

Journey: A Summit on Christian Manhood
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Is a Christian Nation Possible?

Nations, Kingdoms and THE KINGDOM

*Is a Christian nation possible?
Has it ever been tried?*

Is a “Christian” Nation Possible? Seminar Workshop Syllabus
Prepared and Presented by
Donn Williams



Research the Scriptures – Proclaim the Scriptures
www.biblelabs.com
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Presuppositions

- A presupposition is a condition that you assume and accept as true.
- A presupposition is not necessarily logically proven.
- A presupposition requires FAITH.
- Your presuppositions will determine your worldview.
- Your worldview attempts to answer life’s basic questions:
 - 1) Who am I?
 - 2) Why am I here?
 - 3) Where did I come from?
 - 4) Where am I going?
- Only two possible basic worldviews:
 - 1) Everything is a result of an accident. (Chuck Missler’s sarcastic definition of the big bang: First there was nothing and then it exploded! – Unless you accept eternal matter/energy)
 - 2) Everything is a result of the deliberate design of an intelligent creator.
- My Basic Worldview Presuppositions:
 - 1) God is.
 - 2) God is Absolute Truth.
 - 3) God has Revealed Himself in His Written Word (Scripture) and His Living Word (God the Son, Jesus Christ).
 - 4) God is the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe.

Our Approach to Theology

- Dispensational
- Prophetic (or Futurist) view of Revelation
- Pre-Millennial and Pre-Tribulation view of the Rapture of the Church
- Belief in a literal Kingdom where Jesus Christ is King. It is challenged by Satan's final revolt at the end of 1000 years. Satan is defeated and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ continues forever in a New Heaven, New Earth, and New Jerusalem.

Design of the Gospels

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
<i>Presents Christ as:</i>	Messiah	Servant	Man	God
<i>Face:</i>	Lion	Ox	Man	Eagle
<i>Written to:</i>	Israel	Romans	Greeks	Church
<i>What Jesus:</i>	Said	Did	Felt	Was

Initial Thoughts Regarding the Kingdom

- Prophetically, most everyone that identifies as a Christian accepts the idea of a future (or present) Kingdom where Jesus Christ rules, whether literal, figurative, symbolic or allegorical.
- Though viewpoints greatly differ as to the 'what and when' of the Kingdom, what does the Bible teach about the Kingdom? Very importantly, what does Jesus Christ teach about it?
- The first two (and only) mentions of "kingdom" in Genesis: Genesis 10:10 refers to Nimrod, Genesis 20:9 refers to Abimelech. Both are pagan kings.
- The first reference to a "kingdom" in Israel is found in Deuteronomy 17:14-20.
- Saul is anointed the first King of Israel, (not God's choice) as recorded in 1 Samuel 8.
- In 2 Samuel 2, David is anointed King over Israel. 2 Samuel 7:16 speaks of his kingdom enduring forever.
- In 1 Kings 9, God reiterates to Solomon that the kingdom will last forever.
- Jeremiah 22:24-30, God places a curse on the seed (descendants) of King Jeconiah. The only solution to this problem is Jesus Christ. He was born of the virgin, possessing the "blood" (or DNA) of David through David's son Nathan, qualifying as David's "seed." He also had the legal title to the throne through his ADOPTED father Joseph through David's son Solomon.
- Revelation mentions the Kingdom very briefly in Revelation 20. Most of our insight comes from Isaiah and other Old Testament Prophets as they describe some of the details of the Kingdom.
- Jesus Christ has a great deal to say about the Kingdom, but He deals with the ethics, conduct, and moral attitude of the Kingdom.
- Matthew records Jesus's offer of His Kingdom to Israel, as well as Israel's rejection of that offer.
- Matthew also records the "Sermon on the Mount" which is exclusively about the Kingdom. It has been called "The Manifesto of the Kingdom."

Names, Titles, or Terms

The Kingdom of Heaven
 The Kingdom of God
 The Kingdom of Christ
 The Kingdom

(No need to try to separate – all refer to the kingdom)

The Sermon on the Mount – Preparation for the Kingdom

Manifesto of our King

Outline: Relationships of His Subjects:

1. To Self Matthew 5:1 – 16
2. To the Law Matthew 5:17 – 48
3. To God Matthew 6
4. To Others Matthew 7

Beatitudes Matthew 5:1 - 12

- Poor in Spirit
- They That Mourn
- Meek
- They That Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness
- Merciful
- Pure in Heart
- Peacemakers
- Persecution

All who live godly lives will suffer persecution.

Salt and Light Matthew 5:13 - 16

- Salt
 - Generates Thirst
 - Enhances Flavor
 - Melts
 - Corrodes
 - Electrolyte
 - Preservative
 - We need to exhibit an inward character that influences a decaying world.
 - We need to keep ourselves pure to “salt” the earth to hold back corruption so that the Gospel can continue to go forth.

- Light
 - Illuminates
 - Marks
 - Decorates
 - Stimulates
 - Constant (Classical Physics)
 - Separates/Combines in individual colors
 - Marks
 - We are reflectors of the “Great Light”
 - Our light speaks of the outward testimony of good works that points to God (reflection).
 - Our good works must accompany our dedicated lives as we let our lights shine.

The Law Matthew 5:17 – 19

- Yod (Jot) & Tittle
 - Yod – Looks like an apostrophe
 - Tittle – Similar to accent marks or punctuation
 - “Crossing t’s and dotting i’s
- Jesus fulfilled the law
 - Obedience to the Law
 - Death: He met the claims of the law for us
 - Spirit: enables believers
- Pharisaical Error
 - Not insincere: Zealous and sincerely tried to keep the law, (though very misguided)
 - Anyone trying to reconcile to God by work, rules, legalism, etc is pharisaical error.
- Is there any other way to heaven other than by Jesus Christ?
 - If there is, Jesus Christ’s prayers were not answered in Gethsemane.
 - (Jesus pleaded with the Father 3 times for an alternative)
- Which Commandments?
 - The Law of Christ found in remainder of Matthew chapters 5,6 & 7
 - Jesus will emphasize “my words”
 - Jesus calls to obedience
- What is the purpose of the Law?
 - It shows our sin and our inability to deliver ourselves.
 - It drives us to Jesus Christ.
- How can we really be obedient to the law?
 - Possible only through the Holy Spirit

The Law - Moses vs. Christ Matthew 5:20 – 6:4

- Murder
- Adultery
- Divorce
- Oaths
- Vengeance
- Love
- Good Deeds

- Alms
- Charitable giving and / or volunteering

Jesus uses a lot of humor and figures of speech to punctuate His real point: Motivation and lack of self-centeredness.

Prayer Matthew 6:5 – 15

- Not for show
- Not vain repeating
- The Lord's Prayer
 - Not really the Lord's Prayer – It should be called the Disciples' Prayer
- The Disciples' Prayer
 - A model prayer
 - Includes an endearing address, praise / worship, submission to His will, petition for needs, forgiveness, and deliverance.

Fasting Matthew 6:16 – 18

- What is your heart and your true motivation behind your deeds, and your prayer?

Finances Matthew 6:19 – 24

- We are stewards
- Stewardship requirements - 1 Corinthians 4:2
- Counting the cost - Luke 14:28
- PLAN – But do not depend (non-linearities)
- LOVE of money is the evil; not the wealth itself.

Giving Matthew 6:19 – 24

- Invest in the eternal market
- Only way to take it with you
- Non-depreciating “market”

Anxiety Matthew 6:25 – 34

- Worry is a sin.
- Worry is assuming a responsibility that God did not intend for you to have.
- Worry is a trickle of fear that soon cuts a crevice so deep it drains all other thoughts away.
- “When anxiety begins, faith ends – When faith begins, anxiety ends.” – George Muller
- Your heart will be found in the same location as your treasure.
- Prioritize the Kingdom of God and all material needs will be met.

Judging Matthew 7:1 – 6

- A case that we DO judge - 1 Corinthians 5
- Cannot judge the intent of the heart
- Inspect the fruit
- What we should do when wronged
 - Casting the Holy on the Unholy
 - Not understood by the unholy
 - Can turn back and injure

Prayer (Second Mention) Matthew 7:7 – 11

- God delights in His own
- God keeps His Word (and Promises)
- The Golden Rule
- Not negative - passive
- Positive – Active imperative
- “Merciful”
- We have a forgiving spirit and love for others

The Golden Rule principle Matthew 7:12

- NOT: Whatever all things that men do to you, do ye even so to them.
- And DEFINITELY NOT: Whatsoever all things that men might do to you, do ye first even so to them before they can get the chance.
- Correct: Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and prophets.

Two ways of life Matthew 7:13 – 14

- The popular consensus – The Broad Way
- Jesus is the gate (door) – The Narrow Way

Beware false teachers and leaders Matthew 7:15 – 23

- Check (inspect) the fruit
- The false is headed for destruction
- False teachers and leaders can be great counterfeits

Wise men and women build on solid foundations Matthew 7:24 – 29

- Rock (stone, foundation) = Jesus
- Sand = Shifting ideas, change, modernism, relativism, no absolutes

The Kingdom throughout Church History

Initial Thoughts

- The Law of Christ as taught in “The Sermon on the Mount” dictates that we are called to an extremely high and perfect standard, humanly impossible to attain. It must exceed the best of the strictest conservatives, and be as perfect as God Himself.
- We are clearly taught that we cannot serve two masters, so the law of Christ must preside in every aspect of our lives.
- So then, here is the hard question: **Can a nation survive in the world today, living by these principles?**
- Has it been tried? Was it successful?
- To find the answers, we must look back into the history of the church.
- To begin, let us consider what I believe is a prophetic outline of the church in the second and third chapters in the book of Revelation. If I am correct, most of this prophesy is now history.

Basic Chronology of Revelation

Chapters 1 – 3	The Church Age <i>(Dispensation of Grace)</i>	<i>Unknown Time</i>
Chapters 4 – 19	The Time of Judgment <i>(The Tribulation Period)</i>	<i>7 Years</i>
Chapter 20	The Kingdom Age (Millennium) <i>(The Dispensation of the Kingdom)</i>	<i>1000 Years</i>
Chapters 21, 22	The Eternal Age <i>(Eternity Future)</i>	<i>Endless Time</i>

Detailed Chronology of Revelation 1 to 3

Chapter 1	The Church Age Introduction
Chapter 2	The Church Age <i>Ephesus; Smyrna; Pergamos; Thyatira</i>
Chapter 3	The Church Age <i>Sardis; Philadelphia; Laodicea</i>

Considerations of the Seven Churches

- These were actual historic churches (But why these seven?)
- The traits can be found in a number of churches from any period of church history.
- To one degree or another, traces of these traits can likely be found in any given church in any given era.
- There is a personal application for in each letter.
- There MAY be a prophetic profile of church history found in the particular choices of church and the particular order.



Prophetic Profile

- Ephesus – The Apostolic Church – A.D. 30 – 100 (160)
- Smyrna – The Persecuted Church – A.D. 100 (160) – 312
- Pergamos – The Married Church – A.D. 312 – 600
- Thyatira – The Medieval Church – A.D. 600 - 1520
- Sardis – Denominational Church – A.D. 1520 - 1750
- Philadelphia – The Missionary Church – A.D. 1750 - 1900
- Laodicea – Apostate Church – A.D. 1900 – 2015+

The Seven Kingdom Parables – Matthew 13

- The Four Soils (*Matthew 13:3-9;18-23*)
- Tares and Wheat (*Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43*)
- Mustard Seed (*Matthew 13:31-32*)
- Woman and Leaven (*Matthew 13:33*)
- Treasure in the Field (*Matthew 13:44*)
- Pearl of Great Price (*Matthew 13:45-46*)
- Dragnet (*Matthew 13:47-50*)

Relation of the Seven Kingdom Parables to the Seven Churches

- Ephesus – The Sower and Four Soils
- Smyrna – The Tares and the Wheat
- Pergamos – The Mustard Seed
- Thyatira – The Woman and the Leaven
- Sardis – The Treasure in the Field
- Philadelphia – The Pearl of Great Price
- Laodicea – The Dragnet

Paul's Epistles to Seven Churches

Paul wrote 13 letters. Three of them are 1st & 2nds, leaving 10 addressees, three of which are pastors:
Paul also wrote to seven churches.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 13 \\
 - \quad 3 \\
 \hline
 10 \\
 - \quad 3 \\
 \hline
 7
 \end{array}$$

Relation of Jesus's Epistles to the Seven Churches to the Seven Pauline Epistles to Churches

<u>Jesus</u>	<u>Paul</u>
• Ephesus –	Ephesians
• Smyrna –	Philippians
• Pergamos –	Corinthians
• Thyatira –	Galatians
• Sardis –	Romans
• Philadelphia –	Thessalonians
• Laodicea –	Colossians

Personal Application

- Ephesus Neglected Priorities.
- Smyrna Satanic Opposition.
- Pergamos Spiritual Compromise.
- Thyatira Pagan Practices.
- Sardis Watchfulness, Diligence.
- Philadelphia Loyal Ambassadorship.
- Laodicea Materialistic Apostasy

Church History Notes

Recap: Questions to consider:

- Can we create a "Christian" Nation?
- Have there been Christian nations in the past?
- Do we live in a Christian nation?
- Did we start as a Christian nation and then become secular?
- Is a Christian nation even possible?

Note: Preparation for this seminar has included research from studies with Koinonia House (<http://www.khouse.org>); Scroll Publishing Co., The Myth of Christian America by David Bercot (<http://www.scrollpublishing.com>); and, of course, many volumes and notes of Commentaries and Church History from my personal library.