

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

One of the great texts in the Bible is that found in the New Testament book of Colossians, chapter 1, verse 13. This verse says that God "...has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son." There are two kingdoms in this verse. There is the domain or power of darkness. The domain of darkness is a spiritual kingdom. Satan is its ruler. Then there is the kingdom of God's beloved Son. This also is a spiritual kingdom. Jesus Christ is its king. Which one are you living in?

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Which kingdom are you in? Are you in the Kingdom of Darkness or the Kingdom of God's dear son? When you read the rest of the context of Colossians 1:13 you learn that Jesus is not just the king of a spiritual kingdom. That's right! Christ also reigns over the material universe. "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things were created through him and for him. (17) And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:16-17 ESV.) Jesus Christ is the ruler of this universe. Christ rules over all nations of the world. When nations do not acknowledge His rule, then the people of those nations will suffer. A nation will prosper when it honors God by honoring His Son Jesus. And the greatest prosperity of all is the salvation of our souls.

Jesus' apostle John wrote that "Whoever believes in the Son of God has [God's] testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. (11) And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (12) Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life." (1 John 5:10-12 ESV.)

Naturally, at the center of Christ's kingdom are His people who carry him in their hearts. Christ rules these people with a scepter of righteousness. (Hebrews 1:8.) But Jesus also rules over the nations. God predicted this through the prophets. In the Old Testament we read of a promise that God made to His Son: "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. (8) Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. (9) You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalm 2:7-9

ESV.) One of these days all the nations will be smitten with the Lord's rod of iron; broken into pieces like a potter's vessel we will be brought before the King for judgment. Psalm 145 predicts, "They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, (12) to make known to the children of men your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. (13) Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. (The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.)" (Psalm 145:11-13 ESV.) Yes, Jesus is not just the king over his people. Christ's "sovereignty is not to be cramped within buildings with stained glass windows." (Jim McGuigan.)

Christ's apostle Paul predicted that the world as we know it is coming to an "end, when [Christ] delivers the kingdom to God the Father", but Christ will only do this "after destroying every rule and every authority and power. (25) For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. (26) The last enemy to be destroyed is death." (1 Corinthians 15:24-26 ESV.) So, there is coming a great cataclysmic day in which every ruler, every authority, and every power will be snatched from the hands of governments and delivered into the hands of God. On that great day the last enemy will also be destroyed. The last enemy is death.

All death will be annihilated. Christ will do this by raising all the dead of every century since the world began! That's right! The wicked will be raised. And the righteous will be raised. His last great work as the King of all kings will be to give life to the dead and bring them all into judgment. God insists that the dead be raised and stand to be judged.

This great judgment day has been predicted from of old. Ten centuries before Christ was born, Solomon wrote, "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man. (14) For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil." (Eccl 12:13-14 ESV.) Solomon also warned young people about the judgment, "Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment." (Eccl 11:9.) Yes, while alive in this world we can do whatever we wish to do. But we will bring it with us into judgment. We will give an account as to how we have lived in this world. Young people, do you believe this?

Jesus also talked about that great Day of Judgment. For instance, he said, “I tell you, on the Day of Judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak...” (Matthew 12:36.) Of course, it will take a miracle for every careless word to be remembered. Jesus is perfectly capable of performing this miracle. Jesus also predicted that the people of ancient Nineveh would be there, as well as the Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon from Africa ten centuries before Jesus was born. (Matthew 12:42, 43.) In John 5:22, Jesus said that “The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son....” Jesus predicted his second coming in order to begin that great Judgment Day. He said, “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. (32) Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. (34) Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’” (Matthew 25:31-34 ESV.)

The “Kingdom” that Christians will inherit is the heavenly side of the same kingdom they are now in! That’s right! Remember that verse I started with? Christians have been delivered from the power of darkness, that is, the power of Satan. But not only were they saved from Satan, they were translated into the Kingdom of Christ. The Christian who is alive on this earth lives under the reign and in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which is the church of Jesus Christ. When the Christian is no longer alive in this world, he or she still lives under the reign and in the heavenly kingdom of Jesus. The Kingdom of God is an eternal kingdom and its inhabitants do not leave it when they die!

Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is like leaven. (Matthew 13:33.) That is, the kingdom of heaven flavors and seasons everything it touches. It does this through its people. Human civilizations on the earth can be exceedingly blessed by citizens of the kingdom of heaven. But in many countries of the world Christianity is being persecuted. Pure Christianity seasons the society in which it is found. It can make for a more prosperous society.

Furthermore, Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is for everyone who wishes to do the will of God in every nation. There is great diversity in the church of Christ, but yet, a common faith and practice should and does characterize this

great church. Jesus likened it to a grain of mustard seed, which is the least of seeds, but when it is grown it becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches. ([Matthew 13:31.](#)) You see, Pure Christianity is color-blind. The Gospel is for all. In fact, Christians are urged by the Lord to make “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings ...for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions,” so that civilizations may lead peaceful and quiet lives along with the Christians. Christians work for the best for every civilization because this is good, and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior. God wants Christians to be like Him in that He “desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Because “there is only one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.” ([1Timothy 2:1-6 ESV.](#))

The Kingdom of Christ will be saved in the last great day. Will you be among the saved? Visit a church of Christ near you to learn how to receive the salvation of Christ and be added to the church by the Lord himself.