

Kingdom of god

[Religion](#), [Christianity](#)



“ The Kingdom of God is basically the rule of God. It is God’s reign, the divine sovereignty in action. God’s reign, however, is manifested in several realms and the Gospels speak of entering into the Kingdom of God both today and tomorrow.

God’s reign manifests itself both in the future and in the present and thereby creates both a future realm and a present realm in which man may experience the blessings of His reign” (24). The Gospel of the Kingdom by George Eldon Ladd explains what the Kingdom of God means and is.

There are two parts to this kingdom; the present and the future. Each chapter has a specific point about the Kingdom of God that is key to the understand of the full meaning of the phrase. The First chapter is an in depth definition of kingdom of God. According to Ladd the kingdom of God means His kingship, His rule and His authority. (pg 21) In relation to time it was the past and will be the future. There are three different meanings of the Kingdom of God and this is called the threefold effect.

This three meanings of Kingdom of God are: God's reign, a realm that we may enter under His reign, and a future realm that way only may enter once Jesus returns. Another confusion perhaps on the meaning of the phrase kingdom of God is when people or even the bible says to seek the kingdom of God.

What does this mean? It means that we are seeking God's righteousness, His rule or authority in our life. The second chapter is about the future aspect of the Kingdom of God. The fullness of the kingdom of God can't be comprehended until Christ comes because only He can bring it.

This age to come is this idea that we await and prepare for the second coming of Jesus. In this context, today's society is considered “ this age” where evil is still present against God's will. In the second chapter of Ephesians, “ this age” is described as walking in a way that displeases God. In second Corinthians, Satan is considered the “ god of this age.” This is because so much evil and sinfulness is prevalent in today's society.

The third chapter is about the present Kingdom of God. We are promised the fullness of the kingdom of God when Jesus comes again but that doesn't mean that we can't enjoy His kingdom now. God has already accomplished the first stage of His redemptive work. While Satan is the god of this age, his power has been broken by the knowledge and acknowledgment of God's rule and work. The resurrection of Jesus has already begun.

The fourth chapter is about the mystery of the kingdom of God. A mystery in scripture is different than how we perceive it in today's culture. In the bible it means something that has been kept secret through times eternal but now is disclosed (pg. 52) This mystery of the kingdom of God is not shared in the Old testament but is disclosed in the ministry of Jesus.

Ladd describes the mystery of the Kingdom as a “ divine purpose, hidden in the counsels of God for long ages but finally disclosed in a new revelation of God's redemptive work” (52). What, then, is the mystery of the Kingdom? Ladd responds, “ that the Kingdom of God has come among men and yet men can reject it” (56). The fifth chapter is about the life of the kingdom of God. Ladd says we should ask questions like the following to grasp the life of

the kingdom of God; “ Has the realization gripped you that the very life of heaven itself dwells within you here and now? (78).

To enter the life of the kingdom of God we must be reborn and accept Jesus as our savior. Jesus is working in our lives and shaping us to be more like Him. One day the Spirit of God will transform our bodies but right now He is working in us and is dwelling in each of His children. The best is yet to come but the future has already begun. The sixth chapter is about the righteousness of the kingdom of God.

The importance of this kingdom righteousness is found in Matthew 5: 20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.” The righteousness which God requires is the righteousness of God’s Kingdom which God imparts as He comes to rule within our lives” (79). Ladd uses this verse to explain this particular righteousness of God's kingdom.

The Pharisees and scribes wanted an answer to every question about what is right and what is wrong. But if you are living in terms of law and must have dictum from God's law that you may know when you are within the will of God. Simply, you must and should know what is right and what is wrong. The answer of what is greater righteousness of the kingdom can be found in particular illustrations that Jesus gives us that ultimately embodies principles and “ laws.”

The law of anger, law of purity, law of honesty and the law of love are some of the laws that are greater righteousness if we follow them and understand them in the kingdom of God. We are righteous by our experience of God's

rule and reign in our lives. The last chapter Ladd connects the life of the Kingdom to the demand of the Kingdom which is denial of self. He makes an important nuance, “ Self-denial is self-centered; denial of self is Christ-centered.

Denial of self means death, nothing less” (104). This distinction is crucial. The cross is considered an instrument of death. This is not saying that every Christian must suffer a physical death but we must be ready to die. We must be cross bearers and must be ready to die with and for Christ. The demand of the kingdom is to repent, receive the good news and surrender to its rule even through death.

After reading and summarizing the first seven chapters; there is one particular argument in Ladd's book that I do not completely argue with and on some level don't understand as well. The argument that I feel is wrong is Ladd's statement that Satan is the god of this age which is also stated in the bible. I understand why Ladd might think this because it is true that today's world is filled with such sinfulness and evil. Satan is prominent in this age; his power is strong and tempting.

Even though I acknowledge the presence of such evilness that exists in this world in present day; I just don't think it is right to say he is the god of this age. It makes sense that this isn't a dualism between God and Satan but God has permitted Satan to wield such power which does result in a limited ethical dualism. But with this being said by Ladd I would think that this statement only makes my point more understandable than his.

It is evident that God is mighty and “permits” Satan to wield this power but than wouldn't God still be considered the god of this age? His power and bountifulness is so much more than Satan's. In second Corinthians the discovery of manifestation of satanic influence appears. So in this case, according to 2nd Corinthians 4: 4, “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

But doesn't this conflict with God's sovereign selection? Can it be both God's sovereign selection and the blinding of “god of this age?” The doctrine of selection is one of the easiest doctrines to understand because it states that God took initiative and chose us. It is nothing we do to deserve God's grace he just chooses us because He can. So if God chooses us and we become a part of the kingdom of God; does this mean that “the god of this age” was unsuccessful blinding us of the good news?

Or that God didn't choose someone so the blinding of “the god of this age” occurs and is successful? God allowed Satan to ruin Job's life but Job still cried out in praise of the Lord even though he didn't fully comprehend the situation at hand. In this narrative, Satan tempts Job to curse God and be angered by the loss of his children and possessions and later on the appearances of boils. Job was faithful to God until he curses the day he was born near the end of the book.

So even though Satan tempted Job, he failed at blinding him for the glory of God. Just the fact alone that Satan came to God saying that he thought if God took away all his possessions that Job wouldn't be grateful, praise or worship God; shows the authority of God. God allows Satan to test Job. This

shows Gods upper-hand which I think agrees with my point. Satan shouldn't be called a god and he isn't the god of this age.

He may be prevalent and blind the unbelievers but the God's sovereignty and his power and love should be the center of this world. I think by calling Satan “ the god of this age,” allows to much focus on him and acknowledgment of his power which God allows him to have. By the grace of God we are saved from our sins so really Satan's power and temptations can cause us to drift away from God's rule but ultimately we are saved by Jesus' death. This is true love and power.

God is and should be the god of this age and for eternity because he made all things and all things were made for him. Satan is not a creator but more so an enabler of temptations. He does not contribute to any beauty of this world but only to the evilness which God allows because it makes us see His grace on us. This books has increased my knowledge about the Kingdom of God.

There are some things that I thought were quite repetitive but then there were things in the book that I found were helpful in explanation and very important to adopt in my own life. Overall, this book has helped my growth as a Christian and in my knowledge about the kingdom of God. I thought one thing that was annoying about Ladd's writing was his repetitiveness.

He would take topics he talked about in early chapters and go on about them in the current chapter. I did appreciate how he ties each thought and topic together, but sometimes I thought there could have been more in depth focus on the topic at hand rather than going back forth to earlier arguments.

Even though I didn't have much appreciation for Ladd's repetitiveness I did gain some useful information. Chapter three, The Kingdom is Today and chapter seven, The Righteousness of the Kingdom have influenced my thinking the most. I guess I don't acknowledge that the Kingdom of God is at work by the works of God within myself and my fellow brothers and sisters. Also, that the future has begun.

The kingdom of God is here! But won't be fulfilled until the second coming of Jesus. Chapter seven made me realize that I need to be more of a cross bearer. I don't think I am at the level in my faith where I could 100 % say that I would die for Christ. I know that is selfish and I have been working on that level of love but there isn't anyone who could do entirely what Christ did for us.

As believers we should be able to lay down our lives for Christ and what the Kingdom of God stands for. When I hear about the persecution of Christians from around the world, it makes me zealous. I wish I could have that kind of faith; one that is so strong and not scared of death with and for Christ. But I know that I can pray that God continues to work in my heart and that someday I will have unselfish love given to me by God.

Overall I thought this book was well written. It gives clarity to the meaning of Kingdom of God and what it means to live in this kingdom. It is at work now in the inward dwelling of Christ in believers and will be completely fulfilled when Jesus comes again. The heavens will be established on earth and the rule of God will be even more instilled with his judgment. There are different meanings to the kingdom of God which is seen in particular verses in the

Bible. But understanding what consists of this kingdom and what it means to live in this kingdom of God is crucial for us to understand in being Christians.