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Preach the Word in View of Christ's Appearing and Kingdom



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #342 ~

Three of the last four posts have focused on preaching the gospel of the kingdom (*338*, *339*, *341*). Jesus Christ is coming back soon to establish His kingdom on earth, and we know that because we live in the end-times. Therefore, these three lessons about God's kingdom are critically important. That's why eschatology, the study of last things, is a major doctrine at this time in history. Christ's coming and kingdom comprise a comprehensive truth about the future that must be fully and clearly taught so that it's fixed in the hearts of all believers.

A church's teaching must focus on Christ's death and resurrection, our spiritual growth, and the church age, but should also include truths about being glorified and reigning with Christ in the kingdom ages. We need to know about God's love, holiness, sovereignty, justification, sanctification, but we also need hope, and therefore must preach and promote doctrines describing our glorious future with Christ and all the

saints in heaven and on earth.

The book of Acts emphasizes the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God, signifying that it's a primary purpose of the church. Acts 1 starts off by summarizing Jesus' teaching during His last 40 forty days on earth. He was *"speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God"* (vs. 3), which would have been both the spiritual kingdom (the church), and the physical kingdom. It's vital that we know this, and imitate Jesus by doing the same.

Jesus taught His disciples about the entire kingdom of God. He wanted them and us to understand the whole of our Christian life in the context of God's kingdom, and to then tell people this good news of His death and resurrection, the church age, and the kingdom ages. To live rightly for God, we must have an eternal perspective, God's great, grand, glorious plan of an eternal life with His Son.

In Acts 3:21, Peter tells us that Christ will return to bring about the *"period of restoration of all things"*, which speaks of the millennial kingdom. Acts 8:12 says that Philip was *"preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ."* In Acts 14:22, Paul instructs his disciples, *"Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."* Paul is talking about suffering for God during this life, and then entering His heavenly and physical kingdom.

In Acts 15:13-18, James quotes from Amos 9:11 to let us know that Gentiles will also be part of God's coming kingdom. *"I will return… I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, so that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, all the Gentiles who are called by My name."* Acts 19:9 states that Paul was *"speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God"*. Surely, he was speaking about God's kingdom from a present and eternal perspective. He told them the good news about the present and future reign of Christ in our lives, and His future reign over this world.

Paul is talking to the Ephesians elders (Acts 20:17-38), and what he taught them is for all elders to understand, model, and teach. He wanted them to know that he had declared to believers everything that *"was profitable"*, that He *"went about preaching the kingdom"*, and that he taught them *"the whole counsel of God"* (Acts 20:20, 25, 27). Equating these three phrases makes it quite clear that God wants us to know and preach the totality of our eternal life, from being justified to being sanctified to being glorified to reigning with Christ in His coming kingdom.

The last chapter of Acts says, *"Paul… was… solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus… He stayed two full years… preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ."* (Acts 28:23, 31). In this conclusion to Acts, this accurate church history, Paul was teaching people about Jesus and His kingdom. I hope you are realizing that God wants His people to always be occupied with the big picture, the person of Jesus Christ and His kingdom. As in the first verses of Acts (Acts 1:3-11), so too in the final verses of Acts, the focus is on Jesus Christ and God's kingdom.

What does Paul tell Timothy in his last letter? *"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word…"* (2 Tim. 4:1-2). The *"appearing"* refers to Christ's coming, that point in time when we are glorified and our 3-part salvation is complete. The *"kingdom"* refers to the visible, kingdom age when we are with Christ and are reigning with Christ (Lk. 21:28, 31). To all believers, Christ's appearing and kingdom must be in view, must always be on their hearts.

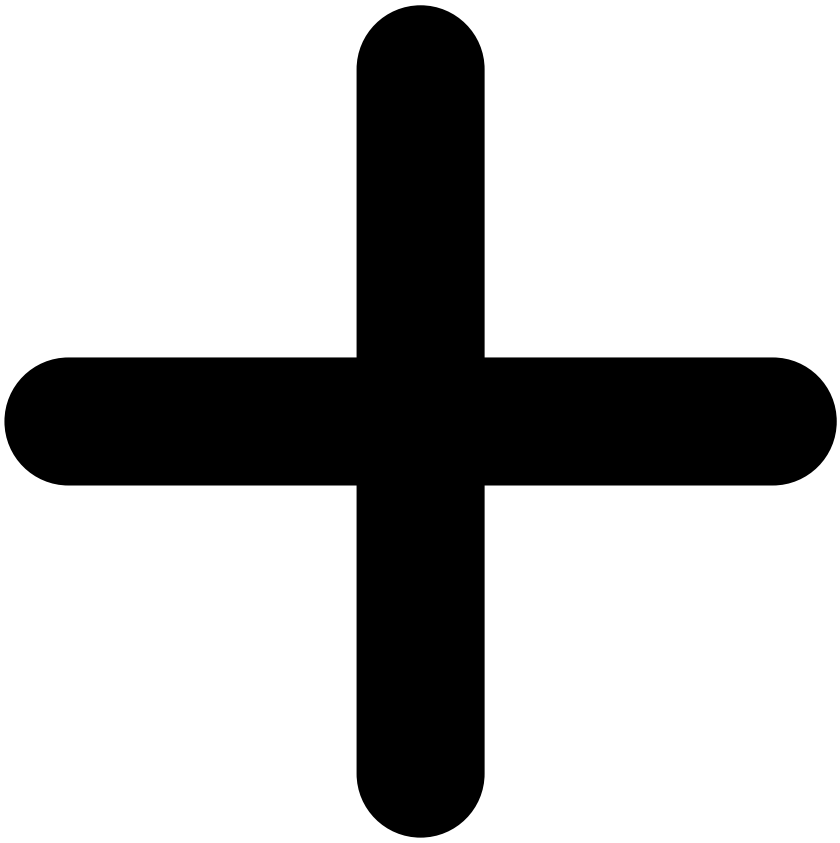
A believer must not be spiritually static, stagnant, or stuck in the present, or think that he is. He must see the present in light of the future, must have the whole of his eternal life in mind. He must know that he was justified and is being sanctified and will be glorified, and then will enter the kingdom – and he should be longing for it. He must

know that what God is doing in his life, in the church, and in the world, is in light of an incredibly amazing future. He must know that he is on a journey, that God is leading and directing him and all believers to the end of this age, to Christ's coming, and to be glorified, and to the kingdom ages, to when Christ is supremely glorified and we are reigning with Him. Ps. 72:19, Hab. 2:14

A pastor must not forget the hope that he and all believers have. that we will soon and forever be with Jesus Christ. A pastor must remember his primary purpose, to preach God's word in view of Christ's appearing and kingdom, whether his teaching is Spirit planned, Spirit prompted, a sentence or two, an entire message, a series of messages, or whether it's a song, closing verse, benediction, or in a private conversation, etc. To rightly do this, a pastor must diligently study the end-times, Christ's coming, the Jewish people, the kingdom ages, Isaiah, Daniel, Matt. 24, Luke 21, 1 Th. 4-5, 2 Th. 1-2, Revelation, etc. Then what is in his heart will come out of his mouth – he will declare the whole counsel of God, he will preach God's word in view of Christ's appearing and kingdom.

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3). *"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."* Jude 24-25

P.S. It's extremely encouraging and motivating knowing that we belong to the greatest royal family of all time, and that we are children of the King. Here are two more posts on the kingdom: *"They Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done"*, and *"Christ's Kingdom is Coming."*



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