

The Kingdom of God



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John the Baptist and Jesus were both preaching the Kingdom of God was at hand,¹ and told their disciples to do the same.² From the beginning we were told that it was at hand, that we were supposed to seek it, that it was in our midst, and within our reach in a present tense.

Everyone knew that a king was born. Prophets knew it, Herod knew it. Magi, angels, and shepherds knew it.³ At Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, thousands of people hailed Him as the *highest son of David*, the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed, the King of a kingdom.

Today, men have created eschatology that might lead people to believe that the kingdom of Heaven or God is some distant event, or that it is only where you go when you die. While its jurisdiction may reach beyond the veil of life and death it was clearly for the living.⁴

The state of our modern society, its similarities to the world of Rome at the time of Christ, and the prophecy of a great deception of the people under a strong delusion should encourage, if not compel, us all to reexamine the events and words of the gospel of the kingdom, and what the early Church and the Christians were really saying and doing.

When Jesus told Pilate that His Kingdom was not of the "world" we see one of five different Greek words found in the Biblical text which have all been translated into the word "world". The word was *kosmos*, and it is defined in Strong's Concordance as an "orderly arrangement" and in another Greek concordances it is defined as "*an apt and harmonious arrangement or constitution, order, government.*"⁵

The word *kosmos* in the Greek and Roman view at the time, "... meant originally the discipline of an army, and next the ordered constitution of a state."⁶ The word came from the Greek "komizo" meaning "to care for, take care of, provide for" or "carry off what is one's own." *Kosmos* did not mean planet, inhabitable place, or age.

Jesus was not saying that His kingdom was not on this planet nor that it was not at hand in spirit and truth. He was simply telling Pontius Pilate, who was seated as a ruling judge of a Roman court,⁷ that Jesus Kingdom was not a part of Pilate's *constitution, order, government or state* and Pilate had no jurisdiction to judge Jesus as king of the kingdom God had given him.⁸

Evidently, this Procurator of Rome had already agreed⁹ that Jesus was the rightful "King of the citizens of Judea," and would proclaim it so on an official epigraph written in three languages and nailed to the cross.

Everyone who accepted Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, the king was cast out of the government of the Pharisees.¹⁰ The Pharisees by denouncing Christ and claiming no king but Caesar had abandoned the Kingdom

1 Matthew 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

2 Matthew 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 Mt 2:2 "Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.", Luke 2:8, 15

4 Luke 20:38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him. Luke 9:60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

5 Strong's # 2889 Online Bible Concordance, Winterbourne, Ontario, Canada.

6 John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy: Section A: Introduction

7 John 19:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha." Matthew 27:19 "When he was set down on the judgment seat, ..."

8 Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

9 John 18:37 "...Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world..."

10 John 9:22 "... the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out

of God and had entered the jurisdiction of Rome.¹¹

Centuries before, in accordance to prophecy the Hasmonean Kings of Judea were taking the first fruits of the people, the best of their fields, making their instruments of war, drafting their sons, and allowed the Levites to own personal estates. By 78 BC the Pharisees, a political party, had passed ordinances,¹² requiring the temple tax be paid and enforced by the *appointed civil magistrates*.¹³

In 66 BC, two royal brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, had begun to battle for the office of the king. Aristobulus appealed to the “world” of Rome, and Pompey's multi national military force.

In 63 BC, Pompey decided against Aristobulus, but Hyrcanus refused to appeal to Rome for protection in accordance with the Torah. The Pharisees, however, did request this foreign aid, contrary to the law. This gave the Roman occupation some appearance of legitimacy.

Rome was in its own decline. The people were neglecting the responsibilities that had kept them free. Greed and corruption had brought in political and economic subjugation of the people through a dependence on governments created by men like Caesar and Herod.

Judea had followed the political pattern of Rome with their “free bread and circuses”, offered to entice the favor and support of the people and gain power over the same. Herod had created his new deal of social welfare through government support. Membership required baptism and the people were given an ID token made from a white stone with a registered Hebrew name carved on it to guarantee their eligibility for benefits and to keep track of their required and compelled contributions.

Their sacrifice, once called Corban, was no longer a “freewill offering.” The society established by God through Moses no longer depended on faith, hope, and charity through the free will offerings of a people who loved each other. This new form of government imposed a tax through Sanhedrin legislation, and the exercising power of a king.

“Let their table become a snare before them: and [that which should have been] for [their] welfare, [let it become] a trap.” Psalms 69:22

“And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them.” Romans 11:9

John the Baptist offered an alternative to Herod's Kingdom of Heaven. It was a system based on faith, hope, and charity and the law of liberty. If you had two coats and your neighbor had none you shared. Jesus preached that same kingdom, and John chose to follow Jesus.

The “kingdom of God” was the right to be ruled by God. Moses saved the people from Egypt and Abraham led the people from Ur, and Haran, and freed them from Sodom, and Gomorrah. There has always been a hope that men could be ruled by God and not by other men. Jesus would bring a more complete salvation in spirit and in truth, a salvation under God in a kingdom at hand, within your midst.

The Pharisees had made the “word of God to none effect” by ordinances which forced the contributions of the people and brought them back to the bondage of Egypt. In Matthew 21:43 Jesus said he was going to take the “Kingdom of God”, a present reality, away from them and it would be “given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

These social welfare systems, called Corban by the Jews, or Qurban by the Romans, had once been systems of voluntary freewill offerings of charity, hope, and love for neighbor. They had become systems of compelled offerings set up by leaders who called themselves “benefactors”, but exercised authority, which was forbid by Jesus.

of the synagogue.”

11 John 19:15 But they cried out, Away with [him], away with [him], crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

12 Salome- Alexandra (about 78 BC), that the Pharisaical party, being then in power, had carried an enactment by which the Temple tribute was to be enforced at law. Alfred Edersheim's book *The Temple*.

13 Magistrates were called “elohiyim”, translated into “gods” or “God”. [See Strong's.]

Luke 22:25, 29 “And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye [shall] not [be] so... And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;[See also Matthew 20:25, Mark 10:42.]

The Corban of the Christian government appointed by Christ “made the word of God to effect” because it required that the leaders of Christ's government of God to allow the people the liberty to choose how, when, and to whom they would contribute to for the care of one another. The sacrifice and appointed kingdom of Christ freed the people in spirit and truth from the laws of the Pharisees, their kings, and government.

The Corban of Rome and the Pharisees was no different than the bondage of Egypt, a system of government that God had told the people to never return to.¹⁴ It had begun as a way to take care of the elderly, disabled, or needy of society. But it bound men under the authority of rulers. The blind man and everyone who professed Christ were cast out of the social welfare system of the Pharisees and set free.¹⁵

The Bible is supposed to be a book about “religion”, yet of the five times the word religion appears in the text, there is only one place that it is used in a good sense, and it is somewhat defining:

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27

Religion is how we take care of the needy of society. Do we care for the needs of our neighbor by faith, hope, and charity, or by force, fear, and compliance? Do we live and let live by love and liberty, or do we dictate and covet entitlements through elected rulers who call themselves benefactors, yet exercise authority at the expense of our neighbors?

For centuries Israel had maintained a system of government dependent solely on “freewill offerings” and a sense of community and brotherhood. That simple precept of God had kept the nation free. When the “voice of the people” cried out for a benefactor who could exercise authority God called that prayer a *rejection of Him*. Despite the warnings by God in 1st Samuel, Chapter 8, the people elected to have a form of government that changed the face and nature of their society.

Jesus Christ was king, but a different kind of king. His apostles were ambassadors and princes but they too did not exercise authority over the people. From the days of David the king acted as an overseer.

Under the kings of Israel, the power to fire the porters of the government temple treasury was the right of every king.¹⁶ That is exactly what Jesus was doing with His string whip in the temple. He was not merely tipping over tables, but he was firing the corrupt administrators in the government temple.¹⁷ The money-changers were officials holding a government commissioned position in the national treasury.¹⁸

Those who had been in charge of God's kingdom on earth were going the wrong way and Jesus as high priest and king was saying repent. He wasn't going to change the kingdom as much as he was going to restore it and return it to the way God meant it to be.

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32

Once the people received the baptism under the authority of the Anointed Kingship of Jesus¹⁹ they were no

14 Deuteronomy 17:16 “... nor cause the people to return to Egypt... Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.”

15 John 9:22 These [words] spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

16 1 Chr. 9:22 “All these [which were] chosen to be porters in the gates [were] two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.”

17 5132 τραπεζα trapeza AV-table 13, bank 1, meat 1; 15 1) a table.

Trapeza is the Greek word for *bank* and is translated bank in Luke 19:23.

18 John 8:20 “These words spake Jesus in the **treasury**, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.” The word treasury is γαζοφυλακιον gazophulakion 1) “a repository of treasure, especially of public treasure, a treasury”

19 Acts 17:7 “... and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, [one] Jesus.”

longer eligible to apply for the benefits of the government of the Pharisees established under the baptism and authority of Herod. They were also no longer subject to the duties and obligations imposed by that government. Through the baptism of Christ the people were freed from those handwritten ordinances of the Sanhedrin²⁰ as well as the decrees of the former corrupt kings of that nation who had returned them to the bondage of Egypt. Citizens of Judea who followed the ways of Jesus were even set free from Rome itself because Christ was a recognized King²¹ and His Ambassadors.²²

Understanding the difference between the nature of the government that God intended for men and the governments often instituted by men is essential in understanding the elements of that gospel of the kingdom and the *elements of the world*.²³

Many people today believe they are Christian and assume they are following Christ, but are in fact no closer to Christ than the Pharisees were to God. No one is Christian because they say they are, or say they believe Jesus was the son of God or born of a virgin. We are brothers to Christ because of what we do, not because of what we say.

“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Luke 6:46 [Matthew 7:21, 22, Luke 13:25]

Saul was the first elected king when the people “rejected” God. When he forced the people to contribute to his government Samuel called it *foolishness* and prophesied that his kingdom would fall.²⁴ When David numbered the young men for a draft to support the army it was called a sin, from which he later repented.²⁵ When the kings set up a central government treasury, formed a standing professional army, and began to pass laws that returned the people to the bondage of Egypt they were all going against the will of God.²⁶

The people of Judea had gone back into the bondage of Egypt where the government could force the people to pay at least a 20% income tax to the government,²⁷ there was a central treasury or bank, and all the land and cattle were owned by government suffrage. Jesus came to change all that and did for those who would seek His ways. He set all the people free who would accept the responsibility and duties of His government of God and live by faith, hope and charity and the perfect law of liberty.

Under Abraham's leadership and faith the people set up charitable altars to maintain societies by free will offerings which liberated them from the degrading subjections of the city states. When Moses returned to Egypt in hope of setting the people free they still had to pay their *tale of bricks*, but provide their own straw.²⁸ The “tale of bricks” and “straw” are metaphors for their tax obligation owed Pharaoh's government and the social benefits they normally would have provided.

“The real destroyers of the liberties of the people is he who spreads among them bounties, donations and benefits.”²⁹

Throughout history these forms of government of power which offer benefits to one class of citizen at the

20 Colossians 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

21 Luke 23:38 “And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, “THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

22 Apostolov, or apostle is a “a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders”
“apostle” meant “ambassador,” or “emmissary”.

23 Galatians 4:3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

24 1 Samuel 13:12, 14 “... And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly ...”

25 2 Samuel 24:10 “...David’s heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly ...”

26 Deuteronomy 17:15, 18

27 Genesis 47:24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth [part] unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

28 Exodus 5:18 Go therefore now, [and] work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks.

29 Plutarch, 2000 years ago.

expense of another have eventually failed under growing avarice, apathy, and covetous greed of the people and their leaders. Without liberty of choice, diligence dies and sloth reigns as king.³⁰ The prophets of God have always preached systems of self government dependent upon the daily practice of virtue where the right to choose, which all men are endowed with by God, remains intact.

Jesus and John the Baptist were teaching that same message. They agreed that you may owe Caesar and Herod because you have gone under their authority, but everyone needed to learn to do without their tainted benefits if they were going to be free. In truth, the Bible is a “do's and don't” guide book to freedom under God, the kingdom of God. It has forever warned of what will lead us back into the bondage of men.

In the first chapter of Proverbs there is a lengthy warning about giving your consent with men who are greedy for gain. Those men entice others to have “one purse”. Through cunning and craft they swallow people alive, trapping everyone in a net of their own making.

Peter warns us that through “covetousness” and “feigned words” we will be made “merchandise,” “human resources”, losing our freedom in Christ.³¹ Just as David, Jesus, and Paul warned about the welfare system of rulers which snares the people, Proverbs 23³² warned us about desiring with a coveting appetite those benefits from leaders who, by our consent, are given the power to “exercise authority” over the people.

“Are men the property of the state? Or are they free souls under God? This same battle continues throughout the world today.”³³

The Ten Commandments is about more than Thou shalt not kill, commit adultery, steal, or bear false witness against our neighbor. They were to be written on our hearts and minds to make us free souls under God. The Kingdom of God, in the Greek “*basileia theos*”, means the right to be ruled by God. The Bible tells of the struggle of man to be ruled by God or ruled by the gods of Cain, Nimrod, Pharaoh, or Caesar.

“If we will not be ruled by God, then we will be ruled by tyrants.”³⁴

This kind of ruler brings the people into a citizenship of servitude.³⁵ Their power is instituted by the consent of the governed³⁶ who desire their benefits, but in return they require the obeisance and service of the people.³⁷ They rule with a different *character*³⁸ than God the Father.

Jesus told us to only pray to “Our Father” in heaven and to “call no man father upon the earth”.³⁹ If we choose men, who call themselves benefactors, making covenants⁴⁰ to obtain benefits at the expense of our

30 Proverbs 12:24 “The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.”

31 2 Peter 2:3 “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”

32 Proverbs 23:1 When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what [is] before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat.

33 Cecil B. DeMille asked at the beginning of his 1956 movie, “The Ten Commandments”.

34 William Penn.

35 Exodus 20:2, 3 “ I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

36 Exodus 20:4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness [of any thing] that [is] in heaven above, or that [is] in the earth beneath, or that [is] in the water under the earth:

37 Exodus 20:5 “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God [am] a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth [generation] of them that hate me;”

38 Exodus 20:7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

39 Matthew 23:9 “And call no [man] your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.” See “Call no man Father” published by His Holy Church

40 Exodus 23:32 Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.

neighbor,⁴¹ then we will only have those who by nature are no *gods*⁴² to cry out to in the “*world*” we have made for ourselves.⁴³

Honoring our Father and Mother was about maintaining the rights of the family. “Excise, in its origin, is the patrimonial right of emperors and kings.”⁴⁴ Government rights originally were vested in the family which was God's first institution. Governments are based on the law of Patronus, our father. As the power of government increases family rights decrease. With whom goes the responsibility, there also goes the right.

The Kingdom of God was a dominion of individuals where the power of the “State” rested in God's sacred institution, the Family. It was and is a system of self-government dependent on the willingness of the people to accept individual responsibility for the welfare of society through charity rather than contracts and force. You could not compel your neighbor to provide benefits through the exercising authority of elected government officials. To force your neighbor to provide the social benefits you desire would be a violation of the foundational law of God to love one another and to not covet anything that belongs to our neighbors through any institution or social scheme.

Ezekiel 11⁴⁵ warns the people about building a civil structure that makes our neighbors and ourselves human resources to be devoured by each other through the power of those who call themselves benefactors but exercise authority one over the other.

“For the LORD [is] our judge, the LORD [is] our lawgiver, the LORD [is] our king; he will save us.” Isaiah 33:22

The wicked governments mentioned in the Old Testament like Cain's city-state, Nimrod's⁴⁶ Babylon, or Pharaoh's treasure cities brought the people into bondage in exchange for benefits. The Bible is about men who serve God by loving each other as He loves us, or men who covet their neighbors rights by establishing governments where some men exercising authority over other men as rulers over a subject citizenry.

We are being warned in Colossians 2:8⁴⁷ not to loose our God given right to freedom, and being tempted to abandon the ways of Christ by being deceived with ideas that cause us to give up these rights.⁴⁸ We also see the Greek word translated “traditions”⁴⁹ can actually mean “ordinances” in accordance with the “elements”⁵⁰ of the “constitutional order” of men which is often translated “world” but means the “state”.

“Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,” Colossians 2:20

The word *rudiments* is the word *elements* we see in Peter's epistle:

“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and

41 Exodus 20:17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that [is] thy neighbour's.

42 Theos, means a ruling judge and is translated “God” or “gods”. The Hebrew word elohiym, is translated “God” or “gods”. Both terms were used every day to address magistrates and judges in courts in nations like Greece, Rome, Israel, and Judea.

43 Judges 10:14 “Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.” Jeremiah 11:12 Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble.

44 Vectigal, origina ipsa, jus Caesarum et regum patrimoniale est.

45 Ezekiel 11:2, 3 “these are the men that devise mischief... Which say, [It is] not near; let us build houses: this [city is] the caldron, and we [be] the flesh.”

46 Genesis 10:9 is telling us that Nimrod was a great 'provider instead of God'. “He was a mighty hunter before the LORD...”

47 Colossians 2:8 “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

48 The Greek word translated *spoil* means “to carry off booty.”

49 The Greek word *paradosis* is also translated *ordinance*, defined “giving up, giving over”

50 στοιχειον stoicheion translated element, rudiment, principle, defined “any first thing,... first principal ... the principles and practices of the old covenant world order.

the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" 2 Peter 3:12

Some interpreters of the New Testament suggest that the word "elements" is referring to a future nuclear war. The same words "element" is also used in Galatians 4:3,⁵¹ in reference to being "in bondage under the elements of the world." This is the same "world" which is defined "constitution, order, government" or "state." Again in Galatians 4:9⁵² the word is used to describe the elements of returning to "bondage" under that world or state where men covet each others goods.

Colossians goes on to talk about being "Buried with him in baptism"⁵³ we are all raised from the dead in the "operation" of God. We know Jesus spoke about the dead burying the dead because they would not participate in the ways of God or the way that Jesus Christ came to preach, saying, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15

When men stop praying to those who call themselves benefactors and start coming together in the character or name of Christ as true *sons* of the Father, then they will be able to *blot out the hand written ordinances of men*⁵⁴ and *be free indeed*. But because false brethren have deceptively brought false doctrines about the simplicity of the gospel of the kingdom, our liberty under God has turned into into bondage.⁵⁵

We are told "Stand fast... in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" by eating that which is *sacrificed to idols*. We were "called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."⁵⁶

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations... No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Luke 16:9, 13. Mt. 6:24.

"Mammon" mean a system of entrusted wealth⁵⁷ where a government may hold the right to exercise authority over the wealth and property of the people. Men who seek power seek those offices of power and are corrupted by that power granted by the people, not by God.

Mankind has repeatedly been snared by his own wantonness and appetite, his own greed and lust. Man's sinful nature will always bring him back to the bondage of Egypt. He must repent and change his ways in order to be free. Even though he may have to suffer for a season under the burden of his captivity, he must, with honesty and honor, seek the ways of liberty originally bestowed by Our Father who art in Heaven.

Did Jesus preach a new world order? The gospel of Matthew wrote in Aramaic. Translating the Aramaic to Greek, the word *malkuthach* becomes *basileia ouranos*, or *Kingdom of Heaven*, meaning a "realm". *Ouranos* is best translated "world"⁵⁸ as in the Kingdom of the World.

51 Galatians 4:3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

52 Galatians 4:9 "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"

53 Colossians 2:12 "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with [him] through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

54 Colossians 2:14 "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;"

55 Galatians 2:4 "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"

56 Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Galatians 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

57 "Mammon, an Aramaic word mamon "wealth" ... derived from Ma'amon, something entrusted to safe keeping." Encyclopedia Britannica.

58 "...indeed we have no suitable word to express what the Greeks at first called an *ouranos*. It will be convenient to use the term 'world' for it"; plato's Dialogues, Early Greek Philosophy, Introduction , John Burnet.

Have certain ungodly men crept in denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ?⁵⁹ Have we left the path to the kingdom of God and crossed over into the “world” and grip of Caesar?

Christ was the king professed by Christians. They did not pray for the subjugating benefit which snared the people into bondage. They sought another king and seeking another government as free souls caring for themselves, and working out their salvation with fear and trembling.

The “union and discipline of the Christian republic... gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire.”⁶⁰ The early Christians were recognized by Rome through the proclamation nailed to the cross by Pontius Pilate. When Jesus rose from the dead to stand again upon the earth, so did his Kingdom.

The Eucharist⁶¹ of Christ was the joy of *thanksgiving*. The early Church was the government of God, answering the prayers of the people by the love and charity of the people who had Christ dwelling in them. In times of famine, social unrest, and want, Christians, who refused to eat the “free bread” of a declining Roman government, were able to sustain and prosper as a community through faith, hope, and charity.

Being excluded from the welfare of Rome and Judea prepared men and women for the decline of the Empire. Christians who had a surplus during the runaway inflation, economic collapse, and endless wars of Roman were able to aid the needy, giving from their hearts.⁶²

“Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils.” 1Corinthians 10:21

The Church was a network of souls who had the message of Christ written on their hearts and minds. They were the social insurance of their society through the operation of liberty and the righteousness of God.

We are all in the world God created, but are we of the world or His kingdom and righteousness which is at hand? We may all pray to God the Father, but should we also pray to the gods of the world when we know they will snare us and make us bow down and serve them? Why should we exchange the liberty of Christ for the chains of the world?

Repent, and seek the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.

59 Jude 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

60 Comment on Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Rousseau and Revolution, Will et Ariel Durant p.801. fn 83 Heiseler, 85.

61 Eucharist is the Greek word for thanksgiving.

62 “And the wealthy among us help the needy ... and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need.” (Ch. 65-67) AD 150, Justin Martyr on the early Church.

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“And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew [water] enough for us, and watered the flock.” (Exodus 2:19)

“Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote [it] in a book, and laid [it] up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.” 1 Samuel 10:25

“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17

“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 10:7

“And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.” Luke 4:43

“And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.” Luke 9:2

“Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.” Luke 9:60

“For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.” (Hebrews 8: 10,11)

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