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Kingdom of God (Part 3)



Kingdom of God - Steve Gregg

In this segment, Steve Gregg discusses the present and future aspects of the Kingdom of God. While Jesus offered the Kingdom of God, it was rejected by the Jews, leading to its postponement until Jesus returns to establish his millennial reign. However, Jesus made it clear that the Kingdom had already come and had been inaugurated, but the Pharisees remained oblivious to it. The Kingdom of God will ultimately resist the power of darkness and obliterates any resistance, as guaranteed in the inscription.

Transcript

In our previous lectures so far on the Kingdom of God, I've tried to point out that there are many views that people hold of the Kingdom in different sectarian environments. There are different Christian denominational opinions and so forth, but that the primary meaning of the Kingdom of God is, it speaks of a relationship between God and a people. The Kingdom is not a place.

The Kingdom is not a particular time in history. The Kingdom is a people, and those people are defined in terms of their relationship with God as subjects relate to a king. In the Old Testament, God had this relationship with Israel.

He established that relationship at Mount Sinai and made a covenant with them, where He told them that on the provisions that He would set, that is, their obedience to His Word and their keeping of His covenant, they could be to Him a kingdom. And they were for a while His kingdom, but we found that in the time of Jesus, the people, although they were looking for a king, they were looking for a Messiah, and initially they saw Jesus in that role, yet as it turned out, they wanted a Messiah on their terms, and their terms were not the terms that Jesus came offering Himself under, and therefore they rejected Him, and He said to them that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them. He said this in Matthew 22, excuse me, 21, 43.

He said, The Kingdom of God is taken from you and given to a people, or a nation, He said, who will bring forth the fruits of it. Now, I want to talk about a very important aspect of the Kingdom of God tonight, and that is the fact that the Kingdom of God has a

present aspect as well as a future aspect, and it is this present aspect that is very important for us to understand right now. I'm not saying that there's no importance in understanding the future aspect, but I think Christians can sometimes make a mistake of focusing too much, almost entirely even, on the blessed hope, which certainly is a blessed hope, and is to be well kept in mind, that when Jesus comes back, all things will be well, and sometimes we think of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven in terms only of this future thing that will happen when Jesus comes back, and as great as it is for us to have that understanding, that may not happen anytime real soon, and in between now and then, there are things we're expected to be doing, and those things are defined by the present nature of the Kingdom of God, and if we don't understand the present nature of the Kingdom of God, and we only look to the future aspect of Jesus' return, then we will possibly fail to fulfill the purpose that we have in being here.

Remember, Jesus said, I must go into many cities and preach the Kingdom of God. He says, for that purpose, I have been sent. Well, actually, we have been sent for a purpose also, and that also is related to the message of the Kingdom of God, so we need to understand what relevance the Kingdom of God concept of Scripture has to the present as well as the future, so in the course of this lecture and the next one, I'm going to be talking about the present aspect of the Kingdom of God and the progressing and future aspects of the Kingdom of God, and then we will have, I hope, the whole picture of what the Bible teaches on this subject.

In this particular lecture, I want to point out to you that there is indeed a present aspect of the Kingdom of God. That is to say, the Kingdom of God was not postponed, as some would say. Some say Jesus came to offer the Kingdom of God.

The Jews rejected it, and therefore, the offer was withdrawn and was postponed and will not be inaugurated until Jesus comes back and establishes His millennial reign. That's how many people have been taught. That's how many people understand the Kingdom.

I would like to point out to you from Scripture that the Kingdom of God is not something that has been postponed. It is something that has yet to be fully realized in its ultimate mode. It is something that was not postponed but was inaugurated when Jesus was here, has been here for 2,000 years, and we are supposed to be functioning as parts of it in the way that is appropriate for people who are part of a kingdom, that is, who are subjects of a king.

That's what we're going to talk about tonight. I want to make it very clear that since Israel as a people were the first ones offered the privilege of being the Kingdom of God, and then this privilege was taken from them, Jesus said, and given to another nation, which would be the spiritual nation of the church, who will bring forth the fruits of it, it points out that when we talk about the Kingdom of God on earth, we are talking about a nation or a community. I would say one way that is helpful to think of it is it's an

alternative society.

It's a counterculture in a hostile world. The world is contrary to Christ, but He has planted a colony in this world, a colony of His subjects who are here on a mission, and this mission is to live as and promote the interests of His people. This alternative society that is subject to another king, one Jesus.

Now, that being so, gives a dimension to the gospel that we often neglect. I think that a lot of times when we think of preaching the gospel, what we're thinking about is individual salvation. We see the sinner as a person who's on the road to hell and needs to be rescued from that so that when he dies, he will go to heaven instead of going to hell.

And I think that some people see nothing more in the gospel than this because of the truncated nature of the presentation that many evangelicals have received and heard of the gospel. But I would like to suggest to you that the gospel of the kingdom of God is not simply about getting a sinner to change his destination so that when he dies, he will no longer be on the road to hell, but he's going to the kingdom of God. But rather, the kingdom of God is the alternative society of the king, the community and colony of the king here on this earth right now, into which the person who is born again comes and to which he or she belongs forever after, until they die.

And they have a role that is consistent with that calling in the kingdom of God. So that in the early church, although the message of salvation was preached and was responded to on an individual basis, that is, individuals had to repent, had to decide that they would respond to the gospel and be saved. Yet what they saw in Jerusalem there after Pentecost was a community of people who were a countercultural movement.

They were distinctive from everybody else because they had another king they were following. They had different principles, different standards. They had a different economy among themselves.

They shared their goods. They made a profound impression upon those who were outside looking in. As a community of love and compassion and of reality and of truth and of power, because, of course, there are many miracles worked in the name of Jesus, which were signs of the kingdom of God.

Now, this alternative community was a very important part of the presentation of the gospel. It was not simply that the apostles went out and told people the message of the gospel, but the people could see that there was something else there that those who had responded previously to the gospel were now part of a functioning community of sorts. I'm not talking about a community like on a plot of land where everyone lives together.

I'm talking about a parallel alternative society that is a colony of another king whose

citizenship is in heaven and who on this earth are strangers and pilgrims, as Peter said in 1 Peter 2, and who serve as ambassadors for their king here on this planet and do so not as simply so many individuals who love God, but as a community of people who corporately are representing the interests of their king. And the community grows through evangelism, but through evangelism the people are added to this community. And the community, therefore, grows at the expense of the kingdoms of this world because a person who was previously not a Christian had a loyalty to some earthly authority.

And when a person becomes a Christian, they recognize that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Christ. He's the Lord of lords. He's the king of kings.

And therefore, their total loyalty is transferred to Jesus Christ. Therefore, the loyalty that was once offered to Caesar in the Roman Empire, when that Roman person would become a Christian, that loyalty to Caesar was transferred into a loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord. And that is why so many Christians died the way they did at the hands of the Caesars because the Caesars were jealous over their authority and they recognized that the kingdom of God as it grew, grew at their expense.

That people who were formerly subjects and loyalists of the earthly king Caesar were now subjects and loyalists to a heavenly king named Jesus. And this is why conflict arose in the Roman Empire. The Christian community was recognized not as just so many individuals who had decided they want to go to heaven instead of hell when they die.

It was comprised of people who had transferred their loyalty from one king to another. Now, of course, this didn't provide as much of a threat to the Caesars as perhaps the Caesars perceived because Jesus did not come intending to establish a political kingdom that would supplant the Roman Empire as a political empire necessarily. He came to win the hearts of people and their lives and their conduct were to be won over to obedience to Him.

But in most instances, this would not make them any less loyal citizens of Rome in the sense that they would still be law-abiding citizens. They would still pay their taxes. But there were things they would not do because they could not say Caesar is Lord as the rest of the Roman populace did.

They could only say that Jesus is Lord. And this, of course, made some of the Caesars rather jealous. I want to talk to you about how the Scripture points out that we're in a kingdom that has already been inaugurated.

It's not something postponed for another time. Jesus was casting out demons on one occasion in Matthew 12. And a very remarkable case occurred where a man with a physical disability, I believe it was blindness and dumbness, actually was delivered of a demon.

Jesus cast the demon out and the man could see and speak. And this, of course, was very astonishing to people. And some of the people in the crowd began to say, Is this not the Son of David? Now, what they mean by that is, Is this not the Messiah? The Son of David was a label for the Messiah.

And so they said, Is this not the Son of David? Now, the Pharisees in the crowd did not like hearing that because the Pharisees didn't believe Jesus was the Messiah or didn't want to believe that He was. And they didn't much want anyone else to believe it either. And so out of desperation, they sought for some way to diffuse this sentiment and to detract from Jesus and the postulate that was being suggested that He was the Messiah.

And they said, No, He's casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the demons, in other words, the power of Satan. Now, Jesus answered them and said, Well, if Satan's casting out Satan, then His kingdom is not going to last very long. That doesn't make very much sense, does it? But He said in Matthew 12, 28, But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, which obviously He was saying is the case, He was casting out demons by the Spirit of God.

He says, Then surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. That's past tense. The kingdom of God has come upon you, has arrived, it has overtaken you.

You haven't noticed it, it may be, but that does not mean it hasn't shown up. The very casting of demons out of people by the finger of God, by Jesus Christ in His ministry, that casting of demons out was an emblem and a sign that the kingdom of God had, in fact, showed up. This was the power of the kingdom being demonstrated.

In Luke 17, verses 20 and 21, this is a different occasion, another conflict with the same kind of people, the Pharisees. In Luke 17, 20 and 21, it says, Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation, nor will they say, See here or see there. But He says, Indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.

Now, this is the King James and the New King James translation. The kingdom of God is within you. But as I pointed out on an earlier lecture, the term within, the Greek word can mean in your midst, that is within the crowd, among you.

And that is how most, I think, scholars would agree that Jesus means this. The kingdom of God is among you, either meaning Jesus Himself was walking among them, or the subjects of the kingdom. The kingdom was represented in the presence of its subjects who were there.

Some of them were there, right there in the crowd. But it's very clear that Jesus is saying, The kingdom is not going to come in the way you think. It does not come with observation.

You will not be able to say, Oh, here it is or there it is, in the way that you think you could. If it were, of course, a political kingdom, you could see it that way. But it's not.

The kingdom is already here. It already exists in your midst. Jesus is making it clear the kingdom had already come, had invaded this world and had been inaugurated, and the Pharisees were simply oblivious to it.

In Mark 12, in verse 34, we see a statement Jesus made to a lawyer who had come to Him, it would seem initially, to be critical of Him and detest Him. And the lawyer said, Well, good master, what is the great law? What's the greatest of the commandments? And Jesus said to love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and all your strength. That's the greatest commandment.

And another like it is that you shall love your neighbor as yourself. And the lawyer answered and said, That's right. You're so right.

He said because to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself really involves everything the law says, doesn't it? That's what the lawyer said. And Jesus said to him, it says, When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, You are not far from the kingdom of God. Mark 12, 34.

You are not far from the kingdom of God. Well, what's that mean? Well, it means the man was not yet in it, but he was not far away from it. It was not far from him.

And he could presumably, without taking too many giant steps from where he already was, find himself in it. His heart was agreeable with what Jesus was saying. He had not yet embraced Jesus as his king, and therefore that lawyer was not yet in the kingdom, but he was not very far from it.

He was on its threshold. The kingdom was present, and this man was in a position that it would not take very much from where he was to transfer into that kingdom. But, of course, Jesus is speaking as if the kingdom is there, is nearby.

Now, this is a very important passage in Mark 11. I'd like to call your attention to Mark 11, verses 9 and 10. This is the story of the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday.

Jesus was riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. The people were spreading palm branches on the road and their clothing before him. It says, Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming in the name of the Lord. It says that comes, present tense, in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Now, what these crowds were saying is that with the arrival of Jesus on that donkey, they

recognized this as the arrival of the kingdom of, as they put it, the kingdom of our father David. Now, that statement, the kingdom of our father David, is extremely pregnant in terms of the Old Testament teaching about the kingdom of God. We've seen this in our first lecture earlier, that the promise was made in 2 Samuel 7, around verse 12.

Nathan the prophet told David, When you have died, David, and when you are asleep with your fathers, meaning when you're in your grave, he said, I, the Lord, will raise up one of your seed who comes from your own body after you to sit on your throne in your stead, and I will establish his kingdom forever. Now, the Jews always understood forever after that, that the kingdom of God that was promised in the prophets was not merely the kingdom of God. It was the kingdom of God to be ruled over through a son of David.

It was the kingdom of David. It was David's dynasty ordained by God to rule the world under David's descendant. Now, that descendant was to be the Messiah, and Jesus, of course, was descended from David, and he was the fulfillment of that expectation.

But what's important here is to note that the kingdom expectation was that David's throne would be occupied forever by one of his descendants, the Messiah. And when these people saw Jesus writing into Jerusalem and said, Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that's coming in the name of the Lord, they were clearly saying, This is the time of fulfillment. This is the time when the promises will be fulfilled, and David's seed, this Jesus, will establish the kingdom of David.

Now, that shouldn't have to be very controversial, but it is in our present day because for the past 200 years approximately, a little less than 200 years, a very virulent strain of evangelicalism has taught that the kingdom of David has not been established yet, that Jesus would have established it had the Jews received him, but it was postponed because they did not, and that when he comes back, so they say, he will sit on the literal throne of David in Jerusalem for the thousand-year millennial reign. And they say that nothing short of this can really fulfill the prophecies about David's throne. That is, the promise was that when David was dead, and when he slept with his fathers, one of his descendants would rule on David's throne after him.

And they say Jesus never sat on David's throne. David's throne was in the palace in Jerusalem. Jesus never sat on a throne in the palace in Jerusalem.

And therefore, they say this promise has not been fulfilled yet. It must await the millennial kingdom when Jesus returns. Then it will be fulfilled.

Jesus will then sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem. This is the popular view that is so commonly taught for about the last 180 years. The truth of the matter is it was never taught before the 1830s, but it has become almost the most well-known and prominent viewpoint today.

Now, the problem here is this popular viewpoint says that Jesus did not establish the kingdom of David because he did not sit literally on David's throne. Yet the people who saw Jesus riding in Jerusalem thought otherwise. They said the kingdom of our father David is coming right now in the name of the Lord.

In the name of God, Jesus was bringing in the kingdom of David that was promised. Now, I suppose those who feel that Jesus has not established the kingdom of David yet would have to say these people were mistaken. After all, the Jews were very much mistaken about many things.

Certainly, they misunderstood Jesus and his mission to a very large extent. But were they mistaken in this? Were they mistaken in saying that Jesus was now bringing in the kingdom of David as prophesied in the Old Testament? I don't think we could say they were wrong for this reason. The Pharisees did not feel comfortable, again, with the people saying these things.

And they said to Jesus, the Pharisees said, Lord, rebuke your disciples. Don't let them say these things. And what did Jesus say? He said if these would be silent right now, the very rocks would cry out.

Now, what is he saying? He's saying what these people are saying is something that needs to be said. And if they didn't say it, God would make sure it was said. Somehow, he'd make the rocks say it.

In other words, Jesus was confirming the correctness of their declarations. I'm not going to silence them because what they're saying is true. It is so true that if they didn't say it, God would make sure it was said supernaturally.

If people wouldn't say it, the rocks would say it. And so, it's obvious that Jesus agreed with what they were saying. He was, in fact, bringing in the kingdom of their father, David.

And in later times, when the apostles were preaching and Jesus had gone on to heaven, the apostles clearly believed that Jesus had established and fulfilled the promises concerning the kingdom of David and sitting on David's throne. It says in Acts 2, verse 29-32, Peter is giving his first recorded sermon there on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2, 29-32, Peter says, Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

Now, before I read further, I want to point out, Peter starts out by saying, David is dead and buried. Well, he was, of course, a thousand years before this point in time. But David being dead and buried was a precondition for the fulfillment of the promises because the promise in 2 Samuel 7-12 was, David, when you are dead and when you are sleeping with your father, that is, when you are dead and buried, I will raise up your seat and

establish his reign forever.

So, Peter is pointing out that the precondition exists. The Messiah could reign, but only while David was dead and buried. And he says, I want you to know, David is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

Now, before I read any further in Peter's statement, I want to point out this sidebar, and that is that if indeed the fulfillment of the promises to David are supposed to happen after Jesus comes back, and during a future millennial reign that happens after the second coming of Christ, there is a problem. Because when Jesus comes back, he is going to raise the dead. Jesus made that very clear.

The Bible teaches it emphatically. Jesus will come, he will raise the dead. David will be raised also.

In any circumstance that exists after Jesus comes back, David and the rest of us will all have been raised from the dead. He'll be alive. God can't establish the kingdom of David according to the promises while David is alive.

It has to be while he is dead. Therefore, it would have to be established after the death of David, but before the resurrection of David. Because this is prophesied to happen while David is dead and asleep.

Therefore, it cannot be fulfilled after the second coming of Christ, because David and all the rest of us will no longer be dead. He'll be resurrected at that time. So, Peter points out, brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David.

He is both dead and buried. His tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.

That is, raise up the Messiah to sit on his throne. He, David, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

Now, this is an important statement here, because he says David knew that God had promised to raise up one of David's seed to sit on his throne. He says, this Jesus God has raised up. This reads a little differently in the Alexandrian text.

If you have a different translation, I'm using the New King James. But the way it reads in the Textus Receptus here, and whether we use that or not, the point is still being made, but it's much more clear in the Textus Receptus. It says that David knew that God would raise up his seed to sit on the throne, and this Jesus God has raised up.

By implication, raised him up to sit on the throne. And that is certainly what the apostles

believed. If you would consider Paul's first recorded sermon in Acts 13.

Acts 13, verses 32 through 34. Paul said, and we declare to you glad tidings. That promise which was made to the fathers, God has fulfilled this for us, their children, in that he has raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm.

You are my son, today I have begotten you. And that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption. He has spoken thus, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

Now this is a very important statement. I will give you the sure mercies of David. Because that statement, which happens to come from Isaiah, is a reference to the promises, the sure promises of mercy and of benevolence that God made to David.

That God promised David certain things. Those things are sure. Those things God swore with an oath.

It is certain that they would be fulfilled. In Isaiah, Isaiah says, speaking with the mouth of God, he says, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Now in Isaiah's prophecy, the context and all, does not make that statement extremely clear.

The only thing clear about it is it is a reference to the fulfillment of the promises made to David about his seed sitting on his throne. That is clear. But the apostle Paul makes it clearer for us when he says, and that he raised Jesus up from the dead.

He has spoken this way, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Paul applies the fulfillment of this prophecy to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, just like Peter did. In Acts chapter 2, Peter said that the raising up of Jesus from the dead and the subsequent enthronement of Christ at the right hand of God, this was the fulfillment of the promises made to David.

Paul says the same thing in Acts 13. And so we declare these glad tidings, Paul says. And so Peter also says that Jesus is the one who reigns.

Now I want to call attention to the many ways in which the New Testament declares this. The kingdom has been inaugurated and the Messiah now is reigning. If he is reigning as a king, he must have a kingdom.

You cannot have a king without a kingdom. And therefore every declaration that Jesus is reigning, that Jesus is king, that Jesus is Lord, or even that Jesus is Christ, because the word Christ means Messiah, and the word Messiah spoke of a king who would come. To say that Jesus is any of those things is another way of saying he has a kingdom.

I mentioned in an earlier lecture there are four psalms which Old Testament scholars refer to as the great kingdom psalms. There are four great kingdom psalms. They are

Psalm 2, Psalm 45, Psalm 72, and Psalm 110.

Three of these psalms are quoted in the New Testament. Psalm 72 is not quoted in the New Testament, but Psalm 2, Psalm 45, and Psalm 110 are. They are all applied to Jesus in the New Testament, of course.

But what's more, they make it clear the way these psalms are quoted in the New Testament makes it clear that the fulfillment of the kingdom promises to David have been fulfilled in Christ already. In Psalm 2, verses 1 through 8, we have this kingdom psalm. I want to read it to you.

David writes, he says, Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Yahweh, against the Lord. And against His anointed. The word anointed is the Messiah.

They take counsel together against God and against His Messiah, saying, Let us break their bonds in pieces, and cast away their cords from us. That is, let's not be their servants anymore. Let's take their shackles off of us.

Let's not let them bind us to their authority. Let's be independent of God and of His Messiah. But then the psalmist goes on, He who sits in the heavens is greatly afraid that things are going to go badly.

No, it doesn't say that. It says, He who sits in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall hold them in derision.

He'll deride them. He'll mock them. Their petty efforts to overthrow His King, the Messiah, cannot succeed.

They are fighting against God. He laughs at their effort. But He's only amused for a short time.

Then He speaks to them in His wrath and distresses them in His deep displeasure. So He laughs briefly, but it's not funny for very long. He's angry then, and He speaks to them in His wrath.

He distresses them in His deep displeasure. And He says this, Yet I have set my King on my holy hill of Zion. In other words, I have placed the King that I promised on Zion.

That's Jerusalem. In the place that I said I would put Him. That would be in David's throne in Jerusalem.

God says, I have done this in spite of those kings and rulers who wanted to stop it. Their efforts were totally futile, and I have nonetheless overcome them and succeeded in my purpose to establish my King on Zion, as I said I would. Now, I want to, we're going to go further in this psalm, but I want to point out that when we see the apostles quoting this

psalm in Acts chapter 4, they will interpret the rulers and the kings of the earth to be Pontius Pilate, Herod, and the leaders of the Jews.

And this attempt to cast off the Lord's cords and bands from them is seen in their effort to get rid of Jesus by crucifying Him. But that His resurrection is in fact the point at which God says, I have now established my King on my holy hill of Zion. The psalmist goes on and says, and now the psalmist is speaking in the person of the Messiah.

These are the Messiah's words. The Messiah says, I will declare the decree. The Lord has said to me, you are my son.

Today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession. So this is what the Lord says to the Messiah.

You're my son. I have begotten you today. Now, this particular beginning is a reference to the resurrection from the dead.

We know this because Paul tells us so in Acts 13, I think it's verse 33. He says, and in that he raised Jesus from the dead. It is written in the second Psalm, you are my son.

This day I have begotten you. The word begotten here is speaking of figuratively of being of coming to life from the dead. Just as a child begotten out of the womb comes into the world, a new person.

So from the womb from in the resurrection. So the dead body comes up into a new life. It's like a birth again from the womb of the tomb.

And so Jesus is referred to in Colossians 1:15 as the first born from the dead, meaning the first resurrected one. He is also called that in Revelation chapter one. He refers himself as the first begotten from the dead.

So this statement, you are my son. Today I begotten you is a reference to the resurrection. Paul tells us so in Acts 13.

And he says, having resurrected him, he says to Jesus, ask of me. You're now on the holy throne in Zion. You are at my right hand.

Just ask me whatever you want. If you ask me, I'll give it to you. I'll give you the nations.

I'll give you the ends of the earth for your possession. That is what the psalmist predicts. Now, here's how the apostles understand and apply that.

In Acts chapter four, verses 24 through 27, the Sanhedrin threatened the apostles and said they would kill them if they kept preaching in the name of Jesus. And it says in Acts four, verses 24 through 27. So when they heard that, they, the apostles, the church

raised their voice to God with one accord and said, Lord, you are God who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, who by the mouth of your servant David have said, why did the nations rage and the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ.

Notice where the psalmist says his anointed, they say his Christ. They understand this. And they say for truly against your holy servant Jesus whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together, et cetera.

The point is they say David said that the nations and the rulers would come against your Messiah and that happened. Herod, Pontius Pilate, the rulers of the Gentiles and so forth came against him. So they recognize the fulfillment of that, including the part that says God laughs and says, yet I have set my king on the holy hill of Zion.

They see Psalm two as already fulfilled in their day because, of course, Christ was crucified by the power brokers of the world at that time. And he also rose from the dead and has been enthroned at the right hand of God. Another of those famous kingdom psalms is Psalm 110.

I've mentioned before this Psalm 110 is the one chapter in the Old Testament quoted in the New Testament more frequently than any other Old Testament chapter. And in the first verse, Psalm 110, verse one says, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool. Now, in that Psalm, the first word Lord is all capital letters in our translation because that means that the word Yahweh is in the Hebrew text.

The second word Lord is not in all capitals because a different Hebrew word is being translated there. And that's the word Adonai. Adonai is a term in Hebrew that means master, ruler or, you know, or Lord.

But Yahweh is the name for, of course, Israel's God. And so David is saying Yahweh said to my master and he means, of course, the Messiah. All the Jews understood that.

And Jesus agreed with that. He quoted this, but Yahweh said to my Lord, the Messiah, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. OK, well, that sounds like the enthronement of the Messiah in the beginning of his kingdom.

In Acts chapter two. Peter, in that first sermon we were talking about earlier, Acts two, verses 32 through 36, Peter said, This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses, therefore being exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the father the promise of the Holy Spirit. He poured out this which you now see in here.

For David says himself, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand till I make your

enemies your footstool. Quotation of Psalm 110, verse one. Peter says, Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

God has done what he said he would do. He it says that Yahweh would seek the Messiah at the right hand of God. And make him rule from there until his enemies are put under his footstool.

And Peter says, I want you to know God has already done this. You need to know that God has made this Jesus, the one you crucified. He's made him Lord and he's made him Christ.

In other words, he's made him king. He's made him Messiah. He has established his kingdom as he promised.

So in Ephesians. Chapter one, verses two through 22, Paul says, which he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age, but also in that which is to come and gave excuse me. And he put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church.

Now, it says that Jesus has been given a position above all rulers and powers and might and dominion and above every name that is named. There's really no other authority that Jesus needs to have put under him. It's already happened.

Remember, Jesus himself said in Matthew 28, 18. All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. All authority in heaven and earth has been given to him.

His name is above that of all rule and power and dominion and every name that is named. There remains no more power to give him that has not already been given to him. This is why it seems so strange to me for anyone to say, well, in order for the promises be fulfilled, he has to come down here and sit on a throne in Jerusalem and rule over Israel.

Well, wait a minute. He already rules over the universe. All authority in heaven and earth is already given to him.

That coming down and ruling over Israel from Jerusalem, that'd be a demotion from where he already is. He is king of kings and lord of lords. He needs nothing more.

He is the ruler of Israel and the Gentiles and the universe, the stars and the planets, the galaxies. He is the king of it all. And God has put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church.

You see what the implications of this are is that he is the king and he is the head over everything to his people who acknowledge him as king to his church. In Revelation 3, 21, Jesus said to him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with me on my throne as I and sat down with my father on his throne. I am already seated, he says, on my father's throne with him.

I am ruling alongside my father. If you overcome, you'll rule with me on mine too. So what is the gospel message preached? It's not that there is a heaven that you can go to when you die or that when Jesus comes back, he's going to establish a kingdom.

And until then, it's just, you know, just believe and and and hope for the rapture. But rather, here's the message as it was understood by Paul's listeners. And there's no reason to believe that they got him wrong about this.

When Paul was preaching in Thessalonica, those who didn't like his message brought this accusation and they accused Paul of teaching something that was subversive. In Acts 17, 7, they say Jason has harbored them, meaning Paul and his companions. And these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, Jesus.

Now, I don't know exactly what words Paul was using, but his listeners summarized the messages. They heard it from his lips. There's another king, one Jesus.

And they interpreted that as being contrary to Caesar. I thought Caesar was the king. How can there be a rival king to him? Now, of course, his listeners probably were mistaken in terms of their understanding of the meaning of that, because they probably thought or wanted the apolitarchs to think that this saying that Jesus was another king means he was a king who was indeed going to come and try to supplant Caesar and take Caesar's job.

Well, Jesus isn't looking for Caesar's job. Jesus already has a job far above that of Caesar and of all the kings of the earth combined. He is above Caesar already.

He's the king over the kings and the Lord over the lords. But he is indeed another king. And for the church, he's the head over all things.

To those who submit to him, who respond to the message, they acknowledge him as their king. And that is, of course, what the gospel calls us to acknowledge. Jesus is king.

I am his subject. And that is something that already has happened. And therefore, of course, it means that I am subject to him now.

His kingdom exists now. And as Paul says in Colossians 1:13, he says that God has already translated us out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of his own dear son. Now, this reference to the power of darkness in contrast to the kingdom brings us to our next thought and really the last main thought I want to bring up today.

And that is that in addition to the kingdom being inaugurated when Jesus came, there's another aspect we need to look at. And that is that the kingdom is resisted. Because the kingdom of God, although Jesus is the only lawful authority that God has ordained, it is resisted by a usurper.

And we know that is the devil. The devil has had control over the world, at least over most of the people of the world. He's had control since the fall in the Garden of Eden.

People have been slaves of sin and therefore slaves of the devil. The coming of Christ was in part to be seen as the release of captives from Satan and delivering them over to the freedom of being subject to a king who loves them, which is Christ. And Satan doesn't like the idea of his slaves being delivered.

This is not an amenable plan to the devil. And therefore, he has resisted it from the beginning. The devil even anticipated the coming of Jesus before he arrived.

There is a chapter in Revelation that surveys the whole cosmic drama from the time before Jesus came till the time after he left and the ongoing conflict between the kingdom of God and the power of darkness. That chapter is in Revelation 12. I want to real quickly survey that chapter with you.

Revelation 12. I'm not going to read every verse. We're going to start at the beginning and read much of it, most of it.

It says, Now, we've got some strange characters here. We've got a woman who's pregnant. We've got her child who's born.

And then we've got this dragon that wants to kill her and her child. Who is the woman? Well, we can identify the woman best if we first identify the child she bears. The child she bears, we are told, is to rule the nations with a rod of iron.

This is an unmistakable allusion to Psalm 2, verse 9, where it is said of the Messiah, God speaks to the Messiah and says, we already saw, God says, I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession. He then says, you will rule them with a rod of iron and you should break them in pieces as a potter's vessel. So there is a promise to the Messiah that he will rule all the nations with a rod of iron.

Here we read that the child born is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This is a fairly unambiguous reference to Christ. And we see the child is caught up to heaven, to God, which of course Jesus was.

After his ascension, he ascended to heaven to the right hand of God. This child, therefore, is Christ and the birth of Christ as well as the ascension of Christ are mentioned. The life of Christ between his birth and his ascension are skipped over

because the focus of the chapter is on something else than the life of Christ, but the identity of Christ is mentioned.

Now the woman who bears him then is the mother of Christ and the Roman Catholics have understood this to be Mary, of course, because Mary was the mother of Jesus. But a woman in Revelation is not a literal woman. We have the bride woman in Revelation 21 who represents the New Jerusalem, the church.

We have another woman in Revelation who is called Babylon, the harlot. Now we know that neither the bride nor the harlot, though both are represented in Revelation as individual women, they're not really individual women. They're entities made up of many people that are represented as women in the imagery of Revelation.

So also this woman is not the individual woman Mary that produced Jesus, but is the Jewish nation and particularly the remnant, the faithful remnant in the Jewish nation through whom Jesus was born, through whom he came into the world. How do I know this? Well, the imagery is fairly clear. In the opening verse, it says, The woman was clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

This is intended to break the code. As we look back at Genesis 37, Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob, had a dream. In his dream he said, The sun and the moon and the eleven stars bowed down to him.

His father Jacob, when he heard this, said, What? Shall your mother and I and your eleven brothers bow down to you? That's exactly what was predicted. And it did happen, of course. It happened later when Joseph was the grand vizier of Egypt.

His brothers did literally bow down to him, but he dreamed about it years earlier. But he dreamed about it under the image of the sun and the moon and the eleven stars bowing to him. And this was interpreted by Jacob to mean his family.

His father, his mother, and his eleven brothers, the family of Jacob. Of course, if we have twelve stars instead of eleven, it includes Joseph. Joseph and his eleven brothers together make twelve stars.

And so this woman is clothed in the sun. She's got the moon on her feet. She's got a head of a garland of twelve stars on her.

These are all the images that associate her with Israel. So Israel brings forth the Messiah. The dragon is easy to identify because we're told later in verse nine that he is the devil and Satan and that ancient serpent.

So there's no question who the dragon is. So we've got the dragon trying to destroy Jesus before he's even born or at the point of his birth. We know this happened because

Herod tried to destroy all the children in Bethlehem to get at Jesus in his infancy.

This no doubt is what is alluded to as the dragon seeking to kill the child as soon as he's born. But the child is caught up to God and then the focus is on things that happen after the ascension of Christ. And so the prophecy goes on in verse seven.

It says in war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out.

That old serpent called the devil and Satan who deceives the whole world. He was cast to the earth and his angels were cast out with him. Now, when did this happen or will it happen? We see the dragon at war in the heavens against Michael and the forces of God's angels and the dragon loses and is thrown down out of heaven.

There are three views about this and I'll tell you which one seems correct in the context. One view is that this is talking about the origins of Satan in eternity, not eternity past, but in ancient time before the creation of the world, or at least before the creation of Adam and Eve. How the Satan state was an angel who staged revolt against God and after the ensuing war, he was cast out to earth as the devil.

Well, however true this scenario may or may not be, this passage is not talking about that. How do we know? Because this war in heaven is said to take place after or at the time that the Messiah was caught up to God. This didn't happen in the days before Adam and Eve.

We're reading about something that happened upon the ascension of Christ to the right hand of God. This is not ancient times before. This is not before the creation of man.

It's much later in history. But other people have a second theory about this and they say this is about a future time in the future tribulation when the devil will be cast down in the middle of the tribulation and then will wreak havoc on the earth and persecution against the saints and so forth. However, that theory doesn't work as well either in the context, because again the passage is associated with the ascension of Christ.

And there's more to it than that, because it talks about this serpent being cast out, but the next verse in Revelation 12.10 says, Then, the word then means, you know, when the serpent was cast out, when he lost this battle and was thrown down to earth, then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of the testimony and they did not love their lives to the death. Then there, it says, therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them, woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you

having great wrath because he knows that he has a short time.

Now, when the dragon saw that he had been cast to earth, he persecuted the woman that gave birth to the male child. And the rest of her seed, as we find at the end of the chapter, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus. Now, what have we here? The devil is cast down from heaven.

The result is that he persecutes the woman who's the remnant of Israel, the believing remnant of Israel, and the rest of her children, which is the church. Now, the remnant of Israel is, of course, part of the church. The Jews who believed became the core of the church.

And then Gentiles were added. But the persecution is against the woman and the rest of her seed, the Gentiles also who are part of this entity. And so the church is under persecution.

But when does that begin? Well, it began, it says, when the man child was caught up, the male child was caught up to the throne and an announcement is made in heaven, in verse 10, that now salvation has come. Well, we know that salvation came at the cross. Now salvation has come and the power of his Christ and the kingdom of our God and strength.

Obviously, the announcement that salvation has come, the kingdom has come, the power of Christ has come, that occurred when Jesus died and rose again. That's when Satan was cast out. That's when he began to persecute the church.

Now, we know this is true also from what Jesus said in John chapter 12 and verse 31. Now, John chapter 12 was written by the same author who wrote Revelation chapter 12. John wrote both books.

And so he was certainly aware of both statements. In John 12, 31, Jesus was near the time of his crucifixion and he said, Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out, meaning the devil shall be cast out.

Notice how Jesus associates the casting out of Satan with the cross. Jesus is about to go to the cross. He says, Now is the judgment of this world.

Now the prince of this world will be cast out. The casting out of the dragon out of heaven took place in association with the cross, the death of Jesus and the resurrection and the ascension of Christ to the throne, the establishment of the kingdom of God and the angels in heaven say, Now has come salvation. Now has come the kingdom of our God.

Now has come the power of the Messiah. That is the declaration of the gospel today. Salvation, the kingdom of God, the power of the Messiah has come.

It's simply a matter of us submitting and surrendering to that. That's the gospel message. But the focus of this particular chapter is not simply to point out that this has happened, but to point out the sequel.

The sequel is the dragon is furious and he persecutes those who follow Christ, those who keep the commands of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. That's how the chapter 12 of Revelation ends. So we see that the kingdom of God has been inaugurated, but it has not been inaugurated without resistance.

There is resistance. There is a power that is jealous over the territory. You see, God has promised the Messiah.

If you ask of me, I'll give you the heathen, the nations for your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession. Problem is, the devil already has been running that territory for a long time before Jesus showed up and he's jealous over it. The devil is not eager to surrender the territory.

So he is at war with those who represent the interests of the kingdom of God. He is at war with the subjects of the king, and that is what is described there at the end of Revelation. And therefore, Jesus teaches that if you're going to be part of this kingdom, you need to come into it like a warrior.

Jesus made this point. He made it in Matthew 11, 12, and you'll find the parallel to it in Luke 16, 16. Looking at the two parallels is helpful in getting the idea because in Matthew 11, 12, Jesus said, And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven, we know that's the same as the kingdom of God, suffers violence.

Yeah, it suffers violence. Persecution and martyrdom has characterized the subjects of the kingdom of God ever since the kingdom has been established. Jesus said, well, the kingdom of heaven is suffering violence and the violent take it by force.

Now, this last line, the violent take it by force, needs to be understood in terms of its parallel in Luke 16, 16. In Luke 16, it says, The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time, the kingdom of God has been preached and everyone is pressing into it.

Now, everyone is pressing into it in Luke 16, 16 is the parallel of the violent take it by force in Matthew 11, 12. Now, the word violent in Matthew 11, 12, the Greek word means a forcer, one who's forceful, a forceful person, a person who crowds himself in. That's what the word means that's translated the violent.

So Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is suffering violence, but those who will crowd themselves in or as Luke says, those who are pressing into it will take the kingdom and they'll take it with commensurate force to meet the force that's come against them. Jesus is saying the kingdom of God has come, but it is being opposed. It is being resisted.

And there are forceful, wicked men trying to overcome it. And if you're going to be in it, you must be one of those men who come with the equal or superior determination to press in. You must be as committed or more committed to your success and the success of the kingdom of God to which you belong.

You must have a greater determination to succeed than your opponents have to prevent it. Your opponents are determined they will. You will suffer violence at their hands.

But if you will be part of this kingdom, you must be a violent person in another sense. A person who is forceful, a person who is determined, a person who will not quit, who will not take no for an answer and says this kingdom, I will lay down my life for this kingdom. If I suffer violence, well and good.

That is my way of being a violent forcer, a hero in this kingdom to make the kingdom go. I'm going to press into it. I'm going to take the kingdom by force because Jesus said that's the only way you can in a milieu of opposition that we have from the enemy.

So Paul says to Timothy in 2nd Timothy 2 verses 3 through 4 in 2nd Timothy 2, 3 and 4, Paul says you therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. Now Paul is simply saying that when you go into the army and a normal army, you are committed for the period of your term to be fully available, to be fully committed to please the person who called you to be a soldier.

You don't maintain civilian interests at the same time. You don't go off and get yourself married and go on a honeymoon. You don't run a business on the side.

When you're in the army, you're all the way in. No one who wars entangles himself in the affairs of this life so that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. So you Timothy, you Christian soldier, you must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

The point here is if you're in the kingdom, you're in a kingdom that is at war. You are in a kingdom that is being resisted by nasty hostile forces, but don't worry. We will see that the kingdom of God will win against these forces, but not without our total commitment.

Remember I said in an earlier lecture that those who are subjects of the king in the Bible in the New Testament are called disciples. And Jesus is talking about discipleship and what it takes really to be a disciple. In Luke 14 and in verse 26, he says, If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, in his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

He can't be a warrior in this kingdom effort. Now, hating your father, mother, wife, children, so forth, that's not literal. This is using an idiom that's fairly common in the Bible.

All it really means is you must disregard their interest compared to the interest of the kingdom. You must not love your family more than you love Christ, your king, just like a soldier, a soldier at war in Iraq or in Afghanistan today. He'd much rather be home with his children, his wife and his parents at Christmas time, but he forfeits that.

He puts the war effort and his nation ahead of his personal family interests or even his own safety. He says you have to, as it were, hate your family and your own life. Hatred is a stronger word than he intends it to be understood.

It's a hyperbole, but the point is he's saying you've got to put the kingdom first or you can't be a disciple. In the next verse, Luke 14, 27, and whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. And then further down in verse 33, he says, So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple.

You can't be a subject of the king, a disciple of Jesus. If you're not going to lay it all down and put in a total effort. And in the midst of those verses, he gives two illustrations I'd like to run through real quickly because we're running low on time.

But he says this for which of you intending to build a tower does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it. Lest after he has laid the foundation and is not able to finish all who see it begin to mock him, saying this man began to build and was not able to finish. So the first illustration is it's like building a tower.

Now, if you're going to be if you're a contractor and you intend to build a shopping mall or a skyscraper tower or anything, you need to first answer. Look at your finances. Look at your financing.

See if you can get the materials. See if the workforce that's available to you at this time is going to be adequate. You've got to see if you've got what it takes to finish the job.

Otherwise, if you start and haven't looked ahead like this, you may find that it's going to cost more than you figured and you'll drop out of the project and then your unfinished project will be a monument to your poor planning and your foolishness. And you'll be mocked, Jesus said. And so also, if you're not ready to if you're not looking at what it may cost you to follow Jesus Christ, you may find it costs more than you were anticipating and you may drop out.

And then it'll be it'll not only make you a mockery, it'll make Christ a mockery, too. In the eyes of the heathen, they'll say, I guess he wasn't worth it, was he? Then Jesus gives this other example, like the first, but changing the metaphor in verse 31, Luke 14, 31. He says, or what king going to make war against another king does not first sit down and consider whether he is able with 10,000 to meet him who comes against him with 20,000 or else while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.

Now, what's this mean? You're the king. You've got 10,000. Your enemy is coming against you with twice that number, 20,000.

What do you want to do? You want to engage? You want to fight him? Or do you want to seek conditions of peace? Or what are conditions of peace? If an army is coming against you to overcome you, what conditions of peace will they accept? Nothing less than full surrender on your part. You become his servant. Now, he could be saying this, that if you follow me, you're following the minority movement.

You're in a sense in that kingdom that has only 10,000 soldiers and your enemy has 20,000. Are you ready for that? Are you willing to do that? Of course, an army of 10,000 might, under some circumstances, beat an army with 20,000. But the army that has the 10,000 has to be determined.

They've got to put their whole effort. They've got to put out twice the effort as the enemy does. But that's not an impossible thing.

You just have to decide, are you willing to pay that price? Are you willing to give your all to it? Otherwise, if not, go and make peace with the enemy. Surrender to the enemy and be the devil's slave. Because it's better for you to die in the service of the devil than to pretend like you're in the kingdom of God, fighting on his side, and still go to the same place as the devil because you didn't put out the effort that was necessary and you become a casualty in this struggle.

Now, another way of seeing this, and I think probably both are in view, I can't be sure, is that Jesus is saying, you as an individual are like a king with 10,000 soldiers and who's coming after you is God. And he's got 20,000. Now, God wants to conquer you.

God wants you to surrender to him. God wants to rule your life. And he's stronger than you are.

Do you want to fight him? Is that what you want? Do you want to fight him or do you want to surrender to him? I don't know which of these Jesus means. He might mean both, but the point he's making is clear. When you become a disciple, you're signing up for battle, period.

But that battle doesn't have to terrify you because even though the kingdom of God is resisted and even though you have to put out a full determination in order to be a part of it, you are going to win if you stay in it because the enemy's resistance is futile. There are two verses that parallel each other in Matthew and Luke. One is in Matthew 12, verses 28 and 29.

The other is in Luke 11, verses 20 through 22. These are parallels. In Matthew 12, 28 and 29, Jesus said, But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man and then he will plunder his house? What he's saying is, I have come to the devil's house. I have invaded his territory. He is a strong man, but I am plundering his house.

And this was in the context of casting out demons. If I'm casting out demons, what I've done is I'm coming and delivering those people who were Satan's captives and I'm freeing them. I'm opening his prison doors and letting his captives go.

Now, you can't do that to a strong man unless you first incapacitate him. You have to bind the strong man, then you can do this kind of thing. And what Jesus is saying is, if you can see that I'm casting out demons, I am plundering Satan's house.

Is he not a strong man? He is. But does that not prove to you that I have already disabled him? If I'm freely plundering his house, he must be incapacitated. He must be incapable of offering successful resistance.

It's as if I've bound a man and taken the stuff from his house. In the parallel to that in Luke 11 verses 20 through 22, Jesus is saying on the same occasion, but if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace.

But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted and defies his spoils. Now notice, if Satan was a strong man, fully armed, his goods would be in peace. You could not take them from him.

But he isn't fully armed because one stronger than him has come and taken away all his armor in which he trusted and is now plundering his house. This is a wonderful image because Satan does resist, but he's an unarmed man. He's an unarmed man.

And so Jesus is able to plunder his house and so can we in his name. It says in Colossians 2.15 that having disarmed principalities and powers, Christ made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross. Colossians 2.15, he disarmed them.

In Hebrews 2.14-15, it says, inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, he, Christ himself, likewise shared in the same, he became human too. It says, so that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. The gospel delivers from the bondage of fear those who are all their lifetime subject to the fear of death.

Jesus takes away the reasons for being afraid of death. And the devil controls people through the fear of death. He's the one who has the power of death.

But Jesus through death destroyed him. And the word destroyed in the Greek is

katergeo. It means reduced him to inactivity.

He subjected him to the point where he cannot successfully resist. It's like binding the strong man to enter his house or taking away his armor in which he trusted. Jesus disarmed the principalities and powers.

He disabled Satan. Yes, there is a warfare, but it's a warfare that Satan cannot successfully win because Jesus has decisively disarmed him. In the story of David and Goliath, which every Sunday school child knows, we have a picture of Jesus and of Satan.

David is a type of Jesus in many aspects of his life. I won't go into all of them now because we've almost run out of time, but I want to say this. In the story of David and Goliath, this was not just a story about a little boy saving his own life by killing a giant who wanted to kill him.

This is a story about two kingdoms. David represented the kingdom of Israel. Goliath represented the kingdom of the Philistines, the enemies of God.

And the agreement was made before they even confronted one another. Goliath said, send me a champion to fight against me. If I kill him, you people will be the slaves of my people.

But if he kills me, my people will be the slaves of your people. This was not just a marvelous fight between a faithful little boy and a big mean giant. This was a battle of two kingdoms fought out in their two representative champions.

This was fought out for the fate and the destiny of their kingdoms. And when Goliath fell and his head came off, that meant not only that David would walk away a living man, not a dead man. It meant that the Philistines were now subject to the authority of the kingdom of the Israelites.

But we know the Philistines did not come and willingly submit to that. They fled. As you read of it, when they saw their champion was dead, the Philistines fled for fear.

And what did the Israelites do? They pursued them. They pursued them and they conquered them. But as they pursued them, they were obviously mopping up a battle that its outcome had already been decided.

There was no significant question as to whether the Philistines would beat the Jews in this particular case, because the war was essentially over. The Israelites were simply going to enforce the outcome upon the fallen enemy. When Jesus died and rose again, he conquered Satan.

He destroyed him who had the power of death. That is the devil. It is as if Goliath fell and his subjects were now officially the subjects of another king, Jesus.

But the world does not know that and the devil does not willingly tell them. That is what the world mission of the church is to go out and to announce there is another king to mop up what has already been accomplished. We have been resisted, but the enemy has fallen.

He only threatens, he only deceives, he only tries to conceal the fact that he has fallen. We have the message of the kingdom that announces that he has fallen and we go out and we enforce the victory that Christ has already established. Like the armies of Israel going out and mopping up and capturing the Philistines.

That is exactly parallel to the situation that has occurred as a result of Jesus dying and resurrecting and conquering Satan. 2 Corinthians 10 verses 4 and 5. Paul talks about the Christian as involved in a kingdom warfare. In 2 Corinthians 10 verses 4 and 5 he says, He is not talking about you bringing your thoughts into captivity.

He is saying we are going out aggressively, tearing down the strongholds of the enemy, overcoming the arguments of the unbelievers and bringing their thoughts into captivity of Jesus. We are bringing them into the kingdom too. We are bringing them into subjection to our king and we have weapons that are mighty in God.

Not carnal weapons. Carnal weapons can't bring people's thoughts into captivity, but we have mighty weapons. We have the gospel of the kingdom.

We have the power of prayer. We have the power of the Holy Spirit given to us. We have much supernatural power given to us.

Our weapons are mighty in God to pull down those resisting strongholds of the enemy and to take the territory. We are not on the run from the enemy. The enemy is on the run from us.

The kingdom of God is here to conquer. It is not here to hunker down and hope it doesn't get conquered itself. That's not even a possibility.

Jesus has already won and it's simply a matter of those who the past 2,000 years since Jesus has won, we are the Israelites going out and conquering the Philistines. We are out mopping up and forcing the victory that has already been established. That is the state of things.

The kingdom has been inaugurated. The kingdom has been resisted, but resistance is futile. We are on the side of the conqueror, on the side of the king, and the power of darkness that resists, it's just a matter of time before the kingdom totally obliterates every last one.

Jesus will reign, Paul said, until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last of those enemies is death, and that will happen at the second coming of Christ. The last

enemy will be conquered through the resurrection.

Until then, Christ is going about conquering all his enemies. How? Through the gospel. Not through the human sword, but through the winning of their souls, the winning of their surrender to Jesus.

That is the mission. That is the warfare. And that is what will happen.

We are guaranteed that in Scripture.