The Kingdom of God, Part 1: The Gospel of the Kingdom

GERALD R. THOMPSON

Ver. 1.1

© Copyright 2021 Gerald R. Thompson

Published by Lonang Institute
https://lonang.com

All Bible quotations are from the English Standard Version

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

THERE IS NO GOSPEL WITHOUT THE KINGDOM 2
- Jesus Proclaimed the Gospel of the *Kingdom* 2
- Jesus Taught in Parables Regarding the *Kingdom* 3
- The Great Commission Couples the Gospel with the *Kingdom* 4

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD? 5
- The Three Physical Kingdoms of God 6
- Ancient Israel as the Kingdom of God 7
- The Root & Graft and the Kingdom of Heaven 8

THE CHURCH IS NOT THE KINGDOM OF GOD 9
- A Question of Timing 10
- The Church Has No King or Government 10
- The Kingdom of God Isn't Here Yet 12
- Entering v. Inheriting the Kingdom 15

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM? 17
- The Good News of the Kingdom 17
- The Progression of the Kingdom of God 19
- The City of God 20

TRANSITIONING FROM CHURCH TO KINGDOM 22
- Marriage Supper of the Lamb 22
- Not a Culmination, But a Repurposing 23

WORKING FOR THE KINGDOM 25
- God Isn't Finished With You Yet 25
- Human Resources Department 27

CONCLUSION 28

INTRODUCTION

It's all about the kingdom, folks. What is? The Bible. The purpose for mankind. Good vs. evil. All prophecy. Existence. Yes, even Jesus. Everything. Including the Gospel.

Before the creation of mankind, there was the kingdom of God. Before the serpent, original sin and the fall. Before there was atonement, forgiveness, or even the need for them. And when this earth is burned up, the heavens melted away, and both are replaced with a new creation, there will still be the kingdom of God. When redemption is complete, sin and death are no more, and we dwell with God forever, there will still be the kingdom. The kingdom is, was, and forever shall be. Amen.

And while you may accept that as a general principle which might possibly be true is some abstract sense, there is more. Everything which has happened since creation, everything which now exists, and all that will eventually happen, are all about the kingdom of God. The creation, the entrance of sin, the flood, the nation of Israel, the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, the founding of the Church, and everything that will happen in the end times, are all about the kingdom, as well.

Therefore, to think correctly about any of these things, we must begin to think about them in terms of the kingdom of God. Not as a secondary consideration or an afterthought, nor as one of many additional perspectives. But as the primary driver of understanding, without which our knowledge is seriously deficient. This necessarily includes our view and understanding of the Gospel.

For example, *what is the purpose of mankind*? That people should do the will of God as expressed in God's laws, that is, the laws of nature (His will imbued in the physical universe) and the laws of nature's God (His verbal laws as revealed in the Bible). Do you want to glorify God? Do His will. Do you want to love God? Keep His commandments. Do you want to enjoy Him forever? Become a citizen of the kingdom of God.

What was the effect of the Fall? It made people outcasts from the kingdom of God, a denizen of the dominions of the kingdom of God (*i.e.*, a resident within God's territorial jurisdiction), but not a citizen. Citizenship can only be regained by the means provided by God grace for salvation, not on the basis of anyone's works or merit.

What the battle between Good and Evil? It is a battle for the throne and dominion of planet earth and all its inhabitants. God's kingdom has a competitor, the Devil's kingdom, which seeks to usurp God's kingdom and dethrone Him. God will eventually defeat the Devil's kingdom and banish its members forever. *Who is the Antichrist?* He will be the human leader of the Devil's kingdom.

Why did God set apart the nation of Israel? Ancient Israel was the first incarnation, or manifestation, of the kingdom of God on earth.

Why was Jesus sent to earth? He was sent the first time to inaugurate the first phase of the kingdom of Christ, that is, the spiritual aspects of His kingdom. He will return to inaugurate the second phase of the kingdom of Christ, the physical incarnation of His kingdom.

What is the role of the Church? The role of the Church is to be the body of fellowship of the citizens of heaven while they are on earth. That role will transform when Christ returns, from a body of fellowship to the governing of the Gentile nations during the Millennium. Until then, the Church is to prepare its members for their tasks in the physical kingdom of Christ.

What is the purpose of biblical prophecy? Prophecy has three functions: 1) to announce God's plans for His kingdom, the nation of Israel; 2) to announce the initial appearance of the Messiah as Priest, to inaugurate the spiritual phase of his kingdom; 3) to announce the return of the Messiah as King, to inaugurate the physical phase of his kingdom; and 4) to describe the events occurring in connection with the transition to the eternal kingdom of God.

Why did God give us the Bible, the holy scriptures? To reveal His laws for all mankind, and similarly reveal his holy principles of good government. To reveal His plans for the kingdom of God, its progression throughout history and its culmination in eternity. To reveal prophecy, to reveal the Messiah (the ultimate Priest-King), and to reveal how people can participate to the fullest extent in God's plans.

What is the Gospel? The Gospel has two primary purposes: 1) to announce the means which God has provided for regaining citizenship in the kingdom of God; and 2) to give people understanding and hope that the wicked and oppressive governments of the world ruled by men will one day be eradicated and replaced by an everlasting kingdom of peace, righteousness and prosperity ruled by God Himself.

Please join me as we consider scriptures regarding the kingdom of God, and what they mean for the Church and the Gospel. In particular, we will see that the Church, rather than being the culmination of the plan of God, is merely an interim phase in the progression of God's kingdom. Not only that, but the Church will be repurposed for its next task when the Church age ends. Prepare to have your eyes opened.

THERE IS NO GOSPEL WITHOUT THE KINGDOM

It is no stretch to say that the message of the gospel and the good news of the kingdom of God are inextricably intertwined. Which is to say, you really cannot separate them from each other. But that does not make them equal.

1. Jesus Proclaimed the Gospel of the *Kingdom*. Scripture indicates some fourteen times Jesus and the early disciples proclaimed the *gospel of the kingdom*. For instance,

> "And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the *gospel of the kingdom* and healing every disease and every affliction." (Mat. 9:35). "Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the *good news of the kingdom of God*. And the twelve were with him." (Lk. 8:1).

In Lk. 16:16, Jesus said, "The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached." The disciples also were instructed by Jesus to proclaim, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mat. 10:7). But perhaps most telling are these statements by Jesus:

> "I must preach the *good news of the kingdom of God* [*i.e.*, the gospel of the kingdom] to the other towns as well; for ***I was sent for this purpose***." (Lk. 4:43).
>
> Jesus answered, "You say that I am a King. For this purpose I was born and ***for this purpose I have come into the world***." (Jn. 18:37).

In Luke, Jesus indicated that the gospel of the kingdom was not merely an ancillary part of His overall message, but the *core* of His message. It was the very reason He was preaching. In John, it is obvious Jesus knew exactly who He was, and exactly what His job was. Namely, to launch the first phase of the kingdom of God on earth - the spiritual only phase. The very *essence* of Jesus was the kingdom of God.

Even in the book of Acts, *after* the death and resurrection of Christ, the disciples were still preaching the gospel of the kingdom. Thus, Acts 8:12 tells us that Philip "preached good news about the *kingdom of God* and the name of Jesus Christ." And in Acts 28:31, even Paul was said to be "proclaiming the *kingdom of God* and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ."

In Mat. 24:13-14, when Jesus spoke of the end times (specifically, the Tribulation period), he said, "But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And ***this*** *gospel of the kingdom* will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." Since the Tribulation hasn't happened yet, maybe - just maybe - this gospel of the kingdom will become increasingly important as we get closer to the end times.

We will consider what the content of the gospel of the kingdom looks like later on. Right now, I just want you to understand the kingdom message is at the very core of the gospel.

2. Jesus Taught in Parables Regarding the *Kingdom*. Further confirmation of this can be seen by the fact that Jesus was always talking in parables, and those parables were most often *kingdom parables*. Typically, Jesus would start a parable by saying, *the kingdom of God (or heaven) is like*, or *the kingdom of heaven may be compared to* .... There are over a dozen such parables in Matthew alone, and another half-dozen in Luke.

> All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden *from the foundation of the world*." (Mat. 13:34-35, quoting Ps. 78:2).
>
> 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*." (Mat. 25:34).

What do these texts indicate, except that the typical parable (kept secret from the foundation of the world), usually taken to be about salvation, or knowing God, *in actuality reveals an aspect of the kingdom of God*. "The kingdom of heaven is like …" Further, both the kingdom itself, and the fact Jesus would speak in kingdom parables, were ordained before the foundation of the world. Would it be too much to conclude that Jesus was destined from before the foundation of the world to reveal the nature of that kingdom in parables?

Which is why Jesus did *not* just say, *heaven is like*, or *God is like*. Jesus was intentionally interjecting a governmental component in statements of spiritual principles. When Jesus talked about the kingdom of God or heaven, I suggest what He really meant was the *government of heaven*, or *God's government*, and that's the way we should start thinking about Jesus' message.

So when we, in an attempt to be spiritual, read Jesus' parables as if He merely said *heaven is like*, or *God is like*, we actually denude the Gospel of its full meaning. By making Jesus' teaching less governmental, we make it less the Gospel. ***The Gospel is by nature a governmental message***. It's about darn time the Church got back in line with scripture and started embracing this truth.

I know some of you are going to assume I'm referring to *politics* in the sense of candidates for office and political parties, or perhaps you have images in your mind about dirty dealings in back rooms - but that's not what I mean. Instead, I mean that *we have to start thinking about the kingdom of God as an actual government*.

3. The Great Commission Couples the Gospel with the *Kingdom*. The Great Commission is to the same effect as the parables of Jesus. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Mat. 28:19-20).

The Great Commission couples "make disciples of all nations" together with teaching the world all of Christ's commands (that is, all of God's kingdom laws). This is a *package deal* - you cannot separate these components. So why is it that the modern Church does only the first of these, and ignores the second altogether? For shame, for shame. Now as to what the content of those universal laws of the kingdom are, see my essay on *The Great Commission and God's Law*.

In similar fashion, the Beatitudes (Mat. 5:2-12) refer to the kingdom three times (if you include the meek *inheriting the earth*, which refers to the Millennial kingdom). Even the Lord's prayer (Mat. 6:9-13) includes a key reference to the earthly, physical kingdom of Christ ("Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.") So the Great Commission is not exceptional in this regard. All of Jesus' key instructions to believers link the gospel and the kingdom of God together.

You have probably been taught that the gospel is the method for producing salvation, and salvation is the ultimate goal of both Christianity and the Church. However, God's ultimate plan for mankind is to physically manifest the kingdom of God on earth, and then transition that kingdom into eternity. Let me suggest a way to reorient your thinking.

Original sin means we start life with no citizenship in God's kingdom. Salvation means that we regain citizenship in God's kingdom, though full possession of the kingdom is deferred until Christ returns. Evangelism is merely the process by which people are recruited to become citizens in God's kingdom. And once we become citizens, we have *jobs* to do for the kingdom, both now and when Christ returns. And when I say *jobs*, I'm **not** talking about more evangelism.

So rather than being the culmination of Christianity and the Church, salvation is only the beginning. When we get to the kingdom, we will not be resting on our laurels, or playing harps and singing praise songs all day and night. Salvation is only a *means*, not an *end*, which ultimately serves the purpose of bringing the kingdom of God to earth. Salvation is only the *first phase* of bringing the kingdom of God to earth, where citizenship is secured but not possessed. Actual possession of the kingdom will not occur until the *second phase*, when Christ returns to set up His kingdom physically.

Here's the bottom line: ***The kingdom of God isn't merely an aspect or feature of the Gospel; the Gospel is merely an aspect of the kingdom of God***. As between the two, the Gospel is lesser and the kingdom is greater. So which should we talk about more often in church, the lesser or the greater? Do we only look back to the cross, or do we mainly look forward to the kingdom?

Thus, for the sake of recruiting the citizens of the kingdom of God, Jesus came the first time. And for the sake of establishing the kingdom of God on earth, He will come a second time. This is the appropriate biblical context of the gospel.

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

So far, we have used the term *kingdom of God* rather loosely. It's time we define *which kingdom*? Kingdom language is used throughout the scriptures. However, there are three phrases, *kingdom of God*, *kingdom of heaven*, and *kingdom of Christ* (or a close variant), used exclusively in the New Testament. This has led some people to make two erroneous conclusions: 1) that all three phrases are equivalent; and 2) one or more of these phrases refer to the universal Church (*i.e.*, the body of Christ).

This second error - that the kingdom of God and the Church are the same, I will examine in the section *The Church is Not the Kingdom of God*.

As to the first conclusion, obviously the kingdoms of God, heaven and Christ are all *related*, since Christ is God, and God rules the heavens. It is a question of *manifestation*, or the extent to which the kingdoms are made visible and take physical form, that distinguishes the terms. And this has to do mainly with the *seat of government*, as I will explain below.

God is by nature an invisible spirit. (Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17). And since God Himself has no beginning or end, His kingdom will necessarily be from everlasting to everlasting, and it is likely that His kingdom will always have an invisible component. Thus, scripture is clear that God's kingdom has no beginning. "Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting." (Ps.

93:2).

Similarly, scripture is clear that the kingdom of God has no end. "How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures from generation to generation." (Dan. 4:3).

The Three Physical Kingdoms of God

What else can we know about what this everlasting kingdom of God looks like?

> The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. (Ps. 103:19-22).

Thus, the kingdom of God *in heaven* has elements in common with just about any other kingdom: a King (*i.e.*, a sovereign), a throne or seat of government, a dominion or territory, subjects and citizens, and ministers (*i.e.*, government agents). For convenience, I will refer to the kingdom of God in heaven as the *kingdom of heaven*.

The *kingdom of heaven* has a particular significance in the New Testament period (the Church age), in that this is when the kingdom of God is manifest only spiritually, and not in any physical form. This is because both the King, and the seat of government, are absent from the earth at this time. The kingdom of heaven is distinguished from when the kingdom of God *has been* or *will be* physically manifested. I will discuss the kingdom of heaven in more detail when we look at *The Root & Graft*.

There are **three instances** when the kingdom of God will be made manifest in the physical realm. And these instances, by definition, though still part of the kingdom of God, are *not* part of the kingdom of heaven, because they are not *in heaven*. These are: **1)** the kingdom of ancient Israel; **2)** the millennial kingdom of Christ; and **3)** the eternal kingdom of the New Jerusalem on the new earth.

Yes, I know people often regard this last instance as being *in heaven*, but in fact the new earth will be a physical place, the New Jerusalem will be a physical city, and the people there will have new physical bodies (though immortal). Whether this eternal state is purely physical, or both physical and "heavenly" (*i.e.*, spiritual), is not necessary for us to decide. To avoid confusion, I will refer to this final eternal kingdom as "eternity" and not as *heaven*.

Therefore, I view the periods of history *before Israel* (from creation until the Exodus), and from the deportation of Israel to Babylon up through the end of the Church Age, as times when the kingdom of God has not been manifest. Certainly, the kingdom of God, being from everlasting to everlasting, has *existed* at all these times. However, God at those times has ruled from His throne in heaven directly, and not through any earthly agents. This is the period we are in now.

Which is to say, God remains invisible, and there is no earthly seat of God's government or physical dominion of His kingdom marked out, *at present*. God reigns, but not so that we can see or touch the kingdom. In this essay, I will address only those three instances when the kingdom of God can be seen and touched.

The millennial period is what I believe scripture refers to as the *kingdom of Christ*. Or, kingdom of Christ and God (Eph. 5:5), kingdom of his beloved Son (Col. 1:13), kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:11), and kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ (Rev. 11:15). This is also the most likely meaning of "the coming kingdom of our father David" as used in Mk. 11:10, since Christ is the Son of David. Whenever I use *kingdom of Christ*, I mean to refer to the Millennial period.

Ancient Israel as the Kingdom of God

You may not have thought of ancient Israel as a manifestation of the kingdom of God, but there are two arguments supporting this conclusion. *First*, ancient Israel shared the key elements of the kingdom of God I mentioned earlier. *Second*, it is a necessary conclusion of the *Root & Graft*, discussed next.

Israel's dominion was the Promised Land, its citizens were the Israelites, its subjects were non-Jews living in the land, and its ministers were primarily the priests, but also the local judges. These kingdom elements remained constant throughout the period from Sinai until the deportation. By *local judges*, I refer to the men appointed as per Exo. 18:25-26, and not the national judges from Moses on down to Samuel.

The key difference between ancient Israel and all other nations in history, as kingdoms, is that in Israel God was king. (1 Sam. 8:7). He ruled directly as king from Moses until Samuel. Thereafter, God retained the exclusive right to choose Israel's kings, which after king Saul were David and his male descendants. And David and his heirs were the representative of God on earth. (2 Chr. 6:5-6; Ps 89:3-4). Although, I believe it is correct to say that God remained the king of Israel during the entire period of the kings.

That's because the ark of the covenant was present in Israel during both the period of the judges and the kings. The space at the center of the top of the ark was the Mercy Seat - representing the very presence of God. (Exo. 25:21-22). So even though there was a separate throne for David and his descendants, yet even while those kings ruled over Israel, God maintained a throne for Himself in Israel at the same time. The Mercy Seat functioned as the *seat of government* in ancient Israel, as far as the kingdom of God was concerned.

Isn't it curious then, that both the throne of David and the Mercy Seat of God disappeared from Israel at the same time, *i.e.*, when Israel was deported to Babylon? Thus, we may say the kingdom of God was no longer manifest in ancient Israel after that time. So Israel was the kingdom of God from the Exodus (1500 B.C. or thereabouts) until the Babylonian deportation in 606 B.C.

Since ancient Israel was a kingdom, and God was sovereign over the nation in a unique way, a way

in which He has not been sovereign over any other nation, Israel was the first manifestation of the kingdom of God on earth. Scripture confirms:

> "And now you think to withstand *the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David*, because you are a great multitude and have with you the golden calves that Jeroboam made you for gods." (2 Chr. 13:8).

One of the major purposes of the Millennial period is to restore Israel as a reactivated kingdom, and to install Christ on the throne of David as its king, not merely in a spiritual sense, but physically on earth. The throne of David will become the new Mercy Seat of God, because God's presence (that is, Jesus Himself) will be manifest there. Thus, if the *restored* Israel will be a kingdom of God on earth, it makes sense that the *original* Israel was also a kingdom of God on earth.

The Root & Graft and the Kingdom of Heaven

Now let's expand on our discussion of the *kingdom of heaven*.

> Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. ... For if [the Jews'] rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Then you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. ... And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree. (Rom. 11:13-24).

Here Paul uses the analogy of an olive tree to explain the relationship between believing Jews and Gentiles as far as God is concerned. And the key question is, "What is the olive tree?" We know the answer *cannot* be the nation of Israel.

First, the context here, by the language used, concerns reconciliation, faith and belief. But the nation of Israel is not by its nature a faith community - it is an extended family tree of the biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. A person does not become a member of national Israel by faith, but by ancestry. This is notwithstanding Rom. 2:28-29, which speaks of spiritual Jews, or spiritual descendants of Abraham, *as opposed to* biological Jews.

Second, it would for this reason be improper to speak of any biological Jews being broken branches with respect to the olive tree on the basis of unbelief, *if* the tree is national Israel. National Israel

has nothing to do with faith or belief, so unbelief has no effect on a person's status as a biological Jew. Thus, if the tree is Israel, the analogy of a broken branch simply does not work. The brokenness being spoken of is spiritual, not physical. Therefore the olive tree must by spiritual, not physical.

Third, if the olive tree is national Israel, then when Christians are grafted onto the tree, it would make them biological Jews, because Israel is a biological entity. This of course cannot be true. For this reason, the Church and Israel can never possibly "merge." One is a community of faith, the other is a group of biological descendants. They are apples and oranges to each other.

It is clear that the olive tree remains fully an olive tree whether or not the natural branches (Jews) are broken off or re-grafted. It is also clear that the grafting of Christians does not change the nature of the tree. And because Christians are not a natural part of the olive tree, *the tree cannot be the Church either*. So what do we call the something to which believing Jews and Christians both belong?

Traditionally, the answer has been to regard the olive tree as the broad scope of the people of God, or the *elect*. I suggest the olive tree is actually the *kingdom of heaven*, that is, the spiritual side of the kingdom of God. Because Christians (or the Church) have no part in a physical kingdom of God until Christ returns. And the Church, unlike national Israel, is a faith-based (*i.e.,* spiritual) community. At present, the kingdom of God is spiritual only, being between ancient Israel and the Millennium.

Thus, ancient Israel is in a *spiritual* sense the root of the kingdom - but only as to believing Jews, not all biological Jews. Which means that in spite of anything you might have heard, the Church and the kingdom of heaven are not the same thing, because the kingdom of heaven includes the Old Testament saints, and the Church does not. Isn't that *exactly* what the root and graft describes? O.T. and N.T. saints both belonging to the same olive tree of God?

THE CHURCH IS NOT THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The key to understanding the gospel of the kingdom is to realize that the kingdom of God and the Church ***are not the same***. We have just seen that the Church is not the same as the kingdom of heaven. It obviously is not the same as ancient Israel either, because one is based on faith, the other on biology. Nor is the Church the same as the kingdom of Christ, because that kingdom hasn't arrived yet (we'll talk more about this shortly), and it will be physical, whereas the Church is only spiritual.

There are additional arguments to the same effect. *First*, the kingdom of God and the Church never quite line up together in time. *Second*, there are key attributes of the kingdom of God that the Church simply does not have, namely, a king and a government. *Third*, the Church exists right now, in physical form, on earth - but the kingdom of God does not. *Fourth*, there is a difference between *entering* the kingdom of God, and *inheriting* the kingdom.

What this means, in the end, is that ***the gospel of the Church*** (*i.e.*, the gospel of Christ, by which people believe and become members of the Church) ***cannot be the same as the gospel of the kingdom***. The gospel of the kingdom is fundamentally *not* a message about the forgiveness of sins, but a message about the coming kingdom of Christ. Much more on this later. What we're doing right now is laying the foundation for *why* these two gospels cannot be the same.

A Question of Timing

We have already seen that the kingdom of God, in its largest sense, is without beginning or end. It being eternal in the heavenly realm, the kingdom of God obviously existed before the Church. No matter your view of how long the Church will last in the future, it had a fixed beginning point back in 30 A.D. The Church is not *from* everlasting. Therefore, the kingdom of God and the Church cannot be the same, because they did not start at the same time.

The same is true for the kingdom of heaven. And no, you can't grab O.T. believers long after the fact, and make them a part of the Church. Nor were they in fact looking forward to something they never even had a clue was coming. Plus, logically, if all O.T. believers have been made a part of the Church, then it destroys the whole premise of the olive tree of God and the root and graft. The root and graft argument *assumes* there are believers who are *not* part of the Church.

I suggest the kingdom of Christ should be viewed similarly. Consider this quintessential statement about the kingdom of Christ:

> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. (Isa. 9:6-7).

Yet, when the time came that the son was given, *i.e.*, when Christ was born, He came only as priest, and not as a king. The government was not "upon his shoulder" during His first advent, and it isn't on his shoulder now either. Just because the son was born, does not mean the kingdom had arrived. The kingdom of Christ will not arrive until Jesus returns to rule over it during the Millennium. And ironically, at that time, the Church as we know it today will more or less disappear.

In other words, the kingdom of Christ and the present-day Church will never exist at the same time, so they cannot possibly be the same. More on this later.

The Church Has No King or Government

We have already seen that the kingdom of God is like any other kingdom, in that it has a king, a throne, a dominion, citizens and subjects, and government ministers. We may also say that the kingdom of God, like any other kingdom, also has a government and laws. Isn't that exactly what Isa. 9:6-7 said?

The Church, however, has no king, no throne, no dominion, no citizens or subjects, and no special agents of God on earth. The Church also has no government, and no laws. Let's walk it through, point by point.

> And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. (Eph 1:22-23). And he is the head of the body, the church. (Col. 1:18a). *See also*, Eph. 5:23; Col. 2:19.

The Church, and here I'm referring only to the universal or heavenly Church that God has instituted, has no king or throne. It has only a *head* and a *body*. Scripture ***never*** refers to Jesus as the king of the Church. Jesus is a king - but what is He king of? The Jews. And the Jews (*i.e.*, the nation of Israel) and the Church are, again, *not the same thing*. We covered this already.

So the Church does not and cannot import any of the kingdom qualities of Israel into its own form of existence. But, did God give the Church any kingdom qualities of its own (not derived from Israel)? No.

The Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20) authorizes the Church to baptize and to teach, and believers are elsewhere commended to preach the gospel. Yet, nowhere does scripture even hint that the Church is to *rule* over anyone or anything. The universal Church has no dominion, and no citizens, in addition to not having either a king or a throne. It has no power to force or compel.

Far from it. Rather than regarded as citizens or subjects, believers are regarded as fellow heirs with Christ. (Rom. 8:17; Eph. 3:6). There is a sense in which the head of the Church and the members of His body are regarded as co-equal. Which is hardly a king-subject relationship. But aren't we (believers) *citizens* of heaven? Yes - we are *members* of the body of Christ, and *citizens* of the kingdom of heaven. But we've already established these are two different things, which just happen to overlap. Don't get *sloppy*, equating citizenship in heaven with being a member of the Church.

And so far is the Church removed from the concept of dominion, that even when believers are said to rule and reign with Christ in the Millennium, they will serve in the government of the kingdom of Christ which will be headquartered in Jerusalem. When this time comes, the Church will have neither a homeland nor a dominion. Much less does the Church have a physical territory now.

But surely the Church has ministers to carry out the business of the kingdom of God? Not really, no. Nowhere in scripture does God put anyone in charge of the Church on earth. None of the spiritual offices (apostle, prophet, evangelist, or pastor-teacher) are put in charge of the others, nor is there any hierarchy among them. God never even says *what* the authority of each office is. Neither are any of the spiritual gifts placed in a hierarchy, or given any authority to rule.

But elders (a.k.a. bishops or overseers) - what about them? Never at any time did God appoint anyone as an elder of a church. Elders are appointed by people. (1 Tim. 3:1). That's why scripture lists qualifications for office - as a standard to guide people's decisions. God doesn't need standards - the offices and gifts He appoints have no standards. All church organizations, on the other hand,

were founded and organized by people. God never yet set His hand to signing the articles of incorporation for any visible church organization.

But clergy - surely God appointed the clergy? Remember - we are talking about the universal Church - the one which exists only in a spiritual or heavenly sense. The universal Church which God instituted, and the visible churches which people establish, ***are not the same***. Clergy, elders, deacons, anyone who is ordained, anyone who is appointed or elected, are all offices and positions ***chosen by people***, not God. Just because someone holds a church office on earth, does not in any way correspond to an office in the heavenly Church.

The Church which God has instituted, has a government which consists - *in its entirety* - of a head (Jesus) and a body (everyone else). There is no leadership, hierarchy, or government between Christ and His body. The governments which exist in all visible churches are all man-made. *So they don't count* either as agents of the universal Church or of the kingdom of heaven.

But surely the universal Church has laws? Baptism and Communion, at least? Aren't these ordinances (or laws) of the Church?" In the Old Testament, when God made the observation of a religious ritual a *law*, He made it mandatory, He prescribed the date, time and manner of observation, and sometimes attached a penalty to its violation. Usually, He would also say something like, "and this shall be a statute for you throughout all your generations." Now *that*, folks, is a law.

No similar statements anywhere in the N.T. attach to the so-called sacraments of baptism, communion, or any other religious ritual. Sure, Jesus *authorized* both these ritual observances, but nowhere *required* either of them of all believers. (When was the last time ***you*** baptized someone? Ah-ah, watch it! The command is to *baptize others*, not to *be baptized*.) Nor is the time, place or manner of the observation of these rituals anywhere specified. Nor are any penalties attached to the failure to observe them.

None of Jesus' disciples, including the N.T. writers, had any legislative or lawmaking authority granted to them by God. Paul "was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher" (2 Tim. 1:11), but nowhere appointed a legislator or rule-maker. No, if you are looking for an applicable rule in the N.T., look no further than this: "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath." (Col. 2:16).

So again, the Church is not the same as the kingdom of God, because the Church has no king, no government, no laws, or any other attributes of a kingdom. But that's OK, the Church has a different role - to be the body of fellowship of the citizens of heaven while they are on earth. During which time *the Church should be preparing its members for their tasks in the coming kingdom of Christ*.

The Kingdom of God Isn't Here Yet

Another key difference between the Church and the kingdom of God is the extent to which they are presently manifest on earth.

The Church, for its part, is *partially* manifested now. Yes, the head of the Church (Jesus) is currently not present on earth. Believers of the past who have died are no longer present on earth, but are still part of the Church. And even believers alive today cannot all be accurately counted or recognized by man. You can't *see* someone else's spiritual status - only God can see that. So for all these reasons we know the Church is not *fully* manifested now.

Nevertheless, to the extent members of the Church are currently alive, their presence is a partial manifestation of the Church. True, the heavenly Church and the visible churches on earth today are not the same. However, *I am not arguing that visible church organizations are a manifestation of the universal Church*. I am saying that individual believers alive today, regardless of their connection to, or participation in, any visible church, are the manifestation of the body of Christ.

The heavenly Church is not manifest on an institutional level, but on an individual level. It appears in *people, not organizations*. Which makes it easy to understand why the spiritual Church has no physical dominion, and never will. It has no territory, no physical headquarters, and no earthly leader (in spite of claims to the contrary by popes, etc.).

Let's face it - God never designed the universal Church to be visible *as an entity*. The Church is like the wind. "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." (Jn. 3:8).

The Physical Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God, of course, is entirely invisible at present. It *was* here on earth, in ancient Israel. But, the presence of the kingdom of God has been withdrawn from the earth and will not return until Christ brings it with Him after Armageddon. In fact, Jesus repeatedly denied that He was bringing the *physical* kingdom of God to earth during the *present age*.

> As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they *supposed* that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. (Lk. 19:11).
>
> Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world ..." (Jn. 18:36-37).

The parable of the talents quite forcefully illustrates that the physical kingdom of God is not here yet in the Church age. (Lk. 19:12-27; Mat. 25:14-30). The account in Luke is most directly on point, because it concerns a nobleman who "went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return." The nobleman entrusted His servants to conduct business on his behalf during his absence, and then returned after having received the kingdom.

The point is that the nobleman is a reference to Jesus, who was predicting His own absence and eventual return with the kingdom. During His absence, the kingdom will never arrive. *In fact it cannot be here when the king is absent*. It is the presence of the king, in his capacity as king, which makes the kingdom present on earth.

The Kingdom of God Is At Hand

Whenever Jesus said the kingdom was *at hand*, He meant the spiritual phase of the kingdom of God was about to be inaugurated upon the completion of His earthly ministry. In other words, the grafting process referred to in Rom. 11, by which believing Gentiles would be grafted into the olive tree of God (*i.e.*, the kingdom of heaven), was about to *begin*. In fact, that process would begin when the Holy Spirit was sent at Pentecost, but Jesus was simply saying it was *not far off*.

In this light, we can understand what Jesus meant in Lk. 17:20-21:

> Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

This phrase, *the kingdom of God is in the midst of you* again refers to the grafting process by which believers would become a part of the kingdom of heaven. The grafting process, and individual conversion or saving faith, are not things which are visible. The mistake people often make in interpreting Lk. 17 is failing to distinguish between the Church and the kingdom of heaven, which we have seen are separate.

Jesus could not in any event have been referring to the physical kingdom of God. When the disciples asked Jesus at His ascension, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Ac. 1:6), Jesus did not say, "But the kingdom is already in your midst." Rather, He said, "It is not for you to know when." And two things we can say with absolute certainty are: 1) the kingdom had not already come when the disciples asked this question; and 2) Jesus has not yet received His kingdom and returned to earth with it.

This Generation Shall Not Pass Away

But what about the several scriptures suggesting that the Second Coming and the kingdom of Christ would be made manifest within just a few years?

> "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. (Mt. 16:28). "Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things [*i.e.*, the Tribulation, the Second Coming, and the translation of the saints] take place." (Mt. 24:34, Mk. 13:30; Lk. 21:32).

Let us freely admit that the Second Coming has not yet taken place, and also that all of the people who were present when Jesus spoke those words are now physically dead. How then are we to

understand these statements? Mt. 16:28 is probably best understood as a reference to the complete inauguration of the spiritual kingdom of heaven at Pentecost, where most of the disciples were present.

The other scriptures, though, clearly refer to events connected with the end times. The Tribulation and Second Coming are events which will take place in the physical world, so the context does not support the idea that Jesus was talking about a spiritual kingdom.

I believe the key is the interpretation - or should I say translation - of the word, *generation*. I am no Greek expert. But Strong's Concordance indicates the meanings of the Greek word translated *generations* as including: *period, age, generation (period of time).* In which case, the verses in question become, "this period or age will not pass away until all these things take place." And if the kingdom of God isn't here yet, then the Church and the kingdom can't be the same, can they?

Thy Kingdom Come

In the so-called Lord's Prayer (Mt. 6:9-13), Jesus said, in part, "Our Father in heaven ... your kingdom come." Now as this was a model prayer for his followers to pray long after He would depart earth, the language suggests that the kingdom of God - in whatever sense Jesus meant here - had not arrived yet. And people today who pray this prayer do so with the understanding that the kingdom has not yet come - for if it had already, why would anyone still pray for its arrival?

I also suggest that the phrase, "your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," supports this argument. The idea being that Jesus' disciples are looking forward to a time when the kingdom of God in heaven is reflected on earth "as it is in heaven." In other words, looking forward to when the kingdom of God is not merely spiritual, but is manifest physically on earth, and the things on earth conform to the heavenly will.

The book of Revelation corroborates this analysis by giving us a glimpse of a future time when the kingdom of Christ is said to have arrived.

> Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world *has become* the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. 11:15). See also, Rev. 12:10.

The arrival of the kingdom of Christ is set to occur when the Church becomes the Bride of Christ and all believers are translated from mortal bodies to immortal ones. That is, immediately following the resurrection of the saints. Metaphorically, this event is pictured in scripture as the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, which I will discuss in detail below. *That* is when "thy kingdom come."

Entering v. Inheriting the Kingdom

During His earthly ministry, Jesus used two distinct phrases to refer to people becoming part of the kingdom of God. Sometimes He said, *enter the kingdom*, and other times He said, *inherit the*

kingdom. I suggest that *entering* the kingdom is a specific reference to spiritual rebirth, when a person becomes a believer and is made a citizen of the kingdom of heaven.

On the other hand, *inheriting* the kingdom is a specific reference to participation in the Millennial kingdom of Christ on earth. This inheritance can only be obtained after a believer has gone through a physical resurrection and received an immortal body. "I tell you this, brothers: *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable." (1 Cor. 15:50).

Obviously, flesh and blood people *can* become believers, a member of the invisible Church, and a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. So the inheritance Paul is talking about here in 1 Cor. 15 *cannot* refer to becoming a believer. Inheriting the kingdom *cannot* refer to a salvation experience. Inheriting the kingdom *requires* receiving an immortal body first, but becoming a believer does not.

I look at becoming a believer as a ticket to receiving an immortal body, and having an immortal body is the price of admission for inheriting the kingdom of Christ.

> In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance *until we acquire possession of it*, to the praise of his glory. (Eph 1:13-14).

So the Holy Spirit *seals and guarantees*, but *possession* of the inheritance only comes after the resurrection of the saints. Again,

> But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Php. 3:20-21).

Notice here that the *purpose* of having citizenship in heaven is to await the transformation of our bodies into an immortal form, at the coming of Christ ("we await a Savior"), as he is about to establish his earthly kingdom ("to subject all things to himself").

I know this all looks, to the untrained eye, like the Church and the kingdom of heaven are the same thing. And I wouldn't keep pounding away at the distinction unless the scripture supported the idea repeatedly.

> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (Eph. 2:19-21).

Notice first that believers are **not** said to be *citizens of the Church*, but rather the household of God. And this household of God was founded on both the apostles and prophets, meaning both O.T. and N.T. believers. Which makes the *household of God* rather more like the olive tree of God in Rom. 11, than the Church. And the language *being joined together* sounds a lot like grafting, doesn't it?

Where O.T. and N.T. saints are joined together?

The best sense I can make of it is when a person becomes a believer in Christ, they really "join" two entities. One is the body of Christ, the Church, consisting of all N.T. believers. The other is the kingdom of heaven, or the household of God (also the olive tree of God), consisting of both O.T. and N.T. believers. For Christians, both lead to the same result - physical resurrection and inheritance of the kingdom. Yet this distinction, coming as it does from God, is important to recognize.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM?

Now, with the differences between the kingdom of God and the Church firmly established, it is time to go to the next logical step. We know that Jesus was sent into the world as a king, to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom. (Lk. 4:43; Jn. 18:37). Surely, Jesus would not have been proclaiming his crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection to the crowds while He was still alive.

For when He predicted these things to his disciples, they did not grasp what was said. (Lk. 18:31-34). So why would He preach that message to people who were *not* disciples, and had even less chance of understanding Him? Consequently, when Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom, he must *not* have been preaching a message consisting of what many people consider to be the only true gospel today, namely, *Christ crucified*. (See, 1 Cor. 1:22-23; 15:1-4.)

So, what kind of message was He likely preaching? But even more importantly, since Jesus said the gospel of the kingdom is what *will* be preached during the Tribulation (Mt. 24:34), what message is that going to be? *And as we continually draw closer to the onset of the Tribulation, should the Church perhaps be preaching that message today?*

The Good News of the Kingdom

I have previously established that the kingdom of God has, up to this point, only been manifest on earth during the time of ancient Israel. By the time of Jesus' first advent, the luster of the kingdom during the reigns of David and Solomon were long past. The kingdom had been divided, its people scattered, its throne cut off, and the nation subjugated by a hostile foreign power.

Understandably, the Jews were looking and waiting for the Messiah, anticipating the restoration of Israel's glory among the nations, when the Roman oppression would be completely thrown off. They were anticipating the coming Golden Age of Israel, or the Messianic Era - what Christians call the Millennium. In other words, ***the Jews were looking for a Deliverer, not a Savior***.

This is the cultural context within which Jesus was proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom. The Jews were not expecting someone who would forgive sins. They were expecting a military leader who would reestablish the physical kingdom. Thus, when Jesus fed the 5,000, the people wanted to make him *king*, not a *redeemer*. (Jn. 6:15). When He entered Jerusalem before the Passover, the people hailed Him as King of the Jews, not as a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

For this reason both the Jewish leaders and the Romans perceived Jesus as a threat. Not because He preached love, faith and forgiveness of sins, but because of the political implications of his message. Thus, when the Jews accused Him, it was on the basis that he claimed to be a king. (Lk. 23:2). And when Pilate wrote out the indictment against Jesus and posted it on the cross above Him, it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" - not, "Savior of the World." (Jn. 19:19).

It is not likely people would have thought this about Jesus simply because of the miracles he performed. He had to have said something to give them this idea. Jesus, knowing his audience, probably said something like the following when he proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom:

> ***The king of Israel will come, bringing a reign of peace, prosperity and the restoration of all things. He will establish law, justice, and righteousness over the land, and his kingdom will last forever. When He comes, He will vanquish all the enemies of Israel. And I (Jesus) am He.***

How wonderful it would be, if the kingdom of God on earth would cover the entire earth and all peoples instead of the Jews alone, and it was ruled by the holy and incorruptible God in the flesh Himself! Why, that would be good news! Good news about the kingdom of God.

And if I may guess what people during the Tribulation will perceive as good news, it would be something very similar. Many people living on the earth during the Tribulation will be persecuted for their faiths. Plus, all of them will suffer through a variety of wars, and most will undoubtedly see firsthand the consequences of pestilence, plagues and natural disasters. Death will literally be everywhere.

In that time of unparalleled distress, what will people ***most*** want to hear? And no, I'm not being flippant or disrespectful when I say, "Jesus can save you from your sins" is probably *not* what they will most want to hear. They will want to hear, "Jesus will destroy your wicked oppressors and throw off the evil tyranny that tortures you." Which just so happens to be the essence of the gospel of the kingdom, as I see it:

> ***The king of the world will come back, bringing a worldwide reign of peace, prosperity and the restoration of all things. He will establish law, justice, and righteousness over the whole earth, ruling over every tribe, nation and language of people, and his kingdom will last forever. When He comes, He will bring His holy ones along with Him to help govern the world, and He will destroy all the enemies of God. The time of His appearing is not far off, and His name is Jesus.***

In essence, the gospel of the kingdom is a look *forward* to when the kingdom of God will be made manifest on earth, not a look *backward* to the cross. A time when these scriptures will be fulfilled literally in time and space and not merely *spiritually*.

> "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and

righteousness in the land." (Jer. 23:5).

Christ is "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come." (Eph. 1:21).

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." (Rev. 22:16).

The Progression of the Kingdom of God

We've looked at how the kingdom of God will have three principal physical manifestations. Now its time to examine how these form a *progression* of the kingdom of God.

In the beginning, people started out in innocence, without sin in their lives. No government was necessary, as there was no evil to keep in check by any external restraint. God ruled mankind directly from heaven, without any intermediate governors.

When sin entered by the Fall, not much changed governmentally. Yes, sin and lawlessness were rampant, but God provided no mechanism for restraining evil until after the flood, by instituting capital punishment. But even that provided no mechanism for civil government, which would not come along until the Tower of Babel, when God created the nations. So from Adam until Babel, the whole earth (governmentally) was in the condition described in Judges 21:25: "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

As I look at that time, God gave people an opportunity to exercise the power of self-government for their own good. But, people merely found out how much their innate tendencies were always to do evil. Then came the nations, which allowed people the opportunity through the use of external restraints (*i.e.*, civil government) to do better. However, that only proved marginally more successful at the local level (*i.e.*, local crime), and led to infinite wars at the national level.

God then established Israel, among other reasons, as an example to the other nations of the world, to model a form of godly government. God Himself was king over the Jews, and He had a throne among them (the Mercy Seat), although he appointed judges and kings to rule over them more directly. He gave them a specific territory, as first promised to Abraham. All male descendants of Israel carried the mark of circumcision to designate them as citizens of the kingdom. And the Levitical priests and local judges were the agents of the national government to carry out its tasks.

Of course, the people were sinful and 100% of their leaders were, too. This eventually led the nation to be severely judged - their cities and temple destroyed (twice), and the people scattered (twice).

When Jesus came the first time, He changed none of this. He was thought to be a king and was killed for being one. But He established no throne or seat of government at that time. He marked no territory, and employed no government agents, for He instituted no earthly government. He did recruit citizens of a heavenly kingdom not of this earth, but made no provision for its government

except by His direct rule.

In contrast, when Jesus returns He will set up a new kingdom improving on the example of ancient Israel in every way. Instead of remaining invisible during His reign and ruling from an invisible throne, He will visibly dwell in Jerusalem and rule from a rebuilt physical temple. The land of Israel will be fully restored and expanded from its original boundaries, as described in Eze. 47. He will employ at least two sets of government agents. *First*, the Jews will not only govern their own territory, but also govern all aspects of worldwide religious worship from the temple in Jerusalem.

Second, He will employ the resurrected saints to govern the Gentile nations as part of His one world government. The subjects of this government will include all the people of the world, without exception. Many of the people of the world will be nonbelievers, for even at this time, faith in Christ will not be coerced. But all of the people will be mortal and fallen, which will require a civil government to continue to restrain evil. However, the Jews will all be saved and perfectly know the laws of God (Heb. 8:10-11), and the resurrected saints will all have immortal bodies. Meaning, for all practical purposes, the entire world government will be sinless and incorruptible.

That's quite an improvement over the kingdom of ancient Israel, and real progress. This progress will continue when the kingdom of Christ on earth is transitioned to the new earth. At that time, we will see God directly in the New Jerusalem. The territory of the kingdom will undoubtedly be greatly expanded with the new earth. All of the people in the kingdom will also be citizens, and sinless as well. There will not be any evil to restrain, as even sin, death and the curse will all be banished. And this kingdom will last forever, not merely for a thousand years.

All of this is ours to look forward to. And this, too, is the good news of the kingdom of God.

The City of God

This gospel of the kingdom is closely aligned with the concept of the city of God, since God's ultimate desire for humanity is to dwell among His people. This was first expressed in connection with ancient Israel, and was later promised to the Church by Jesus.

> "I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God." (Exo. 29:45-46).

> "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." (Jn 14:2-3).

Thus, it is said of Abraham that he "was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God." (Heb. 11:10). Ultimately, of course, the city of God will find its final manifestation in the New Jerusalem, the third physical manifestation of the kingdom of God.

> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, *the dwelling place of God is with man*. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God." (Rev. 21:2-3).

So we see that the city of God, or the idea of God dwelling among His people, forms a *progression* in the scriptures mirroring the progression of the kingdom of God.

Mankind started out in perfect fellowship with God, so that God Himself walked in the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve, and talked with them directly. After the Fall, fellowship was broken, the close communication stopped, and mankind was kicked out of Eden. The saints of God were few and far between, and this remained the pattern until the time of Abraham.

In Abraham, God initiated a covenant relationship intended to secure a people for God's own possession, to mark them as His own, and to give them their own land as an eternal heritage. The ultimate beneficiaries of this arrangement were the Jews. This is where God first established a holy kingdom among men, manifesting His presence in two ways. *First*, at the Mercy Seat (which only the high priest had access to). *Second*, in the Shekinah Glory, which all the people could see (though it was temporary).

Although, even in ancient Israel, God was physically separated from His people (He was there, but they could not approach Him), and He did not personally indwell them.

With the birth of Jesus, as the incarnate God in human form, He was physically with the people of Israel, but effectively only for the last three years of life in which He revealed Himself to them. He was approachable physically only during His ministry, though He remains approachable spiritually even today. And with the sending of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, God indwelt His people on a permanent basis. Fellowship for believers is now possible, but not unbroken due to continued sin.

In the Millennium, however, Jesus will physically return and take up residence with the Jews in Jerusalem. Yet He will be approachable by Gentile people who come to the Jerusalem temple. And presumably, the ministry of the Holy Spirit to indwell believers will continue during that time. Yet, even though the government of the kingdom will at that point be essentially perfect, the people will still be mortal, sin will still abound, and the curse of the ground will remain in effect.

Meaning that many people will still not be in fellowship with God, even though they reside in the kingdom and can see Jesus in person. These are the people who will take part in the final rebellion at the end of the thousand years. Fellowship between God and mankind on a global scale will be far from perfect even during the Golden Age.

All these problems will only be solved in the eternal kingdom of God, when God the Father and Son will both be visible, present and accessible in the New Jerusalem on the new earth. God will then dwell with all people in the kingdom forever, with completely unbroken fellowship. All believers will be returned to state of innocence, as sin, death and the curse will all have been banished.

Again, all of this is ours to look forward to. And it's part and parcel of the kingdom of God.

TRANSITIONING FROM CHURCH TO KINGDOM

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

In light of the gospel of the kingdom, I have come to a new understanding of the significance of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

> Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! ... for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure" — for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev. 19:6-9).

Traditionally, this text is viewed as the culmination of the universal Church, when believers will become like Jesus (immortal, clothed in righteousness) and will join with Him in eternity. Typically, commentators regard the Church as simply no longer needed on earth after this event. Many will also see believers moving straight into eternity at this point without an intervening Millennial period on earth. Alternatively, some believe the Church will watch in heaven as the Tribulation and Millennium play out on earth.

Unfortunately, the Marriage Supper is the subject of much phony speculation. Commentators have waxed eloquent on the nature and composition of the "guests" at this event, exceeded in their folly only by past theologians debating the number of angels who could dance on the head of a pin.

And forget about any "analysis" you may have read using the framework of a three-stage Middle Eastern wedding to interpret this scripture. God did not construct His Marriage Supper of the Lamb based on any human traditions, new or old. God needs no human inspiration to formulate His plans. AS IF God is actually going to host a banquet feast for all believers, who will sit down and eat a meal in heaven in the presence of God. What utter nonsense.

Let me sort this out. *First*, there are no "guests" who observe the feast. The *invitees* consist solely of the believers who take part in the First Resurrection. In fact, what the Marriage Supper describes IS the First Resurrection, just from a different perspective. *Second*, there is no actual banquet where believers sit down and eat. Skip down a few verses, where the actual banquet is described.

> Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great." (Rev. 19:17-18).

That's right: the *great supper of God* is, in fact, the *marriage supper of the Lamb*. Anyone who is

familiar with the scriptures detailing the battle of Armageddon knows what this is. This is the aftermath of the battle, when Christ slays the enemies of God on the mountains of Israel on the day that He returns. *See*, Ezek. 39:17-20. It's all right there in Ezekiel, where the same event is described as *a great sacrificial feast at God's table*.

I suppose, to elaborate on the analogy to a marriage, the actual wedding is when believers are caught up in the air to meet Christ, whether previously dead or alive. The great supper of God is most like a typical wedding *reception* - the meal which follows the wedding. The *Wedding Reception of the Lamb*, as it were.

Prophetic events are often portrayed multiple times in scripture, to show us varying perspectives, or angles, of the same event. Thus, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb shows us the First Resurrection and the aftermath of Armageddon from a unique perspective compared to other scriptures.

Of course, for this to truly make sense to you, you have to accept that these both happen on the same day. And if you let your preconceptions take a rest for a moment and let scripture speak for itself, it becomes clear that the day of the Second Coming is a busy day. The saints are resurrected to meet Jesus in the air (where they are given their new immortal bodies), Jesus sets down on the Mt. of Olives exactly where He ascended, He slays the wicked by the mere appearance of His coming, and the birds are immediately called into action to devour God's enemies.

But that doesn't even begin to describe the half of it. Zech. 12:1-14:15 is an extended text devoted entirely to describing the events on the day of the Second Coming. In that text, the phrase ***on that day*** is used 15 times to describe all the things that will happen on the day of the Second Coming. So the scenario I have proposed is not far fetched.

Not a Culmination, But a Repurposing

So what, you may ask, is the different perspective on the uniting of the Church with Jesus that Rev. 19 presents?

> And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (1 Th. 4:16-17).

Now tell me, isn't that exactly what the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is describing? But wait - don't miss this interesting link between the First Resurrection and the kingdom of Christ:

> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, *then at his coming* those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when *he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power*. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. (1 Cor. 15:22-25).

Notice how the First Resurrection is linked with the Second Coming, which in turn is linked to the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. All of which happens on the same day. Leading me to conclude that ***the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is a metaphorical ceremony by which individual believers are inducted into the physical kingdom of Christ on earth***.

Of course, when this whole thing goes down, there won't be time for an *actual* ceremony. The entire event (transformation, meeting Jesus, and being united with Him) will all take place in the blink of an eye. (1 Cor. 15:52). Then Jesus will appear with his holy ones to destroy the enemies of God. And for you skeptics - Yes, I do believe that watching the birds eating the flesh off the enemies of God will be a joyous occasion, and cause for a great celebration.

Then the real work of establishing the kingdom on earth will begin. No time for partying. Believers will be lifted up, as it were, then immediately return to earth with Jesus to inaugurate the kingdom of Christ. There will be no time spent in heaven after the meeting up. There won't be any watching of the events on earth unfold, as if from a heavenly balcony. No one is going to heaven - yet.

Remember that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15:50-52). The First Resurrection and the earthly kingdom of God are linked together. Believers are transformed *in order that* they may then enter the kingdom of Christ on earth. Being changed into an immortal body isn't the ticket for entrance into heaven - it is the ticket for entrance into the physical kingdom of God on earth. Isn't that good news? Say it with me - *good news*.

In this we also see the ultimate completion of the grafting process described in Rom. 11. When the apostle Paul said that God had the power to graft the Jews back into the olive tree of God again, *He wasn't just speaking hypothetically*. He was speaking prophetically, for the Jews will indeed one day see Jesus, repent, and immediately return to Him. According to Isaiah, this mass conversion of the Jews will happen in a single day. (Isa. 66:8).

And what day will this be? The day of the Second Coming. Which means that the Gentiles will be finally and fully grafted into the kingdom of God on the very same day the Jews are re-grafted in. Does it make sense now? Consequently, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb won't be a culmination of the Church experience so much as it will be a transition into the kingdom of Christ. And upon inheriting this kingdom, everyone will have a *specific job* to do (see below).

In this light, we can better understand the wedding-themed parables Jesus told. The Parable of the Wedding Feast (Mat. 22:1-14) describes a wedding feast where the initial invited guests refused to come, so the door to the feast was thrown open to people who were found out in the street. The main point of the parable is to explain that the Jews would reject Jesus as their Messiah, so God would throw open the door of salvation to the Gentiles. But don't miss the secondary point - when the wedding feast occurs, only the Church will be there.

Similarly, in the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Mat. 25:1-13), two groups of virgins are compared - the foolish and the wise. All of them are ostensibly waiting for the arrival of the bridegroom (*i.e.*, Christ), but when He comes, the foolish are not prepared. Meanwhile, those who were ready went

in with Him to the marriage feast, and then the door was shut. After which the foolish could not get in. This is a direct reference to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, which will occur on the day Christ returns - no do-overs or second chances.

The Marriage Supper will mark the end of the Church in its present form. It is when the Church transitions from being composed of mortal sinful beings living on a broken and decaying world, to being composed of immortal sinless beings living on a restored and flourishing world. More importantly, it is a transition from the Church doing spiritual things very imperfectly, to the Church performing worldwide governance perfectly. The Church does not *complete* its task at the Marriage Supper, but is ***repurposed*** for a new task. You know - ruling and reigning with Christ. ***On earth***. (Rev. 20:4).

This, too, is part of ***the gospel of the kingdom***.

WORKING FOR THE KINGDOM

God Isn't Finished With You Yet

If you have gone to church most of your life, what I have said so far may sound unfamiliar. That is undoubtedly due, in part, to a line you have been fed all your life, that when you die you will immediately go to heaven. Similarly, much of Christianity is infected with the belief that once Jesus returns, history as we know it on earth will cease.

I am here to tell you that before eternity comes, there will be an *interregnum* period known as the kingdom of Christ. And every Christian in this life will actively participate in that kingdom.

The kingdom of Christ will be an intervening government between the world as we know it now and the eternal kingdom of God with the New Jerusalem set upon a new earth. The present world, of course, is governed by competing nations which prey upon and devour other nations in an endless cycle of wars and destruction. In the kingdom of Christ, nations will still exist, but they will no longer be governed competitively or destructively, their governments being unified under a global head.

This kingdom of Christ will be physical, on the present earth, in history. It is still future - we are not in the Millennium now, gradually bringing about the kingdom of Christ on earth. Neither will the kingdom of Christ be merely spiritual, that is, merely a reference to the eternal state. And you have not yet been resurrected - guaranteed - if you have been saved, because the resurrection relates to your physical *body*, not your spirit.

Perhaps you are wondering why God would provide for a physical kingdom of Christ before eternity kicks in. I have two responses, perhaps there are others.

First, I believe God wants to demonstrate a kingdom progression, at least in terms of the physical manifestation of the kingdom of God. He wants people to know His plans ensure that things will

only get better in the long run. I described this progression of the kingdom a few pages back.

Second, I believe God wants to demonstrate a Sabbath principle in history. Namely, just as He created the world in six days and then rested, world history will undergo a time of great agitation and decay for six thousand years, then experience a thousand years of peace and prosperity. In comparison to prior history, the Millennium will feel like a period of great rest. That is, a great physical rest for the world, in addition to the spiritual rest for the people of God. See, Heb. 4:9-10.

In a sense, the Tribulation period is what will make this period of great rest possible. Sure, the return of Jesus with His holy ones will maintain the peace, safety and prosperity of the world during the Millennium. But before that can happen, the agitation, sin and decay of the prior six thousand years must be thrown off and paid for. This is what the destruction of God's enemies and the judgments on the earth up to and including the battle of Armageddon will accomplish.

I see the Millennium as a time when God will let people see what the world could have been like, if they had followed the laws and commands of God from the beginning, and had governed themselves with the Golden Rule as their main goal. I can't prove this from scripture - it's just the conclusion I draw when I look at biblical descriptions of the kingdom of Christ.

So what will this kingdom of Christ look like, structurally? There will be three groups of people on earth at that time. *First*, a remnant of the Jews will survive the Tribulation, who will accept Jesus *en masse* at the Second Coming, and be imbued with a special knowledge of God's laws via a seventh divine covenant between God and Israel. (Jer. 31:31-34). These people will all be normal, mortal human beings, raising families, living and dying as usual, though perhaps longer.

Second, a remnant of the Gentiles around the world will also survive the Tribulation. They will *not* be saved, because if they were, they would have been resurrected with the Church. Some will undoubtedly come to have faith in Christ, but not all. Scripture says every knee will bow, and every tongue confess (Rom. 14:11; Php 2:10-11), but it does ***not*** say every heart will believe. Indeed, many of these will rebel at the end of the Millennium. These will also be normal, mortal humans.

Third, there will be the resurrected saints. Immortal. No marrying or having kids. These will all be citizens of the kingdom, ruling and reigning with Christ. The unsaved Gentiles are likely to be mere subjects of the kingdom.

Israel, as such, will be a self-governing nation, presumably governed by the resurrected apostles. (Mat. 19:28; Lk. 22:28-30). The Levites and priests, particularly the sons of Zadok, will minister to Christ in the rebuilt Temple. (Eze. 44:15). The Jews in general will at that time truly become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, as foretold in Exo. 19:6. (See, Zch. 8:23). From these facts it can be inferred that Jerusalem will be the religious center of the world, and the Jews will be the worldwide ministers and agents on behalf of Christ for religious purposes.

But, what of the rest of the world, the Gentile nations? Even in its restored state, Israel will only be a very small parcel of land, and its people a small fragment of the world population. The Gentile

nations, in order to keep the peace and prevent any and all wars, will ultimately be ruled by a world civil government flowing from Christ in Jerusalem. And who will Jesus use to rule the Gentile nations during the kingdom of Christ? He will contact the Human Resources Dept., obviously.

Human Resources Department

Today we usually think of infrastructure as relating to roads, bridges, buildings, water & sewer, various utilities and other physical alterations to the landscape for housing, transportation, communications, power generation and distribution, etc. However, governments have infrastructure, too. We are all too familiar with the various levels of local, state and federal government organizations, departments, agencies, etc.

Governments, like any private business, need to move things around, house assets in various locations, establish lines of authority and communication, and most importantly, assign various people to perform specific tasks. The kingdom of God, when Christ comes, will be no different. And those people who are given tasks to perform on behalf of the kingdom of Christ will probably consist entirely (100%) of the members of the Church who have been resurrected.

The Gentile nations, being fallen mortal people, will need to be governed. But I suspect the rule providing for the government of the people by the consent of the governed will be largely, if not entirely, suspended. For this will be a time when nations will no longer have conflicts, wars will cease, and absolute peace and freedom from conflict will persist. Which means that the government of the Gentile nations will not be left to the discretion and choices of imperfect human beings.

Instead, Christ will establish regional, national and probably local leaders, all of whom will be perfect and immortal. He will draw from the pool of resurrected saints, who very shortly after coming to earth with Christ, will be assigned some specific government job, which they will faithfully carry out for the next 1,000 years. Yes, folks, this is what it means to rule and reign with Christ. (Rev. 20:4). At least, that's how I see it, based on the available evidence.

Remember that earlier we noticed how any kingdom, and the kingdom of God in particular, has ministers, that is, government agents. Well, when the kingdom of God comes to earth, ***people who are members of the Church now will become those government agents***. It is for this purpose that all believers will be resurrected and united with Christ. What? Nobody ever told you that?

I fully expect Christ to follow the model first used by Moses, to appoint "chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens." (Exo. 18:21). Isn't this in fact exactly what Christ meant in the parable of the talents, when He said to the faithful servant, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; *I will set you over much*. Enter into the joy of your master." (Mat. 25:21). Set him over *much* when and where? And much what?

In Luke's version of the parable, the promise is made more clear. The servant who was faithful over ten minas was given *ten cities*, and the one who was faithful over five minas was given *five cities*. Ten cities and five cities where? And when? In the kingdom of Christ. Again, Jesus said "Blessed

is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions." (Mat. 24:46-47). That is, in the kingdom.

The universal lesson in each of these examples is that the servant who is lazy and unfaithful, rather than being rewarded, will be punished. From this I conclude that positions in the Millennial government of Christ will be distributed on the basis of merit, and not randomly. Which strongly suggests that each believer has a certain hand in determining the extent of their own reward. Do you want to have a key role in the kingdom of Christ? What are you doing *now* to prepare you for your future role? How much are you advancing the kingdom of God? **Not the Church - *the kingdom*!**

When was the last time any of your church leaders told you any of these things, *if ever*? Or are they still looking only backward to Christ crucified? Friends, do not be deceived. The kingdom of Christ is coming, and coming soon. How prepared are you for it?

CONCLUSION

No matter how spiritual you are, your life is likely to be plagued by governmental problems. And not necessarily because of anything you have done personally. We all live in a sinful and corrupt world. Thus, the people of God - throughout history - have been justifiably concerned about governmental things. And God is not displeased with this - He does not sit up in heaven wishing we were all more spiritually-minded.

It is far more likely that God wishes we were all more government minded. Not worldly government minded - not consumed by mere *politics* - but more godly government-minded. Realizing that good, godly government, and mirroring our laws after the model of God's laws, are things God not only *wants* us to do, but in fact *made* us to do. Because, when all is said and done, that's who God is. We often think of how God is light, God is love, or God is holy. But how often do we seriously consider that *God is law*, and *God is government*?

Isa. 33:22 says, "the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our lawgiver; the Lord is our king." Is that not the very essence of government? Did you really think the three branches of government were invented by people? Which is more likely, that God created and fitted mankind to operate in His law and government framework, or that He made people without the slightest regard for such things?

Therefore, a righteous concern for law and government is an inherent part of our makeup. It is a part of being made in God's image. We do not deviate from God's plan by devoting ourselves to matters of righteous law and government, we in fact fulfill His plan for us by doing so. And historically, the people of God have always recognized this.

When the Israelites were stuck in slavery in Egypt, what were they complaining about? Lack of prayer and devotional time, personal piety, or the inability to witness for Jehovah? No, they were looking for a Deliverer, not a spiritual Savior, just as in the time of Jesus. Nor is this merely a Jewish or O.T. mind set.

When the Pilgrims were about to land at Plymouth Rock, before they could leave the boat, they first had to make sure they had all their gospel tracts in order and their evangelistic strategies in place. *Oops - sorry*. Actually, the first order of business was to form "a civil Body Politick." Then when later colonists came to America, surely they immediately set up a nonprofit and tax exempt organization, with specific fund-raising goals and a planned giving program. *Er, not exactly*.

The Virginia settlers desired to bring the inhabitants of the new land "to human Civility, and to a settled and quiet Government." The colonists of Connecticut declared, "the word of God requires that to maintain the peace and union of such a people there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affairs of the people at all seasons as occasion shall require." Wow. What worldly heathen they were.

And of course, when the founders of America decided to break from England, it was for reasons relating to maintaining the purity of the gospel, evangelizing the lost, and promoting personal piety throughout society. No, it was to secure their God-given rights. Relying, in the end, on Divine Providence [*i.e.*, God] and appealing to the supreme judge of the world [*i.e.*, God]. And *this* made America a Christian nation.

In the end, so-called *social issues* always come down to questions of who is going to be in charge, what limits are in place to prevent governmental abuse, and making sure that the governmental mistakes of the past are not repeated. Dare I say, the universal thrust of mankind, across nations and centuries, has been to hope for, and to try to bring about, a good kingdom, and to avoid becoming a bad kingdom.

What was all the recent furor over the 2020 election, Trump, and the storming of the Capitol? To expose and root out the Deep State, to restore free speech, freedom of religion and other constitutional freedoms, and to end oppressive legislation and injustice. When the pandemic hit, what got people riled up? Mask requirements, social distancing, business closures, travel restrictions and quarantines imposed without any finding of actual infection or fault.

I am not endorsing the means or methods used by everyone in these recent instances of governmental turmoil. I am not saying whether the people involved were acting rightly or wrongly. They are all simply examples of people instinctively acknowledging that God made them for good government. You can evaluate each of these on your own, based on God's laws and His principles of government, *assuming you know what they are*. Don't know what those are? *Better look into it*.

It's amazing how the Christian community, as a whole, failed to grasp what was going on with individual Christian responses to the election and the pandemic. The religious community seemed to think people's loyalties were being misplaced, their focus was being drawn away from the gospel (you know, what is truly important), and were chasing after a false (*i.e.*, political) god. In so doing, ministry leaders just showed themselves to be ignorant and completely clueless.

In reality, Christians were, and are, responding just as people in general, and the people of God in particular, have always responded. "Let us throw off the systems, institutions and governments (*i.e.*,

kingdoms) of our oppressors, the agents of the Devil, and bring about systems, institutions and governments more in line with scripture and the laws of God." I suggest there could not possibly be a more holy enterprise than this, and God understands it completely.

In fact, that is what the Gospel of the Kingdom is all about. Not *political action*, as such. But a genuine concern to see the laws of God and godly government implemented *in our lifetime*, because that is the way He made us. My message to churches everywhere: *Get with the program*.

Yes, I know that ultimately, all such human efforts will *fail*. But guess what? All human efforts to transform the world by evangelizing the lost will fail, too. Even the most Spirit-led revival will fail to prevent the world from descending into chaos, or prevent the Devil's kingdom from rising. Only the coming kingdom of Christ will succeed, where all others have failed. And *that* is the best news of the kingdom of God that you will ever hear. *So be bold and tell others about it. It is the Gospel, after all.*

Other publications by Gerald R. Thompson:

A Biblical Worldview Primer

A Call For Reclaiming Church Government

A Pro-Life Attorney Explains Why Abortion Is Not Murder (So Please Stop Saying It Is)

Biblical Genealogies and the Law of Inheritance

Brief and Manifesto Against A Mandatory State Bar (co-author)

Civil Disobedience in an Age of Tyranny

Federal Taxation In the U.S.: A Biblical and Constitutional Perspective

Five Biblical Principles of Church Government (that you have never ever in your entire life heard preached from a pulpit)

God's Laws of Authority

The Gospel of the Kingdom

The Great Commission and God's Law

The Last Kingdom On Earth

Legal Equality: No Respecter of Persons

Legal Foundations: The Framework of Law

No Part of the Mosaic Covenant Has Ended

Politics & Prophecy: A Lawyer's View of the End Times

The Right To Alter or Abolish the Government

Self-Government, Conscience and True Liberty

Sex, Crimes & Punishment

Studies in the Laws of Nature's God

Tithing and The Law of God

The Unalienable Right of Property: Examining the 4th and 5th Amendments

When Judges Run Amok: The Lie of Judicial Lawmaking

All these publications and more are available for free download at https://lonang.com/downloads/