

I. Review

- A. Part 1 - Crisis of Hope - Only 27% of the church holds conviction when it comes to the topic of the “restoration of all things” and the promised age to come. What is to be the steady anchor for our soul and the preoccupation of the bride has been relegated to a subcategory of doctrine. (Heb. 6:13-20; 1 Pet. 1:10-13)
- B. Establishing the Promise - A male child, known as the “seed”, would be given to humanity. Through His righteous rule, He would restore the dwelling place of God to the earth once again, He would fully and permanently destroy Satan, sin, and death, and usher in an eternal reality of the fullness of God on the earth.
 - 1. This great promise became known as the promise of the “kingdom” or the “kingdom of God” and the promised individual became known as the “Messiah” or “Christ”.
- C. Apologetic Expectations - Jesus literally fulfilled over 300 prophecies during his first coming, setting a clear precedent that the remaining unfulfilled prophecies will be literally fulfilled upon his return. This was also the clear conviction and hope of the New Testament writers. (Acts 1:1-8; Heb 9:13-15, 27-28; Eph. 1:13-14; Col. 1:27; 1 Pet. 1:3-5)
- D. There is no Kingdom without the King - There is no prophetic scripture nor apostolic writing that places a hope in the establishment of the kingdom in addition to, or outside of, the literal earthly rulership of the King from Jerusalem. In light of this, one of the foundations of the Christian faith is a longing and cry for the king to come. (Acts 3:6-23; 1 Pet. 1:3-9, 2 Pet. 3:12-13; Rev. 22:17-20)

II. Preaching the Promise of the Kingdom

- A. Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom - In my opinion the modern church has greatly misapplied and misunderstood the repeated New Testament theme of “preaching the gospel of the kingdom”. Most Christians interpret this theme as the preaching of the message of forgiveness of sins through faith. Though this is a critical message, it falls very short of the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. If you take another look at the language, used with the message and demonstration that went along with it, it is clear that they were talking about something far beyond forgiveness of sins.

1. In Messaging - John the Baptist proclaimed that the Kingdom of Heaven was “at hand” which literally translated means, “is near you, or has come near”. This phrase is given greater clarity as we see how it was used in the rest of the scriptures. This phrase was used anytime Jesus was physically near or an aspect of the Kingdom of God was experienced. It was never understood as a proclamation that the Kingdom of God had actually come, or was slowly coming, but rather a proclamation that an aspect of the coming Kingdom had been experienced, thus shoring up and creating a greater hope of the coming Kingdom. (Mat. 4:17; 12:28; Lk 9:1-2, 10:1,9-11)
2. In Demonstration - The demonstrations of power that we see in the scriptures were in accordance with the promises of the Kingdom, and were given as proof to establish the promise of the coming Kingdom and the identity of the Messiah. (Is. 26:19, 29:18, 35:5-6, 42:7,16; Hos. 13:14; Lk 7:19-22)
3. The Command - Just as He and His disciples did, He has commissioned and empowered His church to do. We are called to preach the coming Kingdom through messaging and practical demonstrations of power until the gospel of the coming Kingdom is preached to the ends of the earth. (Mk 16:19-20; Acts 1:2-8; Rom. 15:15-19)

III. The Pendulum of Kingdom Hope

- A. Among those who hold that there will be a literal fulfillment of the promises of the Kingdom of God manifest upon the earth, there are two prominent positions. As seems to be the case in most points of argument, these two positions are set in juxtaposition to each other. I would offer that both positions have strengths and weaknesses and the right position lies somewhere in between the far swings of the pendulum of interpretation.

“And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:4)

1. Premillennial - This position holds that the kingdom will be established by the church walking in signs and wonders that defeat darkness under the rulership and authority of Jesus from heaven through the Spirit.

2. Postmillennial - This position holds that the kingdom of God will be established when Jesus bodily returns to the earth. They believe, in general, that the negative circumstances and wickedness of the earth will increase leading up to the return of the Lord.

B. In general, the premillennial position is correct in mission but wrong in eschatological interpretation and the postmillennial position is wrong in mission but correct in eschatological interpretation. The missing key for both of these groups, in my opinion, is what the promise of the Kingdom biblically is, and what being a preaching witness of that kingdom looks like.

1. Eschatological Interpretation - It is abundantly clear in both the scriptural evidence and the experiential evidence that darkness and wickedness will increase. The only hope of true and lasting establishment of the kingdom hope is found only in the promise of the return of the bridegroom King, beckoned by a longing and ready bride. (Is.60:2; Dan. 7:25; Joel 3:13-16; Hag. 2:6-7 Mat. 13:24-30, 36-40, 24:7-13; 2 Thes. 2:1-12; Rev. 13:7)
2. Mission to be a witness - The command to be a witness of the kingdom, and the empowerment of the Spirit to walk out the command, serves as a clear missional statement to all believers. The escapist and disengaged mindset that often accompanies a premillennial view is an affront to the command and equipping of our Lord to be a light in the darkness and a witness of the coming Kingdom. (Is. 52:4-8, 61:1-3; Mat. 24:14; Act. 1:6-8; Rom. 10:1-21; Rev. 11:3-10)

C. Lovers outwork Workers - The final consideration that must remain the foundation of all eschatological interpretation, as well as the catalyst for missional work, is the heart of intimate love and friendship with God. Not only do lovers outwork workers, but the work that they do is from a pure heart and done by friends and bridal partners eager for the bridegroom. (John 3:26-30)