

Sorting Out the Two Kingdoms

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Depending on what authority you ask, our planet contains from 190 to 206 sovereign states. But there are really only two kingdoms: the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God (also called the kingdom of heaven in the Gospel of Matthew; the Kingdom of Christ and God in Ephesians 5:5; the Kingdom of the Son of his love in Colossians 1:13; and the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ in 2 Peter 1:11). At the end of this article, I have a chart showing the differences between the two kingdoms. You will see that they are so different that they should never be confused.

Kingdom Confusion

That there are really only two kingdoms seems like a simple enough arrangement, and yet people have a tendency to confound or even combine the two. Although Jesus had clearly stated that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36), for a time, even after Jesus' resurrection, His disciples confused the kingdom of God with the earthly kingdom of Israel (see, for example, Acts 1:6). They eventually came to a right understanding, and the Scriptures they passed down give us clear teachings about the kingdom of God.

Yet, despite this unambiguous teaching, people still became mixed up because they had preconceived ideas that blinded them. Have you ever wondered why many first-century Jewish Christians adamantly insisted that "it is necessary to circumcise [Gentile converts], and to command them to keep the law of Moses" (Acts 15:5)? It is because they did not discern the radical newness of the New Covenant, seeing it as merely a continuation of the Abrahamic and Old Covenants, and because they did not understand that the kingdom of God was a spiritual and different kingdom from the kingdom of Israel. There are people today who make a similar mistake. I want to discuss their error. But first I want to give you a bit of history by showing you how the Catholic Church confused the two kingdoms.

A Bit of History

From the time of Christ and the apostles until AD 313, the Roman Empire varied between toleration and persecution of Christianity. When Constantine and Licinius granted religious tolerance in the Edict

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of Milan (313), they began the Constantinian Shift. Among other things, this shift united church and state. This mingling of church and state led to misunderstanding, causing people to lose sight of the fact that the kingdom of God is not of this world. James S. Candlish writes that by the time of Leo I (pope from 440 to 461), Rome was considered the capital of the kingdom of God (*The Kingdom of God Biblically and Historically Considered*, 258). He continues:

The more the kingdom of God came to be conceived as an external hierarchy, the more necessary it was that it should have a regular organization, and that the bonds that united its different parts should be drawn closely and firmly together.... In [the time of Gregory I—590-604] we find that this idea of the kingdom of God led to increased missionary enterprises, and to efforts to enforce uniformity of rules and observances, and to bring formerly independent Churches, such as the Celtic, into subjection to the authority of Rome.... Thus the way was prepared for a fresh phase in the attempts to realize the kingdom of God on earth, the Holy Roman Empire, which began with the coronation of Charles the Great by pope Leo III on Christmas day 800, and was permanently established by that of Otto the Great in 962.

The new Empire was a theocracy; the earthly power of the king was consecrated by the bishop's anointing, the old rite by which the kings of Israel were marked as inspired by God was applied to make the earthly kingdom a heavenly one.

ibid., 258-259

Of course, even the misapplication of rites from the kingdom of Israel did not really make the earthly kingdom a heavenly one. But that didn't stop people from believing it through the centuries. As might be expected, who was in charge was a hot topic of debate between the popes and the kings and emperors.

In 1302, Pope Boniface VIII issued the Papal bull called *Unam Sanctam*. In this bull, Boniface asserts that there are not two kingdoms. There is only one kingdom, the Catholic Church. But there are two swords. The Church controls the spiritual sword and the state controls the temporal sword, but, since the temporal sword is hierarchically lower than the spiritual sword, the Church holds sway over the political realm. And, "Furthermore, we declare, we proclaim,

we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff." Naturally, many of the heads of state didn't agree with the pope's power grab. But few questioned the basic premise that God was working through the Church and the state together in an external way to bring about the kingdom of God.

The Reformers, though not speaking with one voice and even changing individually over time, generally retreated from the medieval Catholic view. They usually described the kingdom of God as invisible and the kingdom of the world as visible.

What the Reformers seem to have had trouble with, however, was the difference in the way Christ rules each kingdom. For example, in the kingdom of God, we directly do His will. We are commanded to spread the Gospel, and so we do, and we do it for His glory; He is the aim. But the kingdom of the world is not conscious of Christ. It goes its merry way, seeking its own ends. But Christ works in history to bring about the ends He wants, using even evil to bring about ultimate good (see, for example, Genesis 50:20). And so, because the Reformers seemed not to grasp this, although they saw a distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, they sought to make the two kingdoms essentially



Ulrich Zwingli. Notice that he is depicted as holding both the Bible and the sword.

coterminous by making sure that Christians—often even clergy—ruled the civil governments in coordination with the church. Thus, we have Calvin's political sway—called totalitarianism by some—over Geneva and Zwingli being called "burgomaster, secretary, and council in one" in Zurich. These were essentially attempts by those who considered themselves representatives of the kingdom of God to grab power in

the kingdom of the world. This was never commissioned by Christ, and was a confusing of the kingdoms. In practical consequence, the attempt differed little in theory from Pope Boniface's claim of church superiority over state. Yet, Puritan New England followed a similar course.

Christian Dominionism/Reconstructionism

One great source of confusion today concerning the kingdom of God is a theological position that is generally known as Christian dominionism or Christian reconstructionism, but which usually calls itself theonomy. One Christian apologist succinctly defines dominion theology this way: "Dominion theology is predicated upon three basic beliefs: 1) Satan usurped man's dominion over the earth through the temptation of Adam and Eve; 2) The Church is God's instrument to take dominion back from Satan; 3) Jesus cannot or will not return until the Church has taken dominion by gaining control of the earth's governmental and social institutions" (Al Dager, *Vengeance Is Ours: The Church In Dominion* [Sword Pub., 1990] 87).

Christian theonomists correctly believe that the kingdom of God is not just a future kingdom. Jesus ushered in the kingdom with His first coming. But the point at which theonomists stray from the teaching of Jesus and His apostles is in claiming that Christians can, and have an obligation to, work to establish a visible kingdom of God and that the kingdom is to be governed by Old Testament law, which they see as largely carried over into the New Covenant. Put another way, Christian theonomists see civilization as the kingdom of God that is mostly in rebellion, and the Christian's duty is to work for the political power they can then use to enforce Old Testament law so as to quell the rebellion.

Theonomists believe that God's call for man to have dominion in Genesis 1:26 and 28 was not just a command to have superiority over the physical earth and lower creatures, but to establish His kingdom under His law. But, because of the Fall, man failed this assignment and Satan began running things. When Jesus came, He defeated Satan, re-established the kingdom, and, through the Great Commission, once again gave man (His followers) the dominion mandate—hence the label of Christian dominionism. The term reconstructionism comes from the goal of the movement: the reconstruction of civilization using the laws of the Old Testament as a blueprint for the rule of the kingdom of God.

Theonomy confuses the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God. It is trying to establish a visible kingdom of God through the politics of this world that would use the myriad laws of the Old Covenant to lord it over people and keep them in bondage to the law by exercising the sword. Theonomists call for the execution of lawbreakers. Many reconstructionists would institute the death penalty for murder, idolatry, homosexual acts, adultery, witchcraft, blasphemy, and, at times, children disobeying their parents.

The theonomists' "kingdom of God" would merely be a Judeo-Christian, church-state hybrid, totalitarian kingdom of this world! It would in no way even begin to resemble the kingdom of God because the kingdom of God is not of this world, is not physically visible, does not use Old Covenant laws, does not lord it over others, does not keep anyone in bondage, and does not exercise the sword (see the chart later in this article).

An advocate of theonomy, Greg Bahnsen, writes, "The Christian is obligated to keep the whole law of God as a pattern for sanctification and that this law is to be enforced by the civil magistrate where and how the stipulations of God so designate" (Greg L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* [Nutley, NJ: The Craig Press, 1979] 34). It should be immediately obvious from this statement that theonomists believe that the magistrate, and, by extension, the state, must be Christian. The theonomist position, then, is contrary to the Constitution of the United States. Article VI, paragraph 3, states, "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." And the First Amendment says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." If Christians occupied every political office and made laws and enforced them and judged cases according to their understanding of the Bible, the United States would, in effect, have an established state religion.

And yet theonomists have the gall to claim that they do believe in the separation of church and state because they believe in the Old Testament standard for government. But Old Testament Israel did not have a separation of church and state. It merely had a separation of function. Neither Moses nor the kings of Israel, for example, could function as priests. This was, admittedly, more of a division of labor or specialization of function than many of the other nations at that time. It might be called a step in the direction of separation, but it was certainly not the separation of church and state as we understand it today. There was only one religion and adherence to that religion was

to be enforced by the state. And that is what theologians advocate—a return to the old, worn-out garment, old wineskin system of the kingdom of Israel. But Jesus instituted a new kingdom that is so much more glorious!

Theologian George Grant writes,

Christians have an obligation, a mandate, a commission, a holy responsibility to reclaim the land for Jesus Christ—to have dominion in civil structures, just as in every other aspect of life and godliness.

But it is dominion that we are after. Not just a voice. It is dominion we are after. Not just influence. It is dominion we are after. Not just equal time. It is dominion we are after. World conquest. That's what Christ has commissioned us to accomplish.... Thus, Christian politics has as its primary intent the conquest of the land—of men, families, institutions, bureaucracies, courts, and governments for the Kingdom of Christ.

George Grant, *The Changing of the Guard: Biblical Blueprints for Political Action* (Forth Worth, TX: Dominion Press, 1987) 50-51

And, sounding like a pope calling for a holy crusade or sending out conquistadors to subjugate Native Americans, Grant again writes,

The army of God is to conquer the earth, to subdue it, to rule over it, to exercise dominion. Christians are called to war. And it is a war we are expected to win.

George Grant, *Bringing in the Sheaves* (Atlanta: American Vision Press, 1985) 98

David Chilton writes, "Our goal is world dominion under Christ's lordship, a 'world takeover' if you will" (*Paradise Restored: A Biblical Theology of Dominion* [Tyler, TX: Dominion Press, 1994] 214. Apparently, reconstructionists have trouble believing Jesus when He said, "I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have oppression; but cheer up! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). If Jesus has overcome the world, why would we have to overcome it again? All we have to do is follow the Great Commission, which doesn't tell us to take dominion but to preach the Gospel and reap the harvest of those who are delivered out of the

power of darkness (the kingdom of the world) and translated into the kingdom of the Son (see Colossians 1:13).

Unlike the Old Covenant that God made with Israel, Jesus linked the New Covenant with no earthly political power. People enter it not by birth or by the coercion of law but by belief. This was the beginning of the separation of church and state and religious liberty.

But reconstructionist Gary North writes this:

So let us be blunt about it: we must use the doctrine of religious liberty to gain independence for Christian schools until we train up a generation of people who know that there is no religious neutrality, no neutral law, no neutral education, and no neutral civil government. Then they will get busy in constructing a Bible-based social, political, and religious order which finally denies the religious liberty of the enemies of God.

Gary North, "The Intellectual Schizophrenia of the New Christian Right," *Christianity and Civilization* 1 (Spring 1982): 25

I have seen the thinking North espouses invading homeschooling—homeschoolers being trained to step into power-wielding jobs in the churches, the courts, the government, and the military so they can establish the "social, political, and religious order" that will deny religious liberty to others. I am an advocate of homeschooling, but I want to go on record as stating that I find this use of it repulsive. Where does Jesus ever say anything remotely close to telling us to use the religious freedoms we now have to teach our children that when they grow up they are to weasel their way into high positions so they can take religious freedom away from others? Nowhere. Since Jesus said, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up in the last day" (John 6:44), forcing Christianity on others would make a mockery of God's plan of salvation.

Politicians who do not use the Bible to guide their public and private lives do not belong in office.
—Beverly LaHaye

North also writes, "Christians are required by God to become active in building God's visible Kingdom" (Gary North's Introduction in George Grant, *The Changing of the Guard*, xxxi). But Jesus told Nicodemus, "Most certainly, I tell you, unless one is born anew, he can't see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3). So how can it be visible in the way North intends? It cannot.

To quote Gary North again: "God wants Christians to control the earth on His behalf" (*Liberating Planet Earth* [Ft. Worth, TX: Dominion Press, 1987] 23).

Pitting Roger Williams' work for the separation of church and state that influenced the First Amendment (which North calls man's law and civil covenant-breaking) against the Puritan John Winthrop's vision of a visible kingdom of God on earth ruled by Old Testament law, North writes, "The choice for Christians in America has been this one since 1636: John Winthrop or Roger Williams, God's law or man's law, civil covenant-keeping or civil covenant-breaking. For over three centuries, Americans have made the wrong choice. So has virtually everybody else on earth" (*Political Polytheism, The Myth of Pluralism* [Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989] 239). Later in the same work, North writes, "In short, by any standard, Roger Williams was a nut, a loose cannon rattling around on the deck" (*ibid.*, 252).

Do you see that these people want to control the state and exercise its power of the sword? They want to use that power to expand and establish what they consider to be the kingdom of God, but would really be a kingdom of the world. They want to enforce Old Testament law, bringing people under bondage to it, using it to control the outward behavior of converted and unconverted alike, exercising dominion over—lording it over—the whole world. The kingdom they want to set up would be, by their own description, a visible kingdom, visible to physical eyes and carnal minds. Those born into it by ordinary birth would be citizens of this kingdom. It should be obvious that Christian theologians are not seeing the real kingdom of God, are woefully off base, and should not be followed. Yet their influence extends far beyond those who call themselves theologians.

*I think we should just kind of keep this clean, keep it simple, go back to what our founders and our founding documents meant – they're quite clear – that we would create law based on the God of the Bible and the Ten Commandments.
–Sarah Palin speaking on The O'Reilly Factor, May 6, 2010*

Kingdom Now

Kingdom Now theology is essentially a variation on dominion theology styled to suit Pentecostals and charismatics. Whereas dominion theology is postmillennial in eschatology, Kingdom Now teaches dispensational premillennialism. Unlike most dispensational premillennialists, however, Kingdom Now adherents believe that they

must establish the visible kingdom of God before the rapture they believe will occur prior to Christ's coming to the earth. Further, they believe that they will do this, not only by taking control of earthly governments in the way dominionists believe, but also by using special supernatural gifts to wage spiritual warfare, wresting control of the earth from Satan and his demons. They believe that there are seven spheres of influence, or seven mountains, they must hold: business, government, media, arts and entertainment, education, the family, and religion.

Although there are definitely theological similarities to dominionism, many in the Kingdom Now movement seek to separate themselves from the legalist image of the dominionists. Kingdom Now advocate, Os Hillman, writes, "It is better that we avoid the word dominion in our culture today due to the connotation that comes with this word of control and manipulation of others. It also reminds people of a flawed movement in the body of Christ called dominion theology that caused great harm to many.... When we operate from love and service, we will be attractive to the world. They will desire to follow. We become solution providers to the issues of mankind. Jesus solved people's problems, which resulted in greater influence in people's lives. Loren Cunningham once said, 'Use your authority and you will lose your influence; use your influence and you will gain authority'" ("Reclaiming the 7 Mountains - is it dominionism?" <http://www.reclaim7mountains.com/apps/articles/default.asp?blogid=4347&view=post&articleid=76021&fldKeywords=&fldAuthor=&fldTopic=0>).

Although kinder and gentler than dominionism, Kingdom Now still seeks to gain control of the kingdom of the world's centers of power and establish a visible kingdom of God, something that Jesus Christ never told His followers to do.

A Spreading Infection

Frederick Clarkson writes in the article, "Christian Reconstructionism" <http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v08n1/chrisre1.html>, "The significance of the Reconstructionist movement is not its numbers, but the power of its ideas and their surprisingly rapid acceptance. Many on the Christian Right are unaware that they hold Reconstructionist ideas." This is all too true. Christians who don't even know what Dominionism/Reconstructionism/Theonomy is now have the same agenda, which has become the platform of Christian conservatism in general: control of the state so they can enforce "God's moral law," the repression or even punishment of homosexuals, the return of

prayer to state-run schools, the posting of the Ten Commandments in the classroom, the creating of a strong foreign policy backed up by the build up of the military, enforcing the teaching of creationism and/or intelligent design in state-run schools, stopping universal health care, ending stem-cell research, preventing strong environmental protection laws, closing businesses on "the Sabbath," stopping amnesty for illegal aliens, and in general breaching the wall of separation between church and state. These are all theonomist objectives that have now been swallowed by Christians.

The influence of dominionism/reconstructionism/theonomy and Kingdom Now on the rest of the Christian world cannot be underestimated. Here in the United States, the idea that Christians must gain control of government, business, the media, arts and entertainment, education, and the family—while relegating other religions (especially Islam) to a closely watched subclass is fast becoming equated in people's minds with Christianity itself. This thought is spreading to the rest of the world, and woe to those who resist it!

We are coming to the times when passive Christianity and passive Christians will cease to exist. There is a maturity, a discipline, and a divine militancy coming upon the people of God. Those who have succumbed to humanistic and idealistic theologies may have a hard time with this, but we must understand that God is a military God. The title that He uses ten times more than any other in Scripture is "the Lord of hosts," or "Lord of armies." There is a martial aspect to His character that we must understand and embrace for the times and the job to which we are now coming.

Rick Joyner, "Taking the Land—We Are Establishing Our
Eternal Place and Position Here on Earth"
http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word.html?ID=3617

"I am often asked if I still think we should invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to Christianity. The answer is: Now more than ever!" (Ann Coulter, *How to Talk to a Liberal (If You Must): The World According to Ann Coulter* [New York: Three Rivers Press, 2004] 22).

If these people are right, then how can Jesus have said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.... Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.... Blessed are the

peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God" (Matthew 5:3, 5, 9)?

I can understand that theonomists, dominionists, reconstructionists, Kingdom Now adherents, and their Christian conservative followers are alarmed by the massive moral decline the past few generations have witnessed. Like Lot living in Sodom, they are vexed to have to dwell in such an immoral society. I share their vexation but not their response. The difference between their reaction and mine can be summed up in the concept of works versus faith. It can be said of them, as Paul said of the Jews, "They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge" (Romans 10:2). They are stumbling at the same stumbling stone the unconverted Jews of the first century stumbled at (see Romans 9:30-10:21). They don't know what kind of spirit they are of (see Luke 9:54-55). As Christians, we are to let the dead bury their dead (Matthew 8:22). We are not to become entangled in the affairs of this life (2 Timothy 2:4). We are to preach the Gospel (Matthew 28:19-20) and trust God to work out His will and take care of His people as He sees fit in this time.

Thy Kingdom Come

In the model prayer that Jesus gave His disciples, He taught them to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10, King James Version). Did He mean that we are to pray that Christians will take over the governments of the earth to establish a visible kingdom of God? Since He gave us no such command and described His kingdom as not of this world and not visible in the natural sense, we must conclude that the answer is no.

Completely in keeping with what Jesus did commission, what Jesus meant in this prayer is that we are to pray for the spread of God's spiritual kingdom on earth through the preaching of the Gospel and the subsequent conversion of hearers who will then submit to God's will.

But What Is the Kingdom of God?

Oddly enough, it can be difficult to define the kingdom of God. Throughout history, people have defined it as the kingdom of Israel, as the Catholic Church, as the visible church, as the invisible church, and as a visible kingdom Christians will establish on earth. None of these are correct.

By definition, the kingdom of God means the rule of God as divine King. God ultimately rules over all things, even the kingdom of the world, working in history to bring about the ends He desires (Romans 8:28). But there is a more specific definition for the kingdom of God.

In Luke 22:29, we find that the Father gave the kingdom to Jesus and He gave it to His followers: "I confer on you a kingdom, even as my Father conferred on me." This does not mean that we now have the kingdom instead of Jesus, but that He is sharing it with us (see verse 30 and Romans 8:17). In the end, Jesus "will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he will have abolished all rule and all authority and power" (1 Corinthians 15:24). But until He puts all enemies under His feet, Jesus will reign, and we will reign with Him (2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 5:10). This period is the figurative one thousand years in which we will reign with Him (Revelation 20:6.) But note that it is not until the end, at the last trump, that the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of God: "When the seventh angel sounded, and great voices in heaven followed, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ. He will reign forever and ever!'" (Revelation 11:15).

The kingdom of the world is under the control of Satan (see Matthew 4:8-9 and 2 Corinthians 4:4). He rules by deceiving the whole world (Revelation 12:9). Yet, Jesus, after His resurrection, said, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18). It was at that time that Satan was bound and cast into the abyss "that he should deceive the nations no more" (Revelation 20:1-3). Now we Christians plunder Satan's worldly kingdom (see Matthew 12:29). We do this by following Jesus' command to preach the Gospel "and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). This undeceives them, delivering them from darkness into the kingdom of God, giving them redemption, the forgiveness of sin (Colossians 1:13-14). In Jesus' commission to Paul, He sent him to the Gentiles or nations (these words are both translations of the Greek word *ethnos*) "to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:18).

The kingdom of the world, then, is the kingdom of Satan. It is in rebellion against God. We of the kingdom of God are conquering Satan's kingdom, not by fleshly warfare or carnal political maneuvering: "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world's

rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12). We do this with the armor of truth, with righteousness, with the Good News of peace, with faith, with salvation, not with the sword of the military or the magistrate but with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God", and with prayer (see Ephesians 6:13-18). The result is "a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes, peoples, and languages" (Revelation 7:9) coming to salvation, forsaking the kingdom of the world and becoming citizens of the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from where we also wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20).

Broadly, then, the kingdom of God is this age in which we now live, God's saints working in concert with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and struggling against spiritual wickedness, spoiling the kingdom of Satan to bring in the harvest of God's elect who become fellowcitizens with their brother saints (Ephesians 2:19). In this way, the kingdom of God dynamically comes and grows. But it remains a spiritual kingdom, not of this world. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world no more mix than oil and water. As humans on this planet, Christians are necessarily in this world, work at their jobs in it, buy and sell in it, interact with the citizens of it, and herald the Gospel in it. But we are not to become of the world, trying to combine the two kingdoms together, becoming unequally yoked (2 Corinthians 6:14-15) in a wrong-headed attempt to use the world's means (e.g. politics and the military) and the abrogated laws of the Old Testament to bring it under subjection. All such attempts are doomed to failure, even as they have always failed in the past.

Instead of becoming overwrought and failing to rely upon God because of the fiery trials we are living through in our immoral society, let us have patience, trusting God (see 1 Peter 4:12-19 and Hebrews 10:36-38). None of these terrors and trials can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:35-39); rather, all will be for our good (Romans 8:28) and to God's glory (Romans 11:33-36). As His "little flock," let us not be afraid, for it is our Father's good pleasure to GIVE us the kingdom (Luke 12:32). We don't have to take it by carnal means. The all-powerful God will work out all things according to His will (Ephesians 1:11). Meanwhile, let's shine our Christian light in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation (Philippians 2:15).

A chart comparing the two kingdoms is on the next page.

A Comparison of the Two Kingdoms

<i>Kingdom of the World</i>	<i>Kingdom of God</i>
Exercises the power of the sword (Rom. 13:1-4)	Exercises the power of the Cross (1 Cor. 1:18) through the preaching of the Gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16)
The greatest lord it over (Matt. 20:25; Mk. 10:42; Lk. 22:25)	The greatest are the greatest servants (Matt. 20:26-28; Mk. 10:43-45; Lk. 22:26-27; 1 Pet. 5:1-3)
Can only control outward behavior	Transforms the inward man (Rom. 12:2)
Promotes and seeks the defense and advancement of one's own concerns: life, family, community, nation, and religion. Often the defense and advancement of these entities is at the expense of individuals; e.g. millions dying on opposing sides of a war to defend and/or advance the interests of their nations.	Seeks the good of others, even those with whom we have no direct interest. Self-sacrifice is made for the sake of other individuals (Matt. 16:25; 20:26-28; Mk. 8:35; Lk. 17:33; Jn. 12:25; Rom. 12:1; Phil. 2:1-8). The kingdom of God is advanced because it demonstrates God's love and gives eternal life to others (Jn. 10:10).
Myriad laws to control outward behavior and so maintain order (Rom. 13:1-4)	One law of love (Romans 13:8)
Uses worldly politics	Does not judge those without (1 Cor. 5:12-13), has no fellowship with the iniquitous system of the world (2 Cor. 6:14; Jas. 4:4), is not flesh and blood (1 Cor. 15:50)
Returns evil with evil	Returns evil with good (Matt. 5:43-44; Lk. 6:27, 35; Rom. 12:20)
Warfare is fleshly	Warfare is spiritual (Eph. 6:10-17)
In bondage (Rom. 8:21; Gal. 4:3)	Free (Lk. 4:18; Jn. 8:32, 36; Rom. 8:21; Gal. 5:1)
Worships Satan, king of this world (Matt. 4:8-9; 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 12:9; 20:2)	Worships the Triune God
Visible to physical eyes and carnal mind	Can be seen only by those born again (Jn. 3:3; Mk. 4:11-12; Lk. 17:20-21)
Entered by physical birth into the world	Entered by spiritual birth (Jn. 3:5)
Of the world	In the world but not of it (Jn. 17:14-18; 18:36)
In darkness (Acts 26:15-18; Col. 1:13)	In the light (Col. 1:13; 1 Pet. 2:9)
Is in wickedness (1 Jn. 5:19)	Righteous (Heb. 1:8)