

## Kingdom of God – Definition, Overview and Introduction

**Kingdom** – Greek *Basileia*: *royalty*, that is, (abstractly) *rule*, or (concretely) a *realm* (literally or figuratively): - kingdom, + reign. God’s moral and spiritual rulership, through Christ, over born-again believers, their families and their churches and eventually, after Christ’s return, over the entire world. It is trans-local and trans-cultural, includes Earth and Heaven, Jew and Gentile, male and female, and is found in the local church meeting place, fields, fishing boats, prayer places by rivers, bible colleges, house churches and many ordinary locations where God turns up. It is not manifestly present amidst idolatry, greed, wickedness and corruption.

Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven are the same, with a slightly different emphasis, “of Heaven” prioritizes the spiritual nature and throne-room authority of God, “of God” emphasizes the broader aspects, including the Christian’s inheritance of the Kingdom. Also Kingdom of Heaven is mainly used in the gospel of Matthew. because of the Jewish intended audience.

There are 150 verses in the New Testament that use the word Kingdom, of which 4 refer to the kingdom of the Beast, one to human kingdoms fighting each other, one to a kingdom divided against itself, and the other 144 verses refer to the Kingdom of God either directly or in parables.

Much of the concern in the gospels is with “entering” the Kingdom of God, much of the concern in the epistles is in “inheriting” the Kingdom of God (since their audience is baptized Christians). The difference between entering and inheriting can be seen in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 which concludes with:

(1 Corinthians 3:14-15) If anyone's work which he built remains, he shall receive a reward. (*inheritance*) (15) If anyone's work shall be burned up, he shall suffer loss. But he shall be saved, (*entrance*) yet so as by fire.

### The Spiritual Nature Of The Kingdom of God

(Luke 17:20,21) And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation. Nor shall they say, Lo here! or, behold, there! For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.

(John 3:3) Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

(John 3:5) Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

(John 18:36) Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would fight so that I might not be delivered to the Jews. But now My kingdom is not from here.

(Romans 14:17) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

(1 Corinthians 15:50) And I say this, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

**Discussion Question:** *How does the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God affect how Christians view progress and politics esp. in the light of John 18:36?*

## **The Kingdom God Is Ruled By Jesus, Who Is Co-Regent With The Father**

In most ancient Kingdoms there came a time when the Father and the Son ruled at the same time, often for many years. This is very well set out in the following section from Colossians;

Colossians 1:13-20 For He has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; (14) in whom we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins. (15) who is the image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation. (16) For all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created through Him and for Him. (17) And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. (18) And He is the Head of the body, the church, who is the Beginning, the First-born from the dead, that He may be pre-eminent in all things. (19) For it pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell. (20) And through Him having made peace through the blood of His cross, it pleased the Father to reconcile all things to Himself through Him, whether the things on earth or the things in Heaven.

Other verses include:

(Luke 22:29) And I appoint a kingdom to you, as My Father has appointed to Me,

(Luke 22:30) that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

(Luke 23:42) And he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.

(Ephesians 5:5) For you know this, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous one (who is an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

(2 Timothy 4:1) Therefore I solemnly witness before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is going to judge the living and the dead according to His appearance and His kingdom,

(Hebrews 1:8) But to the Son He says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

(2 Peter 1:11) For so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

(Revelation 1:9) I, John, who also am your brother and companion in the affliction, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the island that is called Patmos, for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

(Revelation 12:10) And I heard a great voice saying in Heaven, Now has come the salvation and power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ. For the accuser of our brothers is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night.

**Discussion Questions:** Who is Jesus ruling over? How long does He rule for? Who does Jesus delegate some Kingdom authority to? When will Jesus authority be fully manifested? How is the Kingdom of Christ both "present now" and also "yet to come"?