

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Douglas, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mr. Mathis, Lamar Mathis, Ms. Matchett, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mr. Sowder, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:
www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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The Establishment of the Kingdom

By Derek Long

The Bible predicts God setting up a kingdom which will never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44). Many people today believe we are still waiting on Jesus to return to earth when He will set up His kingdom and reign 1,000 years on earth. Are we still waiting on the kingdom to be set up or has the kingdom already been established?

The Old Testament predicted the kingdom would be ruled by one of David's descendants. God promised David concerning one of his descendants, "I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2 Samuel 7:12-13). A normal person would not be able to reign forever but Jesus, who was a descendant of David (Romans 1:3), would end up reigning over God's kingdom forever. When Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce the birth of Jesus, he says, "the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:32-33). Therefore, the kingdom foretold by the Old Testament scriptures is a kingdom over which Jesus would reign as king.

The Psalms give us a picture of Jesus reigning from the right hand of God. Psalm 110:1-2 says, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your

footstool.' The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!" Many people's vision of the reign of Christ in His kingdom is it will be a time characterized by utopian conditions on the earth. However, Jesus will rule in the midst of His enemies not after all His enemies are conquered.

Daniel 2 gives us the account of a dream had by Nebuchadnezzar which predicts future events. The dream consists of an image made of four different metals representing four different kingdoms. The four kingdoms would be the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman. A prediction is made concerning the establishment of God's kingdom in verses 44-45. Daniel 2:44 tells us when the kingdom would be established, "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Therefore, Daniel foretells the kingdom coming within the days of the Roman empire or the fourth kingdom. Jesus was born and lives during the days of the Roman empire (Luke 2:1). Jesus also taught the kingdom was at hand (Matthew 4:17). If the kingdom was not set up before the Roman empire ceased to be the world power, Daniel's prophesy was false!

The New Testament speaks of the kingdom's establishment approaching. In Matthew 3:2 and 4:17 both John the Baptist and Jesus announce "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus specifically predicts the kingdom would come into existence within the lifetime of those present while He was speaking (Matthew 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27). If we are still

awaiting the kingdom of God, Jesus lied or some very old people must still be alive upon the earth no one knows about!

The Bible clearly teaches the kingdom was established and people were in the kingdom during the first century. In Colossians 1:13 we read, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." If people were being conveyed in the kingdom, it is obvious the kingdom was established. In Revelation 1:9 John says, "I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." John speaks of being a companion with others in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Clearly, John was teaching the kingdom was already in existence. He and others were part of the kingdom.

The Bible clearly indicates Jesus received His kingdom when He came to the Ancient of Days not when He comes from the Ancient of Days. In Daniel 7:13-14 Daniel records a part of a vision he received. He says, "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall never be destroyed." When Jesus returns, He will not set up but deliver up the kingdom (1 Corinthians 15:24) which He established in the first century.