“What is Kingdom Theology?”
From “GotQuestions.org”

Question: "What is Kingdom Theology?"

Answer: At its most basic definition, kingdom theology would be the part of theology that studies the Kingdom of God in all its many different aspects, manifestations and elements. In that sense kingdom theology is a legitimate and beneficial part of theology as a whole. But there are also theological “movements” or beliefs that are sometimes labeled as “kingdom theology,” so one must be careful to understand how the term is being used.

One type of kingdom theology that would be considered within the realm of biblical or orthodox Christian doctrine is what is sometimes referred to as the “already but not yet” view of the kingdom of God which simply means that the “end times” began with the ascension of Christ into heaven. It is also called “inaugurated eschatology” because the life, death and resurrection of Christ are seen as inaugurating, or ushering in, the beginning of the last days. Those who hold this view believe that the Kingdom of God is already here but has not yet been fully consummated.

This type of kingdom theology divides human history into two broad periods of time. First is the “present evil age” which started with the fall of man and will last until the Second Coming of Christ. This time period is marked by sin, sickness, death, disease, war and poverty. In it Satan is seen to be ruling the world and the world’s system as seen in verses like Ephesians 2:2 and 6:12, among many others. (Of course we also know from Scripture that Satan’s rule is limited to only what God allows him to do.) The second age is the “age to come” where the kingdom of God rules an age of eternal life, freedom from sin, sickness and suffering. It will be a time of universal peace on earth and God’s absolute sovereign reign over all of creation.

The above position is the view held by Mclean Bible Church. The view presented below would NOT align with our theology and what we teach.

Kingdom theology teaches that both ages are in play today. In other words while Jesus ushered in the Kingdom of God we still suffer from the consequences of living in a fallen world with sin, sickness and disease. So while the Kingdom of God is already here and Christ is already ruling from heaven, the full benefits of the Kingdom have not yet been ushered in. Because the Kingdom of God is still “not yet” here in all of its glory and power, Christians still suffer sickness and death. Although we have eternal life we still live in a world of sin with all the sickness, pain and suffering that brings. Until Christ returns again we will not experience the fullness of the kingdom of God in all aspects and areas. Where the waters start getting muddy among adherents to a kingdom theology point of view is in regards to exactly how much and to what degree the power of the Kingdom of God in the age to come is being manifested today.
Kingdom theology became a popular teaching among some Vineyard churches and was embraced by charismatic leaders such as John Wimber and others. A misunderstanding or distortion of kingdom theology has influenced or led to many different variations and movements such as the Latter Rain Movement. The charismatic leaders of these groups do not see the distinction between the two ages or how the Kingdom of God is manifested differently now than it will be after Christ's return. This leads to many outlandish and often unbiblical claims concerning miracles, a Christian's ability to live totally free from sickness and disease, and all types of other errors.

Taking the biblical concept of kingdom theology to unbiblical extremes, some of these leaders began to make claims that the miracles that modern day “prophets and apostles” were performing were greater than anything done by the original apostles. This erroneous teaching has spawned a whole movement of unbiblical and sometimes heretical teachings. The teaching also became popular among “Word of Faith” teachers and spawned related but heretical views such as the Kingdom Now Theology and Dominion Theology.

The basic premise of the kingdom theology movement is that the Kingdom of God is in effect now, and certainly that is a true statement. God is reigning and His Kingdom is in place as it always has been. God is the sovereign ruler over all things and we know from Scripture that Jesus Christ is “at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56) and that He is “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). Where some of the proponents of the more extreme kingdom theology movements begin to go wrong is that they believe and teach that all the Old and New Testament promises and descriptions of the Kingdom of God directly apply to Christians today. Therefore they teach that salvation also brings with it total and complete healing of all diseases and problems. Then when that worldview does not match with reality they make the healing dependent on man's faith and not God's power or reign.

Another teaching that is somewhat common among those that take Kingdom Now theology beyond what the Bible teaches is that the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ has restored the earth to what it was before the fall and that man's rule and reign over the earth now is the same as it was for Adam and Eve before they sinned. What those who embrace this type of extreme theology fail to recognize is the “now but not yet” aspect of God's Kingdom. As John Frame writes, “We live in tension between this age and the age to come. In Christ, the age to come has already arrived, but the present age, dominated by sin, will not expire until He returns.” While many kingdom promises do apply to Christians today, many still await a future and more complete fulfillment after Christ's Second Coming. Where some who teach kingdom theology begin to get off base biblically is that they try to appropriate and apply all promises and verses that pertain to the kingdom of God to Christians today and fail to see the future, fuller fulfillment that is to come.

Kingdom Now or Dominion Theology teachers try to apply Old Testament verses to Christians today in a way that cannot be done through sound exegesis of the passages. Like most false teachers, they selectively quote from Scripture and take verses out of their
context to make application that is not supported from the text. Extreme Kingdom Now theology has many problems. First of all it diminishes the need for the return of Christ and what the Bible teaches that He will accomplish when He comes again. After all, if the full Kingdom of God is available and in effect for Christians today, why does Christ need to return at all? Second is that Kingdom Now theology exalts man and makes God dependent on man and his faith in order for God to accomplish His will. God’s rule is diminished and His sovereignty is attacked by many Kingdom Now teachers. Man controls his own destiny through his words and the power of his faith.

Starting with the false teaching that God “lost control” of the earth when Adam and Eve sinned, extreme adherents to kingdom theology believe that God has been looking for a “covenant people” who will take control of the earth back from Satan. Through the power of their faith and by following “last days apostles and prophets,” the church will win back dominion over the kingdoms of this world. These kingdoms extend to all areas of life including sickness, disease and financial problems. They also include such things as education, government, science, etc. Those who embrace this teaching are looking forward to the time when they, as God’s covenant people, take dominion over every aspect of the world ruling and reigning for God. They believe this will be achieved as believers use supernatural gifts given by the Holy Spirit. This particular type of kingdom theology has given rise to many well-known false prophets who have made all kinds of wild claims and prophecies only to be proven wrong time and time again.

Again it is important to recognize that kingdom theology, when correctly understood, is certainly within the realm of evangelical Christianity and those who teach it and embrace it can have sound biblical reasons for doing so. The danger, like many doctrines or theological movements, comes from those who distort the doctrine or take the theological construct to unbiblical places. Proponents and teachers of kingdom theology can run the gamut from being good sound biblical teachers to those who are misguided but not totally unbiblical, all the way to outright heresy. So one should be very careful to avoid broad-brushing the entire movement and instead judge each teacher or church by comparing what they are teaching to Scripture.

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