, having not invested that which was given to them.<sup>1</sup> Christ is returning for a bride who is watching for Him in purity, not looking for oil in the city.<sup>2</sup> Let us be filled with the true oil of His Spirit that, through His empowering, we may be found living and waiting in obedience.<sup>3</sup> It is only through our faith working out in practical ways that we will assure our hearts before Him at His coming.<sup>4</sup> I am persuaded that much of the church that has followed the Postponement Theory, or any other doctrine that seeks to separate us from the direct commands of Christ, even through sincere motive, is in danger of having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.<sup>5</sup> “The saving Christ is not a proposition to be accepted, but a person to be loved and obeyed. The expression of faith is

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up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

<sup>1</sup> **Mat 25:24-30** Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

<sup>2</sup> **Mat 25:10** And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

<sup>3</sup> **1Pe 1:22** Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

<sup>4</sup> **1Jn 3:18-19** My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

<sup>5</sup> **2Tim. 3:5** Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

obedience and love.”<sup>1</sup> This message from my heart is to those supposing themselves to be within the Church that call Christ Lord, but do not do what he says<sup>2</sup> who have gotten caught up in a kingdom that is in word only when the true Kingdom is demonstrated in the lives of His servants through the Spirit and power.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wynkoop, Theology of Love p.248

<sup>2</sup> **Luke 6:46** And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

<sup>3</sup> **1Cor. 2:4** And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

**1Cor. 4:20** For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

# CONCLUSION

***“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?” - Hebrews 2:1-4***

This is the Kingdom I believe God in the flesh made the unfathomable sacrifice to live and preach.<sup>1</sup> This is the message the disciples continued to preach under His command and anointing.<sup>2</sup> This is the seed originally sown by the Son of Man<sup>3</sup> and that must continue to be preached until the great Day of the Harvest.<sup>4</sup> This is the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, into which we have been translated and

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<sup>1</sup> **Mark 1:15** And saying, **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**

<sup>2</sup> **Acts 1:3** To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

**Acts 8:12** But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

**Acts 20:25** And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

<sup>3</sup> **Matt. 13:37** He answered and said unto them, **He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;**

<sup>4</sup> **Matt. 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**

delivered from the power of darkness.<sup>1</sup> This is the Kingdom over which Christ has become the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.<sup>2</sup> This message is the Gospel of the Kingdom,<sup>3</sup> the Gospel that embraces a personal Savior *and* a reigning Lord!

*Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Col. 1:13** Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

<sup>2</sup> **Heb. 5:9** And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

<sup>3</sup> **Matt. 4:23; Matt. 9:35; Matt. 24:14 and Mark 1:14**

<sup>4</sup> **1Tim. 1:17**