

Lesson 9 – D.B. Ray

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The Visibility of the Church or Kingdom

[Luk 16:16] The law and the prophets [were] until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.
- This verse alone is enough to persuade that the Kingdom has to be visible.

Three Theories Concerning the Government of Christ on Earth

First Theory – Christ has two Kingdoms on the earth:

- One of the kingdoms is a visible organization
- The other is the invisible reign of grace in the hearts of men
- - This last view suggests a person is baptized by the Holy Spirit

Second Theory – There is No visible Kingdom of Christ on earth

- The Kingdom is in the hearts of His subjects
- These persuade themselves that there are No binding laws or ordinances so they enact their own laws to govern the people of God

Third Theory – Jesus Christ established a visible Kingdom during earthly ministry

- The only thing invisible is the part gone on to heaven to be with the Lord
- We believe that this last theory is what the Bible teaches
- Some visible children of God are in Babylon so the Bible teaches: [Rev 18:4] And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Scriptures Urged in Opposition of a Visible Kingdom

[Luk 17:20-21] And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

- - - “Within You” is found to mean “among you” or “within you”

- - - Answer was to unbelieving Pharisees so the Kingdom could NOT be in them

[Rom 14:17] For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

- - - First element of Kingdom is “righteousness” which includes visible obedience

- - - Baptist is part of the righteousness of obedience as we find: [Mat 3:15] And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer [it to be so] now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered Him.

[1Co 12:13] For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- - - The Lord is the only one Who ever baptized with the Holy Spirit, Matt 3:11

- - - “In one Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, we have all been baptized into one body”

Scriptures Teaching the Visibility of the Kingdom

[Mat 16:18] And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

- - This is taken as the first proof verse to show Kingdom must be visible

- - “IF” the Lord spoke of the “reign of grace” it would be wrong seeing that men began to call on the Lord and find grace with Abel, Heb 11:4

- - Could speak of invisible men and women as easy as an invisible Kingdom

[Mat 11:12] And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

- - The visible Kingdom of the Lord has suffered violence from John till now

- - How could an invisible one suffer violence or be taken by force?

[Mat 25:1-13] Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. 2 And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish, etc...

- - If the of Kingdom consists of grace in the heart, then final apostasy is true

- - 1 John 3:9, John 5:24, and Rom 8:38-39 contradict the idea of final apostasy

[Luk 22:29-30] And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

- - Notice that the Lord fixes His table in His Kingdom.

- - Lord’s Supper is a visible ordinance meaning the Kingdom has to be visible

The Kingdom is a visible organization on the earth

- It has visible subjects

- - - The subjects walk in ordinances of the house

- It has visible laws found in the Word of God

- It has visible ordinances including baptism and the Lord’s Supper

[Dan 2:44] And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, [but] it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

- This verse predicts a visible Kingdom destroying other visible Kingdoms

Questions

1. Why is Luke 16:16 enough to persuade people the Kingdom is visible?
2. Which theory of the Kingdom do we find to be true?
3. What was the Lord saying about the Kingdom in Luke 17:20-21?
4. Who was the only One to baptize with the Holy Spirit?
5. When did men begin to call on God and find grace?
6. What must the Kingdom be in order for the Table to be set in it?
7. What do visible ordinances, baptism and communion, say of Kingdom?