

WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Kingdom

STATEMENT OF FAITH ON ETERNITY

We believe that God, in his own time and his own way, will bring this present world to the appropriate end and usher in the fullness of his kingdom. We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly, the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all humanity. Those who die in their sins without Christ spend eternity in Hell, while those who die with their sins forgiven through Christ spend eternity with him in Heaven.

ARTICLE 9

VII. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S GENERAL REIGN

- God originally intended creation to be the realm of his kingly authority, his kingdom.
- God created us to know him and live for him, to be a holy people in a good place serving a perfect God. This was why he placed our first parents in a garden, to steward this world for his glory, to live in and extend his presence throughout the universe.

THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S GENERAL REIGN

- God has always been the one who reigns over his creation and his people. He is exalted above all else, he alone rules in majestic splendor, he gives directions to his people in his law on how to live for him and with each other.
- God continues to rule over all of creation. His sovereignty extends to all the earth. He is behind the rise and fall of nations. He is the source of all that is good and just.

THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S GENERAL REIGN

- Psalm 47 - O clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy. For the LORD Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth. He subdues peoples under us And nations under our feet. He chooses our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. God has ascended with a shout, The LORD, with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm. God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne. The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted.

THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S GENERAL REIGN

- Israel was to be a kingdom of priests, mediating the kingdom to the whole earth
- Exodus 19:4-6 – “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S GENERAL REIGN

- . This is why the original intention was for God's Old Testament people Israel to have no earthly king, because God is King, and we are the subjects who live for and extend the kingdom.

THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S GENERAL REIGN

- Even as God permitted his people Israel to have kings (ultimately because they wanted to be like the other nations around them, implicitly rejecting God as their one true king), God in his grace promises his people that he will someday send them a perfect king, the Messiah, whose reign would usher in the promised eternal kingdom of God.

THE KINGDOM IS GOD'S GENERAL REIGN

- Isaiah 9:6-7 - For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- Jesus is the fulfillment of God's plan for us
- Mark 1:1-3 - "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'"

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- Mark 1:14-15 – Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”
- When Jesus says the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand he says that God’s rule and reign over his universe is at hand, is right here. God’s future, God’s purpose, is no longer a far-away distant, wishful hope, it is here. It has broken into the present in Jesus Christ.

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- The kingdom of God refers to the reign of God, and specifically that time when the Messiah will reign as God over this earth.
- Jesus is now saying, “that’s me, that kingdom is found in me.” He is the promised Messiah, when he came, the kingdom of God came near in him. We can now enter the kingdom of God because of Jesus.

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- The rest of the New Testament fills out this understanding of the kingdom of God for us.
- The moment we believe in Jesus we are transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his beloved Son. We enter the kingdom through repentance and belief.

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- . The kingdom isn't here in its fullness yet, but we are already citizens of the coming kingdom already.
- . As a church we are a kingdom outpost, meant to be a preview of the kingdom, to live out the values of the kingdom and share the good news of the kingdom.

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- . So while Jesus is Lord of all, the kingdom is recognized and experienced right now by all who know him, who follow him. The kingdom is bound up with the church. Jesus is the head, the king, of the church right now.

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- Ephesians 1:20-22 - Which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

THE KINGDOM IS PRESENT IN JESUS CHRIST

- Col 1:18 - He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

- However, the kingdom is not here in its fullness yet, there is coming a time when Christ returns in glory and his rule and reign will be instituted everywhere and recognized by everyone.

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

- 1 Corinthians 15:25-28 - For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

- Matthew 26:64 - Jesus said to him, “You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN.”

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

- . Acts 1:11 - They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

- Phil 2:9-11 - For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

- Rev 5:13 - And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

Rev 19:11-16 - And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

THE KINGDOM IS COMING

So we live for the kingdom now as we await the kingdom to come, displaying out confidence that the King is coming, as ultimately the kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the full consummation of his purposes.