

Response by Brother Andrew Gackle, missionary /evangelist

Dear Mary,

I got your two e-mails. Thanks! Well, I have to tell you up-front, that when it comes to these doctrinal issues, I try to keep things very, very simple. In 26 years of walking with Jesus, I have seen way too much unnecessary division in the Church over what I consider to be non-essential issues. For example, "Kingdom now". You want to know if I agree with "Kingdom Now" principles. In 26 years, I still don't know if I even know what the principles are!!! Okay, we know what Eph. 5:27 says. I agree with the Scripture!!

You say that "Kingdom now" people take that verse, and reword it to say that the body of Christ presents Jesus with the Church. I've not directly heard any of those men say that, but let's say there's truth to that. What does all that mean "on the ground" (in daily life)? How do we, who believe that Jesus presents the Church to Himself, differ in our daily lives from someone who says that we present the Church to Jesus (if that's what they say)? Does either group deny the Virgin Birth, the incarnation of Jesus, His blood atonement, resurrection, and His Second Coming? Do both groups believe that people are sinners and need to be saved? Do both groups believe that through the Holy Spirit signs, wonders, and miracles are still done to a hurt and dying world through the name of Jesus? If there is agreement on those basic issues, then it is not in me to split hairs over eschatology (sp?) or the specific interpretation of Eph. 5:27 or Rom. 8:19 (The sons of God being manifested in the earth).

Now, if anyone who ascribes to "Kingdom Now" or "Manifested Sons" ideology, uses that as a basis to teach people to believe anything over the Scripture (if there's a conflict between the two), or get caught up in pride/arrogance, or uses it as a basis to control others, I will oppose that person tooth and nail. However, no one who would ascribe to either of those two schools of thought/theology has a corner on pride, arrogance, or a desire to control others. We can find that anywhere throughout the body of Christ, for sure. I simply want to know what people are doing with their daily lives. I will leave it to others to parse words and determine people's motives, because unless I actually sit under any of those men personally (be it Joyner, Bickle, or others) and know from my interaction with them that they are in error or teaching something unscriptural, I can only go by what I've heard or read by them. Beyond that, I must give them the benefit of the doubt, as I do with any member of the body of Christ. Yes, Rick Joyner has written of many visions/dreams/etc. that he has received over the years. I've read many of them. I do not remember reading anything in them that was clearly unscriptural.

In any case, I have never heard Joyner say that he is infallible, nor that anyone should take anything he says, or dreams/visions he reports on, to be elevated above Scripture. In fact, he often exhorts believers to spend MORE time in the Scriptures so that they will NOT succumb to error.

We are told in Scripture that "as He (Jesus) is, so are we in this world." (1 John 4:17). We are

told that we are to grow "into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. 4:13). These and any number of Bible verses point to the work of grace and the Holy Spirit that will take place in God's people that will cause us to shine like lights in a dark world. This will not happen in a vacuum, nor with passivity. There is an active seeking of the Lord that will be needed for us to be who Jesus called us to be in this world. I have learned that we believers, who are pursuing Jesus with all that is in us, will not word everything the same, nor will our paths always follow along exactly.

The most dangerous deception that I have seen over the past years is the "inclusionist" doctrine, that Carlton Pearson ended up embracing. I am not aware personally (that doesn't mean it hasn't happened) of anyone who is said to be a "Kingdom Now" or "Manifested Sons" advocate who doesn't believe that people need to be saved by confessing their sins and committing their lives to Jesus. But the "inclusionist" doctrine says that everyone is ALREADY SAVED; they just need to be told that!! Such a doctrine has caused churches to pull all their missionaries off the field (because who needs missionaries if everyone is saved already!!) and not have any definition for sin anymore!

This is where a doctrine changes everything "on the ground". Where a doctrine causes something like that to happen across the board of those who embrace it, then it's clear where it came from (the pit of hell), because salvation through the Cross is a non-negotiable item in the belief system of any Christian. Take replacement theology. Not all who are said to be "Kingdom Now" people agree with replacement theology (I mentioned Joyner and Bickle). That means that replacement theology cannot be said to just reside in that stream of the body of Christ (Replacement theology has infected whole church denominations).

I will end this too-long e-mail by saying that deceivers and error will wax worse and worse, the Scriptures say. No group has a corner on it. There is much, what I consider to be non-essential doctrinal beliefs, that I disagree with many groups on. However, if I allowed that to cause me to see true believers as heretics, or people with an evil agenda to do harm to other Christians, I would soon find myself standing alone. Years ago, someone sent me a paper on Kenneth Copeland that made him out to practically be the devil incarnate!! Any "faith" person could be thought of as arrogant.

Jesus was thought arrogant/heretical for saying that was the Son of man/Son of God. I'm sure we'll not escape such judgments in this world either. The Lord knows our hearts. Only He knows (and we'll know if we sit directly under someone) the motives of people's hearts. We're all doing the best we can to walk in the wisdom of the Lord in this fallen world. I'm with you, Mary. We both want the same thing. We want the body of Christ to grow up into a mature person that is not cast around by every wind of doctrine and vulnerable to deception. So we must walk in the light we have and encourage others to do likewise. Jesus is the sum total of everything. To Him be the glory. Your brother, Andrew