

Kingdom / Dominion Theologies Heresy or Orthodoxy

When I first became a believer in Jesus as Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit came upon me in a very vivid way saying:

“All revelation takes you deeper into the Word of God, never outside of the Word of God ”

I understood “the Word of God” to be Scripture. In subsequent years I received only one more carefully worded instruction from the Holy Ghost that could be compared to a computer print-out. That message also lay well within the boundary of Scripture. I've had *nudges*, *guidance*, as well as the *still small voice* of the Holy Spirit saying *go here, not there*. I have been used in a small way in the gifts of the Spirit. But God's voice was always clearest for me while reading the Bible. Nothing can replace His word for just sheer richness. With His Word would come illumination, comfort, or warning.

One of the most striking features of Christianity is that unlike all other religions, one experiences it before full understanding comes. Christianity is *experience* grounded in the Word. The great men of the Bible had singular and supernatural experiences. However, one of the reasons for this essay is to question the hyper-experiences of the new prophetic/apostolic movements.

Some terms that I will use interchangeably will be *Apostolic/Prophetic*, *Kingdom Now*, or *Dominion theology*. Another common term is *Manifest Sons of God*. Prophetic/ Apostolic is usually in the description or title of those ministries which embrace dominion beliefs. Another sub-title or description is *The Seven Mountains*. Kingdom beliefs may have some variations but typically line up with the doctrines that will be described in this paper. Well known leaders tend to call themselves *prophets* or *apostles* and seldom use the term *Kingdom Now*, a term that embodies the concept as does the term, *dominion*.

In the last thirty or so years we have seen the emergence of Kingdom Now or Dominion Theology with its companion—the Apostolic/Prophetic. *Kingdom /dominion* ideas have saturated the Christian media so thoroughly that one is hard pressed to know whether or not their ideas are scriptural. This movement says that God is *restoring* to the church the five fold ministries which have long been dormant. And that the apostle and the prophet are only now taking their rightful place. Quite naturally, some of the vocal claim to be the missing prophets and apostles.

However, prophets and apostles have always *functioned* among us. True, traditional charismatic and evangelical churches have not given titles to these men. They may not have even acknowledged their existence, but they were there just the same. A *title* is not necessarily the same as a *function*. For example, Richard Wurmbrand was surely an apostle to the underground church of Romania ministering to his Russian torturers and fellow prisoners. He had no title but like the Apostle Paul, fits the profile of the abased apostles:

“Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of this world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day” (AV, 1 Cor. 4.11-13).

Prophets fared no better. They were scorned and alienated for their unique calling. Death was their sure reward. Isaiah was sawn in two, Jeremiah, nearly buried alive by his own king. The Babylonians actually treated him better. Above all, they blazed with accuracy! How do today's prophets and

apostles line up with their biblical counterparts? Would an unbiased appraisal call their prophecies clear and accurate? How can we continue to excuse their failed prophecies, their hindsight ammendments, their rationalizations and their spiritual pride?

We must consider the possibility that today's prophets and apostles wear titles that come from self-promotion. A book or a TV appearance easily opens the door of that office, but the genuine calling may be missing. Unlike their biblical examples, They enjoy enormous popularity. We want to bask in their glory. We hanker for a *word* for ourselves and for their the latest “thus saith the Lord” because they seem to enjoy greater light and greater intimacy with God. In short, they seem to have reached the stars. So, ordinary believers desire what these men appear to have—a more powerful relationship—a more thrilling connection to God. We don't seem to realize that the same Holy Spirit resides within us and that the Bible contains thousands of words for us—and for our future. Titles may seem to elevate these men above the flock, but the flock must always remember that the ***Lord is their shepherd.***

The words *relationship, intimacy, and hearing from God* have become the new buzzwords and phrases which clearly need clarifying and defining. Does having a relationship now imply something much grander than knowing Jesus as Lord and loving Him?

Today's prophets may aquire their validation because of supernatural experiences that once published gives them the brush of spiritual ascendency. Many believers long for similar experiences and so become their emulators. The prophet may claim to have visions, visitations by angels, or even by Jesus. So far, so biblical. But what about their moral responsibility to their followers? Are we supposed to follow their guidelines until we also can achieve a running dialogue with Jesus or Angels? Are we to meditate until we also have visions? What if their experiences are counterfeit or even fraudulent? These are legitimate questions that should be pondered. We know that “His sheep hear His voice”(John 10). But what exactly does that all entail?

Modern prophets may have recognizable names or just be ordinary people who believe in the **superiority of their own revelations**. One man on You Tube, *Final Call*, says that Jesus comes into his room every night and talks to him. Now *Final Call's* Bible is in second position. *Final Call's* Jesus is harsh and punishing. If you don't have a *relationship*, if you have sin in your life, you are going to hell says his Jesus. *Final Call* says that Jesus is the Word, not Scripture, and so say the new revelators. I had several conversations with him on Skype and can assure you of his complete sincerity. I was so taken with his intimacy with Jesus that I almost fell for his legalistic doctrine. I hear that he now calls the Bible a Satanic deception. He is clearly spinning out of control.

Books such as *The God Chasers* by Tommy Tenney and, more recently *The Shack* by Bill Young illustrate enviable relationships with God. These books and others like them may imply that *relationship* is more important than doctrine. *The Shack* may even suggest Universalist doctrine. Such messages sound very spiritual and enviable. Other teachers supply methods to “hear from God.” They may include anything from journaling what the mind is conveying after asking the Lord a question, to other mystical methods having their origin in the Catholic desert monks, and farther back, the Hindu mystics, farther back still, ancient Babylon. Spiritual contemplation is making a huge comeback. The labyrinth is a big hit with even CD's roms to help accomplish the experience virtually. Formerly a practice of Monks, the idea is to successfully walk a maze and thereby discover God.

We do not easily see the little leaven in the mix. After all, didn't Jesus die on the cross to take down the wall of separation between sinful man and God so that we could come boldly to the throne of God to find grace to help in time of need? That is exactly the point. The wall of separation has been removed.

Do we need instructions on how to penetrate the mysteries from those who did not know that the *only mediator* between God and man is Jesus the Messiah?

What can be wrong with a zeal to see God move in new and dynamic ways? If the *prophetic/apostolic/kingdom movements* replace the foundations of Scripture then something is wrong. If we rely on another's cloudy lens to view the Bible, then something is wrong. If we do not learn to rightly divide the Word for ourselves, something is wrong. If someone implies that revelation and relationship are superior to the Bible, something is wrong.

So be careful. A dangerous leaven is cross-pollinating the entire body of Christ, and a little leaven leaveth the whole lump. The *dominionists* urge us to cultivate experiencing God and to cultivate hearing his voice which is most Christians' deepest desire. They tell us that we may access all the fullness of heaven *now* without having to wait for Jesus' return. When we press in to get similar supernatural adventures, we may end up counting dust motes in our prayer closets or even encountering a powerful counterfeit. *The question has always been how?* How is He reached, and so formulas abound. Also meetings. Just keep going to the conferences, buy the latest book, get a hold of it, they urge! Try try try! So the Bride of Christ becomes the maid of all work.

I remember reading Myles Munroe's book on prayer. Every chapter outlined detailed formulas of how to pray correctly to get our prayers answered. I took copious notes believing I had tapped into the secret of the universe. But the time I reached the end, I was defeated. Truly the devil was in the details. I just couldn't remember all of the steps. Can't we just trust that our relationship is a natural one as uncomplicated as that of any family? And that prayer is not a method as much as a deep utterance of the heart?

We have an earnest on our inheritance now, true. But our complete inheritance will only come with the restoration of all things. Paul says “*That in the dispensation of the fulness of times* he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him” (Eph, 1.10-14). Jesus' first coming was the earnest—the down payment on glory, and Jesus' second coming—the fullness of our inheritance.

Here is what I see happening. The prophetic movement with its streams of revelation:

- has trumped the plain sense of Scripture;
- has replaced *event driven prophecy* with symbols or allegory interpreted at whim;
- has subtly done away with the *judgments* promised in the Word;
- has become the statue of Daniel 2 with man as the head instead of Christ.

Going by various names: Kingdom Now or Dominion Theology, with its emphasis on the five-fold ministry and the restoration of prophets and apostles may be a dangerous infection in the body of Christ: a movement where the zeal for God, the zeal for intimacy replaces the Truth.

Some prophetic ministries have many fine qualities, many inspiring messages, many powerful worshipers. But could the combination of these good qualities blind the ordinary believer? Will he know if he is being seduced by the light? Are the prophets becoming *Lords over* us rather than *Servants of all*? *Are they doing away with the plain sense of Scripture?* Kingdom prophets claim to have messages that are updates from God. Perhaps even the prophets don't realize how far they have strayed from Scripture.

Familiar names are: Rick Joyner, Mike Bickle, Paul Cain, Chuck Pierce, John Paul

Jackson, Todd Bentley, Ryan Wyatt, Myles Munroe, Lynn Hiles etc. Bishop Paulk and C. Peter Wagner are godfathers of the movement. There are scores of unfamiliar names of similar persuasion. They are dream weavers; I can feel myself being carried on the wave of their messages. I understand how many believers can fall into lock step. The leaders, of course, want submitted, paying followers. They argue that unity in the movement produces results. Does submitting to these prophets, then, open the doors for potential domination or even Spiritual abuse? *At what cost comes unity?* We must ask this question: If the prophetic utterances from this new wave of the apostolic does not line up with Scripture, what is it? Wouldn't we have to call it heresy or even **The Apostasy** that Paul warns Timothy will come in the last days? Are we in **The Apostasy** now?

Paul says: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; And they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables"(NKJB, 2 Tim.4.3-4).

What is Kingdom Now and Dominion theology?

Essentially, *Kingdom Now* says that it is the job of the church to establish the Kingdom of God on earth and until this is done, Jesus cannot return to earth to rule and reign. And, there has to be a **restoration of the law and rule** of God globally. The new wave of *manifest sons of God* will accomplish this task. God is dependent on the church to make the earth ready to receive Jesus. Therefore, all end time events are put on hold until the church reigns supreme.

The encyclopedia definition of Kingdom Now says:

"When Christians have caused the earth to reach a certain state of perfection, the return of Christ will then occur the doctrine rejects the doctrine of the **Rapture**, which states that Christ will return to remove the church from the earth. Rather than being "rescued" by Christ, the role of the Church is to usher in Christ"
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_theology; February 2010).

Earl Paulk, one of its original proponents says:

"The Church has been foreordained of God to become that people who will become so glorified that we can bring Christ back to the earth. This glorified church must make the earth God's footstool before Jesus can come again" (From *The Wounded Body of Christ* qtd. by Sandy Simpson in *Dominion-ism Exposed*. 2/02/2006. Simpson quotes from Van der Merwe's *Joel's Army*).

Rick Joyner from Kansas City Prophets/Latter Rain/NAR writes:

"What is about to come upon the earth is not just a revival, or another awakening, it is a veritable revolution. The vision was given in order to begin to awaken those who are destined to radically change the course, and even the very definition of Christianity" (*The Harvest*. Morning Star Publications: 1989).

Ryan Wyatt says that "Jesus is retained in the heavens until there is a restoration of things on the earth. Jesus will put the church in the center of the world stage" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zq4sX0RQN4M>) Feb. 2010).

Wyatt has extrapolated a thread from Acts 3.19 which Peter's urgent message to the Jews to receive Jesus as Messiah prior to his return. There is nothing in that passage to indicate the church being center stage. So, Wyatt's interpretation subtly twists the meaning. And, why does the very definition of Christianity need changing?

What does the Jesus say?

One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, “When will the Kingdom of God begin?” Jesus replied, “The Kingdom of God isn't ushered in with visible signs. You won't be able to say, 'It has begun here in this place or there in that part of the country.' For the kingdom of God is within you” (The Book, Tyndale 1971, Luke 17.20-22).

Jesus refutes the belief that says His kingdom will be “**ushered in**.” A close reading of the phrase *The Kingdom of God* indicates that Jesus spoke of it in one of two ways.

1. *The kingdom of God* is the spiritual presence of the power of God *carried* into situations to meet the needs of hurting people. “The kingdom of God comes *unto* you.” This power invades evil and changes circumstances.
2. *The Kingdom of God*, in its second most frequent use, is a reference to the end of the age when Jesus establishes his own material reign on earth that will **only** begin when he plants his feet on the Mount of Olives establishing his millennial kingdom.

Definition one is illustrated in Matthew 12.28. Here Jesus, under the power of the Holy Spirit, casts a demon out of a man who was both blind and mute enabling him to see and speak. When the religious leaders accuse Jesus of casting out demons by Beelzebub, Jesus answered:

“If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then surely the Kingdom of God has come unto you” (AV). Jesus' use of the term *Kingdom of God* in this instance refers to carrying the healing and deliverance of the Holy Spirit into a situation where it is needed.

The authority of the Believer

Let us examine the first use of the term more carefully. Though some evangelicals and apologists make some good arguments against the Dominion theologies, they often confuse *dominion* with *authority*. Jesus clearly gave his disciples *authority* over the realm of evil spirits. Some anti-dominionists are fond of tossing out the *supernatural* as well as the *authority of the believer*.

In Luke 10.19 Jesus says, **“Behold, I give you *authority* to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the works of the enemy, and Behold, nothing shall by any means hurt you.”** He gives this authority to the twelve and later to the seventy. The Centurion of Matthew 8 had one of the best understandings of this transfer of authority. Jesus commended him on his great faith.

And, finally, in Matthew 28.17, Jesus tells his disciples that “all authority has been given unto him” and to make disciples of all nations “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Implied here is a transfer of His authority. New disciples may exercise authority like the original twelve under the empowering leading of the Holy Spirit. See Mark 16. “these signs shall follow those who believe”

Jesus' final command to his disciples was to tarry in Jerusalem until *they be endued* with power from on high to be His witnesses throughout the earth. These witnesses must go where Jesus himself would go and do what He would do (Matt. 10.1).

However, this delegated authority is only over the works of *evil* and **not** over the *will* of men, or over nations, or over political regimes. We must remember that Jesus says His Kingdom is not of this world. That we render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are

God's. The Kingdom folks have it backward. They want to render unto Caesar the things that are God's.

Global Dominion

A Kingdom Now objective is not only to win the world for Christ but to achieve global unity. Globalization is also a goal of One World Government. It is also the goal of Islam that wishes to usher in the Mahdi. And, is also the goal of the New Age movement that wishes to usher in Maitreya who will bring universal peace. I seem to remember Jesus saying that he came to bring division, not unity.

If everything is getting better and better until the entire globe is one in unity enabled by the *manifest sons of God*, then apostasy and tribulation and final judgment can be done away with and replaced by a mealy sort of universalism (I've heard that hiss in the garden before). Its global thrust does away with the boundaries of Nations so important to the work of God and merges curiously with other New Age movements.

Dominionists stake their rights to the globe from Genesis. The cross has won back Adam's dominion from Satan, they say. Where he failed, they will succeed. A closer look at Genesis says that God's injunction to Adam was to *keep Eden* and to have **dominion** over *creeping things, beasts of the field and birds of the air*. Any time man tries to exert his will over our free will, he is practicing control and domination, a kind of witchcraft. The new prophets and apostles are fond of exercising their authority over others. Jesus says:

The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors'. But not so among you [disciples]; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. . . . am among you as One who serves (Luke 22.25-27).

In another text, Jesus warns:

Beware of these experts in religion, for they love to parade in dignified robes and to be bowed to by the people as they walk along the street. And how they love the seats of honor in the synagogues and at religious festivals! But even while they are praying long prayers with great outward piety, they are planning schemes to cheat widows out of their property. Therefore God's heaviest sentence awaits these men. (The Book, Luke 20.45-47).

One finds similar issues within the new prophetic ministries. They are God's oracle. Now comes the love of power, the love of money, the love of public admiration, the love of having a TV audience, the love of having the name of *prophet* or *apostle*. And soon, they no longer need to line up with the Word of God because they have become a law unto themselves. Situations become rife with the possibility of abusing and fleecing the flock.

The central question is: Will the the new kingdom church be needed to usher in the Kingdom of God? The Bible says No! God is sovereign and The End will not come with a global taking of the world's institutions but when God's cup of wrath is full and spills over.

And, the church will never be able to so control the nations and so sweep the law (theonomy) of the Bible into the world to make a world fit for Jesus. That thinking is delusional. For the world will not get better and better. Jesus didn't say that a big revival will occur before he returns, but rather a big apostasy. There will be so much evil in the world that the angels will come to reap out the tares and throw them into a burning furnace (Matt. 13.36-43). Jesus is wondering if He will even **“find faith on**

earth” when He returns (Luke 18.8) .

What Jesus Says About His Return The Second Coming

When I return the world will be [as indifferent to the things of God] as the people were in Noah's day. They ate and drank and married—everything just as usual right up to the day when Noah went into the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. And the world will be as it was in the days of Lot: people went about their daily business—eating and drinking, buying and selling, farming and building—until the morning that Lot left Sodom. Then fire and brimstone rained down from heaven and destroyed them all (The Book, Luke 17.26-28).

The end times will resemble the days of Lot and Noah. Judgment will occur! There will be some who have managed to survive the tribulation who still don't get it, who still ignore the strong warnings of wars, earthquakes, and terrors in the heavens; who will still refuse to recognize Him as Lord. He will come at last to his brothers, the Jews, who are in natural Israel, calling out for their Messiah.

He will descend upon the Mount of Olives with ten thousands of his Saints, Jude says. Anybody see a world wide revival here or a earth won for the Lord? Only the kingdom prophets who must rip away many parts of the Bible to allow for their the dominion of their glorious church.

Even in the parables Jesus is saying: be ready, watch and pray, judgment is coming upon the whole earth. Many books of the Bible speak of the terrible *Day of the Lord* when Jesus actually steps back into history to war against the Antichrist and the enemies of God. This will be a day of the separation of the wheat and the tares. The bodies will pile up and where the bodies are, there will be the vultures (Matt. 24.28; Luke 17.37).

For Jesus says, **“For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled”** (AV, Luke 21.22). Jesus prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem and then goes on to prophesy the End. He doesn't view his prophecies as symbols. Days mean days. The destruction of the temple happened exactly as he said in 70AD. So will the rest of his prophecy.

He says **“this will be a “snare upon all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth” (Luke 21.35)**. Would Jesus give such a warning for the sake of symbols? He is not underhanded! I personally think the believer won't be *dwelling on the earth* for Jesus says:

“ . . . pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21.36). How the Kingdom Now preachers scoff at the word “escape.” Why should the believer “escape?” There is no rapture, they say, and we are cowards for wanting to “escape.” **Well, Jesus said we could.** There is always that ark of safety for the believer, the Bride of Christ. We are hid until the *Great Day of the Lord*.

Isaiah 26.20-21 tells us of this time: "Come my people, enter our chambers and shut the door behind you, hide yourself as it were, for a little moment until the indignation is past. For behold the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." (See also my Bible study on the Jewish wedding as a type of the rapture: <http://www.friendlyarts.net/IsraelPerspective/jewishwedding.htm>) I personally think that chamber is in heaven because Jesus says that *we stand before him*.

In the Olivet discourse Jesus explains just what events must occur just prior to and during the tribulation. He validates the prophet Daniel who also speaks of this period. John goes into exquisite detail of what awaits those who are caught in the outpouring of God's wrath. Where is this beautiful global world restored to the theonomy of God? It is not in the Bible. Revelation has trumped Scripture. Zeal has replaced truth. And new visions refute the words of Matthew 24.

Paul says that we “wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come” (1 Th.1.10). Paul says that we will be “caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord”(1 Th.4.17). These are words of comfort, “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Th.5.9). What's coming? Apostasy and Wrath and that great and terrible *day of the Lord*.

Is God waiting for the church to do something special before He can enter history? No, only to be ready to escape the wrath to come! Are the last days to be interpreted as something OTHER than events?

Listen to these words of Jesus:

“. . . Notice the fig tree or any other tree. When the leaves come out, you know without being told that summer is near. In the same way, when you see the **events taking place** that I've describe you can be just as sure that the King of God is near” (The Book, Luke 21-25).

Some streams of Kingdom Now theology have eliminated **natural Israel** for a demonic lie called **replacement theology**. Part II of of this work examines the preterist Lynn Hiles and offers a rebuttal of his E-book entitled "[The Revelation of Jesus Christ from a Modern Prophet](#)". Notice that he calls himself prophet. Almost always a signal of Kingdom Now beliefs.

Kingdom/Dominion Theology with all its attendant beliefs and practices is simply another picture of the statue in Daniel chapter two. Man is the self declared head of the body, not God. Look at the statue: the head is gold indicating absolute rule and majesty; The head is a man who has elevated himself over all the people in the kingdom; His rule is absolute. His terror is felt.

Is this the picture that we want for the church? In an attempt to get a “bride without spot or wrinkle” some bad things are happening. We need to remember that Jesus is the head. We are to call no man Master; we are to humble ourselves, and if we lead, we are to be servant of all. Our righteousness is because of what he has done, because of His passion on the cross, not our passion to evolve into spiritual giants. Beware the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.

Afterward

It was with some reluctance that I attempted to discuss the Kingdom Now/Prophetic-Apostolic movements. I am not an apologist. But, a culmination of recent experiences, including reading Lynn Hiles E-book on Revelation, spurred me to write. I have friends that *are or have been* involved in some way with the Kingdom movement. I know they want nothing more than to be used by God and to live as fully in his will as possible. I know they love God! This paper is not to offend them but to search for truth as did the Bereans. I want to say once more that I believe God speaks to us today in the same way that he spoke to men of old. I do believe that there are prophets and apostles in the body of Christ. I believe that the gifts of the Spirit are for today as taught by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12. I believe that God reveals himself in several ways. But revelation never should overwrite Scripture.

We must be **Sola Scriptura!**

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