*The Kingdom of God*

By Stephen McDowell

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**By Stephen McDowell**

## Prologue

The Kingdom of God is a broad concept that encompasses the King (Christ) and all of God’s work in creation and history; therefore, only a brief overview can be given here. The Kingdom comes first within man, but flows out and touches all things. This booklet will center in on the Kingdom’s external impact and manifestation in the earth, rather than its effect on individual lives. The Kingdom comes as we are obedient to the commands of Christ to disciple the nations, to fulfill the Cultural Mandate, and to accomplish our divine vocation or work.

# What is the Kingdom of God?

Jesus taught us to pray: “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” What does it mean for His Kingdom to come? What is His Kingdom? What does His Kingdom look like? Is it just in the eternal hereafter?

Jesus began His ministry proclaiming “the Kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). The phrase, “the kingdom of God” or “the kingdom of heaven” occurs about 170 times in the Gospels (ASV, less in KJV); in addition, “thy kingdom” and “the kingdom” are used multiple times. Jesus clearly built His ministry around the proclamation of the Kingdom. He reveals that **the center of God’s purpose is not our salvation, but His Kingdom**. But again, how are we to view His Kingdom?

 How has the Kingdom been understood? Origen stated that Jesus was Himself the Kingdom. Some have seen it to refer to the proper spiritual relationship with God. Some have identified it with the visible Church. Others have equated it with a reformed social order. Some said that Jesus referred to an expected apocalyptic intervention by God. Some, especially in more recent times, have seen it as entirely future.[[1]](#endnote-1)

Jesus never specifically defined the Kingdom; so what would it have meant in His culture at that time? Kingdom meant “reign” or “sovereignty,” and could be used in three different ways:[[2]](#endnote-2) 1) The eternal and invisible reign of God – “Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endures throughout all generations” (Psalm 145: 13); 2) The realization of God’s reign in people or groups that accept His sovereignty; 3) The eschatological kingdom at the end of history or at a new dispensation in history (that is, Jesus ushered in the kingdom with His incarnation).[[3]](#endnote-3)

In some sense Jesus referred to each of these when He spoke of the Kingdom, though most often He probably had the third point in mind. Regarding this third point, some people argue He was proclaiming the imminent arrival of the eschatological Kingdom (Mark 9:1; 13:30; Matthew 6:10; Luke 11:2). Others say that Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom to have arrived already in his own ministry and person (Matthew 12:28; Luke 11:20; 10:23 ff.; Matthew 13:16 ff).[[4]](#endnote-4) It appears both are true: the Kingdom had come and the Kingdom was still yet to come. Today we could say that the Kingdom came with Christ, that it expanded over time, the Kingdom is here now, and the Kingdom is coming in the future – it was, and is, and is to come.

The Kingdom came to fallen earth with Christ. He birthed the Kingdom within redeemed man and told us to manifest the Kingdom in our lives and within the nations. His Kingdom is to be advanced through living, and teaching, and demonstrating the King. From the time Christ set foot in the earth, there has been no end to the increase of His Kingdom (Luke 1:33).

Providential history shows us that the Kingdom has been advancing in the past two millennia; that is, it has been coming.[[5]](#endnote-5) But it will never completely come since man is fallen and sinful. There will be a culmination of His Kingdom. We have that to look forward to. But until then our task is to advance His Kingdom. This is the center of God’s purpose for mankind.

## What is the relationship of the church and the Kingdom?

George Ladd summarizes well the relationship of the church and the Kingdom:

The Kingdom is primarily the dynamic reign or kingly rule of God, and derivatively, the sphere in which the rule is experienced. In biblical idiom, the Kingdom is not identified with its subjects. They are the people of God’s rule who enter it, live under it, and are governed by it. The church is the community of the Kingdom but never the Kingdom itself. Jesus’ disciples belong to the Kingdom as the Kingdom belongs to them; but they are not the Kingdom. The Kingdom is the rule of God; the church is a society of men.[[6]](#endnote-6)

Ladd gives five specific aspects of the relationship between the Kingdom and the church:

1. The church (whether as an institution or all believers) is not the Kingdom (Jesus and the disciples preached that the Kingdom was near, not the church).
2. The Kingdom creates the church.
3. The church witnesses to the Kingdom (the gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole earth – Matthew 24:14).
4. The church is the instrument of the Kingdom (demonstrating the Kingdom through healing and casting out demons, but also through advancing His government, order, and rule in all spheres of life).
5. The church is the custodian of the Kingdom. (The church has been given the keys to the Kingdom, Matthew 16:19. This is true both for the institution and believers operating in the Biblical calling to take dominion and fulfill the Cultural Mandate.)[[7]](#endnote-7)

## The Kingdom not only encompasses the church but all things.

The Kingdom of God is planted in redeemed man. As the redeemed, we are to work as vice-regents of the King to see His kingdom come to earth as it is in heaven – implanted in other people, but also changing families, businesses, communities, and nations. We will know and experience some measure of the Kingdom of God while on the earth. When He returns, His Kingdom reign will extend over all His creation, but in the meantime, His rule has been expanding over all creation. Our mission is to see His Kingdom come to earth. This has occurred in the past 2000 years. There has been a progressive advancement of His Kingdom. It will continue to advance, until the final consummation.

# The King of the Kingdom

Every kingdom has a king. The nature of Christ the King reveals something of the nature of His Kingdom. The Scriptures reveal much about the Kingship of Jesus:

* “Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Timothy 6:14-15).
* “For the kingdom is the Lord’s: and He is the governor among the nations” (Psalm 22:28).
* “For the Lord most high is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. . . . For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness” (Psalm 47:2-3, 7-8).
* “For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king: He will save us” (Isaiah 33:22).
* “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth” (Zechariah 14:9).
* Christ is the Word and God. All things were made by Him (John 1:1-3).
* “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18).
* “Jesus is Lord” is proclaimed throughout New Testament (Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 12:3).
* He is above all power; all things are put under His feet (Ephesians 1:20-23).
* “Of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:33).
* Isaiah 9:6-7 speaks of the Messiah: “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.” The government and determination of all things is on Christ’s shoulders, and His government and Kingdom shall prevail and shall cover the earth.
* Zechariah prophesied: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9).
* He is “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:16).
* **He is reigning NOW –** 1 Corinthians 15:25 states, “He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet.”

## What does this mean?

Some of the implications of the Kingship of Christ include:

1. He is in charge of history, fulfilling His plans and purposes.[[8]](#endnote-8)

Since God is King of all creation, His reign is at all times universal. Every event in history is the manifestation of His plan, purpose, justice, punishment, or blessing. “The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof” (1 Corinthians 10:26). God’s government, care, and concern extend to the very sparrows (Matthew 10:29-31). Everything has a place in His plan and care although we who are redeemed by Him “are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31).

He providentially moves to accomplish His will, not only for men but also for nations: “He rules over the nations” (Psalm 22:28); “He makes the nations great, then destroys them; He enlarges the nations, then leads them away” (Job 12:23); “It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings” (Daniel 2:21). “The God who made the world . . . gives to all life and breath and all things; and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God” (Acts 17:24-27).

2. He is in charge of our lives and demands obedience in all things, especially that we fulfill His purposes in the earth.

Psalm 8:6 says: “Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet.” Every area of life, and every aspect of creation, is totally under Christ.

3. Understanding and living out the implications of the Kingship and Lordship of Christ brings a powerful impact in a nation.

There are numerous examples in history where Kingdom men and women have brought complete transformation to nations – consider, for example, Patrick in Ireland in the 5th Century and Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, and other Protestant reformers of the 16th Century. They were following the example of how the early church transformed the Roman Empire. When the early Christians proclaimed “Jesus is Lord” they were declaring to Caesar that his power was limited, that he was not the ultimate authority in the earth. Seeing the threat this posed to his rule, he began to persecute and kill myriads of Christians. But over time the Gospel of the Kingdom, which supernaturally transformed men, also became the chief force in the collapse of the pagan Roman Empire. A Christian civilization (in some sense) would gradually rise upon the ruins of Rome.[[9]](#endnote-9)

4. Since God is the universal King, all creation is under His law.

Kingship and law are inseparable. A king rules by means of his law, and the law of a king is the expression of his will, purpose, and plan for his realm. Isaiah declares of the Messiah: “He will bring forth justice to the nations” (Isaiah 42:1-4). His justice comes as His law is applied.

It is not only redeemed men who are to live under His law, but all men are to live in accordance with His commands. “**Man** shall not live on bread alone but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3). God, as Creator and supreme ruler of all the universe, demands that all men and all creation live in accordance to His truth expressed in His Law-Word.

5. Knowing that the great King has redeemed us and called us and supports us should give us great confidence in being ambassadors for Him – in being “a light to the nations.”

# Defining the Kingdom of God

Early in my Christian life I had a spiritual or mystical view of the Kingdom of God. It was something we could look forward to seeing in the eternal hereafter. And if we experienced it here on earth, it would be something like the cloud that filled the tabernacle in the wilderness. It is true, as mentioned above, that the coming of the Kingdom in fullness will take place in the future, and God can certainly reveal Himself today in a cloud as in times past, if He so chooses. However, the kingdom of God is a very real, concrete thing that we can experience everyday in every aspect of life. Simply stated, the Kingdom of God is the government of God, where government means direction, regulation, control, and restraint.

1. The Kingdom of God is the government or rule of God.

The Greek word for Kingdom is *basileia* which denotes sovereignty, royal power, dominion. W.E. Vine states, “The Kingdom of God is the sphere of God’s rule, Psalm 22:28; 145:13; Daniel 4:25.”[[10]](#endnote-10) It is the rule of the eternal sovereign over all His creation (Psalm 103:19; Daniel 4:3). Where the King is, there is the Kingdom of God. First, the Kingdom is in the heart of the believer. When Christ comes into the heart of man, His Kingdom comes. To the degree that He rules in your life is the degree to which His Kingdom comes into your life.

The Kingdom of God is the rule of God, the order of God, the standard of God. The Kingdom is the total rule of God in every area of life and thought in terms of His Law-Word. Every king has a law by which he rules. God cannot rule, or establish His Kingdom, without a law (His righteousness).

The Kingdom of God comes to your life to the degree that His rule comes to your life. This is also true within the society at large. The Kingdom of God comes to a nation to the degree that the rule of God comes to that nation, being reflected in its laws, institutions, moral standards, and all spheres of life. Alfred Edersheim observed:

In fact, an analysis of 119 passages in the New Testament where the expression “Kingdom” occurs, shows that it means *the rule of God*; which was *manifested in and through Christ*; is *apparent in “the Church”*; *gradually develops amidst hindrances*; is *triumphant at the second coming of Christ* . . . and, finally, *perfected in the world to come*. Thus viewed, the announcement of John of the near Advent of this Kingdom had deepest meaning, although as so often in the case of prophetism, the stages intervening between the Advent of the Christ and the triumph of that Kingdom seem to have been hidden from the preacher. He came to call Israel to submit to the Reign of God, about to be manifested in Christ.[[11]](#endnote-11)

The Kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:20-21). It begins in the heart of man when we are regenerated, and His rule begins in us. Jesus said the Kingdom was here when He healed the sick, cast out demons, and raised the dead. This shows His rule over sickness, disease, demonic forces, and death. He rules over all dominions, seen and unseen. The Bible teaches that the Kingdom came, the Kingdom is here now, and the Kingdom is coming. While the Kingdom begins in the heart of man, it does not stop here. His rule is over all.

## Biblical Conception of Society

If the Kingdom of God is the rule of God, how does God rule? He rules by His Spirit-endowed Word, proclaimed and applied internally in the heart of man, and through His divine institutions of family, church, and state.

The Kingdom of God existed in Eden. God ruled. His law was the standard for Adam and Eve’s life, and at first they obeyed it. God ordained the family from the beginning (Genesis 1-2), then civil government (Genesis 9:6), and later the church. They were instruments of the King for His Kingdom. All were affected by the Fall, but His intent is still for them to be instruments of the Kingdom. His rule is to be mediated in some sense through each of these divine institutions. He has chosen to exercise His government through them. They can certainly be corrupt, but if so, we are to influence these governmental spheres so that they rule in accordance with the King. To the degree that we are successful, is the degree to which His kingdom will be manifested in the earth.[[12]](#endnote-12)

**Biblical Conception of Society**

**One Authority**



**Many**

**Jurisdictions**

## The Great Commission

After Christ’s resurrection, He gave the church a commission (Matthew 28:18-20). This Great Commission includes the evangelistic mandate to transform men, and the Cultural Mandate to transform nations. (The Cultural Mandate refers to the Creation Commission of Genesis 1 and 2, where God told man to be fruitful and multiply, subdue, rule and take dominion over the earth and all that God created and placed in and on the earth for man’s benefit. Culture flows out of man acting in obedience to God’s plan for him in the earth.) As we go and fulfill the Great Commission, we are in essence extending the Kingdom of God in the earth. His Kingdom encompasses all things. We are to see His Kingdom come to earth as it is in heaven.[[13]](#endnote-13)

**The Great Commission**

(Matt. 28:18-20)

**CREATOR REDEEMER**

Creation Commission Redemption Commission

Cultural Mandate Evangelistic Mandate

(Gen. 1:26-28) (2 Cor. 5:17-19)

**Transform Transform**

**Society Men**

 (Nations)

1. Paul’s definition of the Kingdom of God: “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17).

Paul’s definition of the Kingdom of God provides further useful understanding of how we should view God’s Kingdom as it not only applies to our personal lives but also as it impacts the earth. “The Kingdom of God is … righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Righteousness, peace, and joy have meaning and significance both internally and externally. The Kingdom of God is first within man’s heart, then his mind, and then affects his actions in all spheres of life.

# Righteousness

Many people see this passage of Scripture as only having personal application, thinking the Kingdom of God as related to this world is a personal matter, and that the rule of God in the Kingdom of God is only to come in the eternal hereafter. It is certainly true that God’s Kingdom as manifested in the earth begins within the heart of man, and that He eternally rules in His heavenly Kingdom, but His Kingdom is much more.

**Every kingdom has a king, and every king a law by which he rules.** Christ rules by the Law-Word of God. God rules His people by internally planting His Law in our hearts and empowering us by the Holy Spirit to obey. He does not rule from the top-down, or from the outside-in. His Law has application far beyond personal affairs; it speaks to all of life.

The righteousness of God includes our right standing before God, the King. We have the righteousness of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:22). It is through appropriating His righteousness that we become citizens of the Kingdom of God. Our righteousness is not man-made, but is in conformity to God’s Law (Matthew 5:20). As members of the Kingdom where Christ is King, we look to His righteous standard (Word) to be the foundation of our lives. However, His Kingdom is over all and encompasses all, and His Law is to be the standard for all things and all men (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3). His Word (His Law, His righteousness) is to be the blueprint upon which we build our lives and societies (including law, education, economics, and government). It is to be our personal and civil standard.

This component of the Kingdom – righteousness – entails establishing His Law in our heart and in society. Righteousness includes His justice, for righteousness and justice go together; it includes His government (management, direction, control); it includes His rule and authority, His standard for what is right and true. Understanding His righteousness requires us to recognize His sovereignty over all men and creation.

## His righteous standard (His Word) is to be the source of law of society.

Who is the source of law of a society? This is a fundamental question each society should be asking, but none are. This is fundamental because the source of the law of a society is the god of that society. Laws express the working religion of the state and its people. Laws express the will of the sovereign. Law is the word and will of a sovereign.

God’s law is His righteous standard. For His righteousness (His Kingdom) to come, a nation must have His laws. Kingdom has to do with sovereignty, and sovereignty is expressed by obedience to a king and his standard of how to live.

Most nations today look to man as the source of law. Thus, man is his own god. Statism is the general term we could use to describe the belief that man is the ultimate authority in the earth. God forbids man being a law unto himself, where “every man [is] doing whatever is right in his own eyes” (Deuteronomy 12:8). Statism has existed since the Fall of man. It was dramatically displayed at Babel and strongly opposed by God (Genesis 11). His Kingdom wars against statism and all its forms.

The Kingdom of God comes to the extent that His government (rule, direction, regulation, control) comes. The fruit of the coming of the Kingdom of God by obedience to the King (and His law) is great blessing, to individuals and nations.

## Blueprint of God’s Law

A blueprint is a set of plans detailing action to build. The Bible is a blueprint for all of life, personal and civil. The Bible is essential for discipling nations and for advancing the Kingdom. This is why God gave His Law to Israel after He delivered them from bondage in Egypt and before He led them into the Promised Land to start a new nation. Israel went from a nation of slaves to become a great nation, so great that Israel was known throughout the world. The Queen of Sheba came to see Israel for she had heard of her greatness.

God gave Israel two things that made her great and different than all the other nations. He gave them **His Law** and **His presence** (Deuteronomy 4:5-8). Great nations will have God’s presence and God’s Law-Word. These are essential for the Kingdom to come on earth. God’s Law was a template or blueprint to build a nation. It worked. Jesus said it is still a template (Matthew 5:17-19); it is for establishing and discipling a nation. These laws addressed all of life: matters of worship, but also, familial, civil, economic, and social affairs.

God’s standards for living as revealed in His Word are not just for redeemed men but are for all men. God is the King over all the earth (Psalm 47:2, 7-8). Jesus is Lord of all. He is King of kings. God created individuals and established three divine institutions (family, church, state), all of which are to live according to the standards He has established in His Word. It is the duty of civil governments to take His Word as their law. Civil rulers are to be ministers of God’s justice (Romans 13). His Word is the blueprint for all mankind, and for all spheres of life.

God’s Law speaks to all of life and gives practical means for building nations.[[14]](#endnote-14) We are to see that every sphere of life reflects God’s truth. His Law is for this purpose. God’s Law transformed Israel from a nation of slaves to a great nation. His Law contains practical principles for every sphere of life. As Israel lived according to these principles, the nation grew, prospered, and became free – they were blessed. Conversely, when Israel disobeyed they went backward.

God has a heart for nations. He wants people saved, but He also wants whole nations “saved.” Nations throughout history have been changed and blessed to the degree they have applied all of His Word to all spheres of life. His Law-Word transformed Israel, but it also has transformed many other nations.

In using the Bible as a blueprint for building nations, we must remember that the New Covenant has modified the Old Covenant laws in various ways (for example, the ceremonial laws were fulfilled in Christ, and hence not applicable for us today, and the “holiness code” – those laws that set Israel apart as a unique physical nation – are not binding in the same way today).

Building your life and society upon this blueprint will produce great blessing, the fruit of the Kingdom. In fact, the Bible teaches over and over again that if we obey Him and His Word we will be blessed (Deuteronomy 5:29; Deuteronomy 28), but if we disobey we will go backward (Jeremiah 7:23-24).

His Word is not just personal. God’s Word addresses every area of life. It is for building nations. Some of those areas in which the Bible gives us instruction include:[[15]](#endnote-15)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Biblical  | Blueprint:  | Speaks | to All of | Life |  |  |
| Worship | Personal Conduct | Family | Child Raising | Value of Man | Character in Society | Societal Structure |
| Health & Sanitation | Work and Rest | Social needs & Justice | Government & Law | Economics | Business | Liberty |
| Education | Crime and Punishment | Warfare | Philosophy | Arts and Media | Science & Technology | History Literature |

# Peace

Jesus instructed us to seek first God’s Kingdom and His righteousness, and as we do, many other things (like peace, prosperity, and joy) will be added to you (Matthew 6:33). When God’s Kingdom comes – when we submit to His government and apply His righteous standard to our lives – we will lead a peaceful and blessed life. Life without the King is restless and miserable. This peace resides chiefly within our hearts and minds, and is available even under the worst conditions.

Christ, who is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), gives us peace. When the angel announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds he proclaimed, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **peace**, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14). Jesus tells us, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you” (John 14:27), and “Peace to you” (John 20:29, 21, 26).

What is this peace given to us? For one, it is the internal peace of salvation that comes from our right-standing with God. Jesus said, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). It is peace in the storms of life. Jesus calmed the sea – saying to it, “Peace, be still” – and He will also bring peace during the storms of our lives. There is peace for the righteous but no peace for the wicked (Isaiah 57:19-21). We can have peace in the daily challenges that exist in the world because of sin. Simeon could depart in peace because he had seen the Prince of Peace (Luke 2:29). We can depart in peace, and we can live in peace once we have seen and follow Him.

Biblical peace is not the absence of conflict. The response of Herod (a pagan ruler) to the Prince of Peace was the massacre of the innocents (Matthew 2:16-18). The response of fallen man/society was to crucify the Prince of Peace. Having God’s peace does not mean your life will be without challenges or hardships, but possessing His peace enables you to face every situation with confidence and great grace.

Consider the testimony of many of the Scottish Covenanters who were persecuted for their Christian faith. Three days before James Renwick was hanged, “he told a friend who kindly asked how he was, that he was very well but that he expected to be much better in a few days.” On the morning of his execution, February 17, 1688, he told his mother and young sisters: “Death is the king of terrors but not to me now, as it was some times in my hidings. . . . Would ever I have thought that the fear of suffering and of death could be so taken from me? What shall I say to it? ‘It is the doing of the Lord and marvelous in our eyes.’ I have many time counted the cost of following Christ but never thought it would be so easy.” As he was marched down the street and saw his place of execution he cried out: “Yonder is the welcome warning to my marriage; the Bridegroom is coming; I am ready, I am ready.”[[16]](#endnote-16)

The peace Christ gives us impacts our whole life, and beyond. The Hebrew word for *peace* is *shalom* (more on this below). In the Septuagint (the oldest Greek version of the Old Testament dated from the third century before Christ), *shalom* is often rendered by *soteria*, which is translated *salvation* in English. *Soteria* means complete salvation (of spirit, soul, and body). It includes restoring the inner man, healing the mind and body; it touches all of salvation. It implies peace in our family and relationships, peace to the elements, and peace to the created order. Biblical peace also includes the supernatural rest we have in Him, the rest of Hebrews chapter four.

We are to pray for kings and authorities in order that we may live a peaceful and quiet life (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Paul’s concern was not only for our personal peace but for civil and societal peace as well. Such is the fruit of the Kingdom of God manifested in the earth. Where His kingdom has come, peace has come, and has included the advance of civility. As the underlying Biblical ideas of the Protestant Reformation advanced, persecution against Christians and innocent citizens diminished. Nations embracing the Reformation ended martyrdoms, tortures, and other barbarous acts.

A perfect peace will never come to sinful man, so conflicts will remain until Christ returns, but Biblical peace has and will progress in men and nations as His Kingdom comes to earth as it is in heaven.

As was mentioned, peace is much more than the absence of conflict. It includes being blessed and happy; having full and perfect happiness. Peace includes having prosperity. The Hebrew word for peace, *shalom*, signifies prosperity, and much more. ***Shalom,*** *peace,* is the restoration of the Creation order with man acting as God’s vice-regent ruling in the earth and carrying out the Dominion Mandate.

Jeremiah told the exiled Israelites to “seek the peace [*shalom*] and prosperity of the city” of Babylon. Before this, he explained what God said they were to do in order to seek the *shalom* of the nation: “Build yourselves houses and dwell in them; plant gardens and eat the fruit of them. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not be diminished.” (Jeremiah 29:4-7, AMP)

To bring peace to our city, and to our nation, we are to fulfill the creation mandate of God to be fruitful and multiple, to fill the earth, and rule over it. We are to seek to establish God’s original creation order. Cornelius Plantinga writes that s*halom* is

the webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight. . . . *Shalom* means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight – a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. *Shalom*, in other words, is the way things ought to be.[[17]](#endnote-17)

*Shalom* is “the way things ought to be;” it is completeness, wholeness.

**There was perfect *shalom* in the original creation order**, in the Garden of Eden. This was corrupted by the Fall of man. We are commissioned to restore this order in the Cultural Mandate (given to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Israel) and in the Great Commission. This will ultimately come about at the end of all things with the establishment of the eternal city, but will progressively come about in the earth as the Gospel of the Kingdom is preached and embraced.

**Jesus (the Prince of Peace) provided the means for Biblical *shalom* to be realized.** *Shalom* is one aspect of His Kingdom (righteousness, *shalom*, joy). He demonstrated and preached the Kingdom. He first established His Kingdom within man (Acts 1:7-8), knowing that it would gradually flow out and impact all of life (family, occupation, society, government). **Jesus** is called the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), that is the **Prince of *shalom***. When the angels announced peace on earth (Luke 2:14), they were announcing that through Christ, *shalom* (the way things were created to be) was coming to the earth. The restoration of all things was at hand. He made the way for the earth to be restored to God’s original plan, and more.

When Christ was riding into Jerusalem to fulfill His redemptive work, the people declared the prophetic Scripture: “blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; **Peace in heaven and glory in the highest**!” (Luke 19:38; Ps. 118:26). God’s restored order for the *cosmos* – both heaven and earth – was being initiated. The King was re-establishing His creation order.

The Christian faith is the means by which *shalom* is being worked out in history. And our work (calling, vocation) is the means by which *shalom* is gradually and progressively occurring.[[18]](#endnote-18) We are building for the future. We are to occupy until He comes. Our calling is to build a society to the glory of God, which includes converting individuals, but also much more.

His Kingdom came with Christ, but also has been coming progressively in the past 2000 years, and will continue to come in the future. His Kingdom has come in the past, is coming now, and will come in the future. **His Kingdom was, is, and will be**. At the end, with the coming of the New Jerusalem – the eternal city of God – things will have perfect *shalom*.

## Replace *Two Chapter Gospel* with *Four Chapter Gospel*

Much of the church has preached a truncated Gospel in the past century or so. It has failed to understand that the Kingdom of God encompasses all things, and that our mission in the earth is to advance His Kingdom (government) in all spheres of life. These pietistic Christians have embraced what some have called the “Two Chapter Gospel.”[[19]](#endnote-19)

The “Two Chapter Gospel” teaches that man is fallen and sinful (Chapter 1 – Fall) and in need of a Savior. Christ came to earth to redeem man, to restore his relationship to God (Chapter 2 – Redemption), so that he may live with Him for all eternity in the consummation at the end of the age. The salvation of man is of foremost importance, and the work of the church is to see as many people saved as possible before we die or Christ returns. In this view the Kingdom of God is about man’s salvation and life in the Kingdom that is to come.

These two chapters (Fall and Redemption) are certainly true and important, but is this the whole Gospel story? Is this the Gospel of the Kingdom that Christ proclaimed? What is the Gospel? What did Christ do for us through His coming to earth? Herman Bavinck summarizes it well: “God the Father has reconciled his created but fallen world through the death of His Son, and renews it into a Kingdom of God by his Spirit.”[[20]](#endnote-20)

The “Four Chapter Gospel,” which is what the church generally believed and preached for 18 centuries, recognizes God’s created order and purpose before the Fall as well as the broad redemptive work of Christ. The four chapters are:

1. **Creation** – God created the world very good. He created man in His image and made him vice-regent over the earth. He gave him the Creation Commission or Cultural Mandate, which required him to work to take the resources in the earth and make it a better place (Genesis 1:26 – 28; 2:15).
2. **Fall** – man disobeyed God, sin entered the world, and everything was negatively affected (Genesis 3:6-19; 6:5, 11). Man lost the capacity to properly fulfill the Cultural Mandate.
3. **Redemption** – Christ came into the world to restore all that sin had affected, and sin affected man and all the created order. Redemption is as broad as the sweep of sin. (Genesis 12 through Revelation 22 shows the outworking of God’s plan of redemption.) This redemption is for man, but it is also for all of God’s creation. God loves His created order, His *kosmos* (world). In fact, God so loved His created order (world, Greek - *kosmos*) that He sent His only Son to redeem and restore it (John 3:16). All the creation groans for its restoration (Romans 8:19-22).
4. **Restoration** – Personal conversion is important, but it is only the beginning. It is how we enter into the Kingdom of God, but our purpose is not just to enter the Kingdom; it is to extend the Kingdom of God. The Bible teaches that matter/creation/the earth is good, and God wants to restore the creation order that was negatively impacted by the Fall. Work is a primary means of doing this. This restoration does not mean we are to go back and live in the original primitive state of nature, but we are to utilize the talents and skills God has given us and take His good creation and see that it advances; that is, we are to seek to fulfill the cultural or Dominion Mandate.

The end of redemptive history is seen with the coming down from heaven of the “new Jerusalem” (Revelation 3:12), the city of God. When the new city comes, the “tree of life” (Revelation 22:12), the same tree of life in the garden, is now in the midst of a developed city. The cultural mandate has been fulfilled. This is the **consummation**.

**We are redeemed in order to restore God’s original creation order and mandate.** We are not merely redeemed to get to heaven, but to bring heaven to earth. **God wants the restoration of all things** (Acts 3:21). The Father’s pleasure and purpose through the cross was “to reconcile all things to Himself” (Colossians 1:20). The creation itself will be set free through Christ’s redeeming work (Romans 8:19-22). We are called to restore all things, to extend His Kingdom, which is over all. Abraham Kuyper declared there is not one inch of creation where God does not say, “Mine.”

Believing a Four Chapter Gospel affected how the Puritans evangelized the lost in the founding of America. They understood it was not enough to just send a “talking head” to tell the Native Americans that they were sinners in need of a personal savior who would become their “fire insurance” and give them eternal life if they believed in Him. This is the Christianity that was presented to much of Africa in the 20th Century. The Puritans sought to “propagate the Gospel” by not only teaching of Christ’s redemptive work but also of demonstrating the restorative effect of His redemptive work. They sought to set up a model community with civil liberty, order, peace, and prosperity in order to show the fruit of redemption in society and provoke the lost to desire this same thing.

The Charter of Massachusetts Bay reveals the Christian mission as the central motive of those behind colonization. In the charter, provisions were made for establishing laws, electing representatives, punishing offences, etc. “whereby our said People, Inhabitants there, may be soe religiously, peaceablie, and civilly governed, as their good Life and orderlie Conversacon, maie wynn and incite the Natives of Country, to the Knowledg and Obedience of the onlie true God and Sauior of Mankinde, and the Christian Fayth, which in our Royall Intencon, and the Adventurers free Profession, is the principall Ende of this Plantacion.”[[21]](#endnote-21)

## Biblical Doctrine of Work

A vital part of bringing God’s Kingdom to earth, of restoring all that was affected by the Fall, of establishing Biblical peace (*shalom*, the way things ought to be) is restoring the Biblical doctrine of work. After all, Jesus taught that we will occupy the earth through our occupation (Luke 19:11 ff).[[22]](#endnote-22)

One reason the Protestant Reformation had such a transformational impact upon many nations is that it revived the Biblical teaching of vocational calling, that work is holy and is to be done not only for God’s glory but also in accordance with Biblical principles, recognizing, in the words of the inventor of anesthetic surgery, Crawford W. Long, M.D., that “my profession is to me a ministry of God.”[[23]](#endnote-23)

Martin Luther helped promote a Biblical view of work, writing:

the works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going through her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone.[[24]](#endnote-24)

*Shalom* includes increasing prosperity. As the Christian faith is progressively established in a nation, by first changing men’s hearts and minds and then gradually flowing out to transform all spheres of society, the corresponding blessings of obedience to God’s Word are manifested as well. The blessings of obedience include material prosperity.[[25]](#endnote-25) Jesus taught us to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread.” This prayer has been answered most where God’s Kingdom (His righteous standard, His law, Biblical peace, Biblical doctrine of work) has been manifested the most. America’s prosperity is a product of God’s Kingdom and in particular the application of the Biblical doctrine of work.

Understanding and applying the Biblical doctrine of work is essential to fulfill the Cultural Mandate. In my book on *Building Godly Nations* I write how fulfilling this mandate requires us to: discover truth through sciences, apply truth through technology, interpret truth through humanities, implement truth through commerce and social action, transmit truth through education and arts, and preserve truth through government and law. I present many examples of how Christians have led the way in advancements in all of these areas, and in so doing have played a large part in advancing the Kingdom of God in history.

Christians today must see this is how we will fulfill our mission in the earth of working with Him as vice-regents in His ever expanding Kingdom. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end (Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 1:33). Calvin said God put us here to work in His Kingdom, and “the nature of the kingdom of Christ is that it every day grows and improves.”[[26]](#endnote-26)

# Joy

Paul wrote that “The Kingdom of God is . . . righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Joy follows the establishment of His righteousness and peace, in man and in society. Joy grows in men and the society as a whole as God’s righteousness and peace grow within men and the nation. Joy is the inevitable fruit.

God created us to enjoy Him and His good creation. Christian service is not merely fulfilling some external duty to live according to His standard, but it is loving service that flows from inward joy and peace. The first question of the Westminster Catechism asks, “What is the chief end of man?” The answer, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to **enjoy** Him forever.”

Joy comes internally as we are liberated from sin; it comes more and more externally as a society is liberated from the fruit of sin in the world. This liberty comes to a nation to the degree that His Kingdom comes to that nation. Joy and peace come to men as they fulfill their mission to bring *shalom*, to take dominion.

## How do we enjoy Him?

There are many ways that we can fulfill our primary purpose of glorifying and enjoying God. We can delight in Him — in following, worshiping, and obeying Him. We can enjoy all aspects of communion with Him, walking with Him, and encountering Him.

We can also enjoy His creation. He made all things to enjoy — for His enjoyment (for He delights in His creation), but mostly for our enjoyment. God has given to us all these things to enjoy — God “richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy” (1 Tim. 6:17). He wants us to enjoy His creation, to enjoy our spouses and families, to enjoy our vocation.

God’s creation reflects His desire for us to enjoy. Consider simple things such as drinking a glass of fresh-squeezed orange juice, observing the beauty of a flower, or walking on a beach. Think of the grandeur and beauty of the Grand Canyon, the Teton Mountains, Crater Lake, and myriads of other natural wonders. They all proclaim that His creation is good; it is for our benefit. We are to enjoy it.

There is much to enjoy: the harvest; food and drink; animals he created (for our use, but also that they are a marvel — consider the hummingbird); beauty of the earth — mountains, lakes, seas, trees, flowers. God gave us human companionship. Marriage is good. We are to enjoy our spouse, children, grandchildren, and extended family. We take joy in fellowship with others. We can enjoy our calling, ministry, and work; we can enjoy being used of God. God directs us to enjoy rest and leisure, plus He instructs us to set aside special holy days to rejoice in Him and with one another. As a Christian we can enjoy everyday life, even the mundane affairs. Brother Lawrence learned to enjoy the presence of God, even while washing dishes.[[27]](#endnote-27)

We can enjoy Him by enjoying our calling — our occupation, vocation, ministry gifts. Those who have understood and fulfilled their Biblical vocational calling have demonstrated great joy in their own lives and labor, but also have brought great joy to myriads of others who benefited from their work. As an example, Cyrus McCormick was a Kingdom businessman who used his God-given and personally developed gifts to produce goods and services that brought great blessing to millions of people. This included material prosperity for employees, co-laborers, and customers, but also mental, spiritual, and physical well being for millions who were directly and indirectly impacted by McCormick’s invention, and later mass production and distribution, of the reaper. In addition, his work affected the prosperity and up-building of the entire nation of America, and also nations around the world. Millions rejoiced as they were elevated out of poverty by gaining access to an ever increasing supply of food. McCormick took great delight in his work. Whatever our calling may be, God gives grace to enjoy it.[[28]](#endnote-28)

McCormick’s life work is an example of how joy increases in a society as God’s truth and order increase in a society. The Biblical foundation of America, with its civil and economic liberty, provided the environment for McCormick to invent and build up a business, which in turn enabled farmers to prosper and all men to have access to more and cheaper food.

## Enjoyment and the Bible

At the birth of Christ, an angel of the Lord announced “good tidings of great joy” (Luke 2:10-11). This joy is connected with the reality of our knowledge of who Jesus is, our relationship with Him, and our worship of Him. The Bible speaks much of enjoyment:

* The land can enjoy Sabbaths (Leviticus 26:34, 43; 2 Chronicles 36:21).
* People were to enjoy their inheritance (Numbers 36:8).
* Disobedience cuts us off from enjoyment (Deuteronomy 28:41).
* We are to enjoy land, possession that God gives (Joshua 1:15).
* Enjoy good in labor (Ecclesiastes 2:24; Isaiah 65:22).
* Enjoy pleasure (Ecclesiastes 2:1).
* Enjoy eat and drink, the good of our labor (Ecclesiastes 3;13; 5:18).
* Enjoy work of our hands (Isaiah 65:22).
* God established feasts in the Old Testament for His people to enjoy. The “rejoicing tithe” was to be used in celebrations before God (Deuteronomy 14:22-27, 16:3, 13, 16).
* “God gives us richly all things to enjoy” (1 Timothy 6:17).
* Enjoy Him. As we first take joy in Him, then we can enjoy His creation.
* Weddings are times of joy. This is a taste of the eternal enjoyment in being wedded to Christ for all eternity.

What do you enjoy in life? What do you delight in? For Kingdom men and women, it will be good things. We should not enjoy pleasures of sin (Hebrews 11:25).

Enjoyment can be affected by our external environment and circumstances (for example, persecutions, hardships, lack of material comforts, wars, and disasters will certainly tend to diminish joy in life), but we can enjoy God in any circumstance. The joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). The Scottish Covenanters faced death with great resolve due to the joy of what was to come. Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him (Hebrews 12:2).

Understanding God’s Kingdom will give us joy in any situation. Working to bring His Kingdom will produce the greatest delight. Living in the fruit of His Kingdom will bring great joy in body, soul, and spirit.

# The Fruit of the Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. This defines what the Kingdom is and reveals the fruit of the Kingdom. The Kingdom within us will flow out to all spheres of life. The Kingdom is: Righteousness – His righteous standard, law-Word, justice; Peace – includes prosperity, restoring the creation order, Cultural Mandate, Biblical work; Joy – fruit of His righteousness, peace, and liberty (internal and external).

The Kingdom produces internal fruit (righteousness, liberty, peace, joy, prosperity) and external fruit (justice, liberty, prosperity, peace, virtue, order). Kingdom men and women, who were a product of the Bible and the Protestant Reformation, gave birth to America. They, in turn, produced the fruit of the Kingdom in the nation at large. America has been the most free, prosperous, and just nation in history due to her Biblical foundations.[[29]](#endnote-29) Kingdom fruit is growing in many nations today.

# How does the Kingdom come?

The Kingdom of God is like a seed (Luke 13:18-19). It begins very small, but when it is planted in good soil and is watered and cultivated, it will grow and produce abundant fruit. In time an entire forest can come from this seed.

The Kingdom is also like a tulip bulb. If you hold a tulip bulb in your hand, you hold a tulip. But you cannot cut it open and see it. It is hidden within. You must plant the bulb and allow it to grow. God planted the seed of His kingdom in the earth in human history. He watered it with His grace, and it grew. There is an aspect of the Kingdom seen in the Old Testament, but the flowering occurred in the New Testament, with the coming of the King. His Kingdom has been growing ever since.

## Advance of the Kingdom in History

Jesus ushered in the Kingdom of God. It has been advancing ever since, in individual lives, and in nations at large. History shows that there has been no end to the increase of His Kingdom (Luke 1:33). Jesus said that the restoration of the Kingdom was to come via times and epochs, with God’s Kingdom first being established within man and then gradually flowing out and transforming all spheres of life (Acts 1:6-8). Providential history is a study of those times and epochs. Within five centuries about one quarter of the known world had become “Christian.” Patrick’s work in Ireland, beginning in the Fifth Century, reveals the Kingdom as a seed, growing and producing much fruit over the centuries, and helping lay the foundation for western Christian civilization. Another significant “time and epoch” that has been part of the establishment of His Kingdom in the earth was the Protestant Reformation, which is still impacting the world today. (Seeing history in this light makes for a very exciting study. A brief review of the advance of the Kingdom of God in history can be seen in *America’s Providential History*.)

God’s Kingdom is advancing more rapidly today than ever. Consider these facts. The ratio of Christian to total world population in 1430 was 1 to 99; in 1790, it was 1 to 49; in 1940, 1 to 32; in 1994, 1 to 7; and today, 1 in 3 people in the world are nominally Christian, and 1 in 7 are Bible-believing Christians. Following are the current estimated percentages of the population of various nations who are “renewalists” (that is, they have a living Christian faith and are not just nominal Christians): Guatemala, 60%; Kenya, 56%; Brazil, 49%; Philippines, 44%; South Africa, 34%; Chile, 30%; Nigeria, 26%; United States, 23%; Columbia, 20%; South Korea, over 20%. Most of this growth (other than in the U.S.) has come in the last 3-4 decades.

With the increase in the number of people who have been birthed into the Kingdom in various nations, there has been a growing manifestation of the fruit of the Kingdom. This is especially true in the nations that have embraced God’s righteous standards, order, and peace. That is, to the degree nations have applied His word in every sphere of life is the degree to which those nations have prospered and been free. The degree His Kingdom comes into men’s hearts and minds, and also in civil and social life, is the degree to which Kingdom fruit is produced.

Some nations in the past century have experienced great growth in the number of believers, but have seen little corresponding advancement in civil and social life, because they have not preached the Gospel of the Kingdom but rather the gospel of man’s salvation. **The center of God’s work is not our salvation, but His Kingdom.**

Our mission is to advance the Kingdom of God. The King commands it, but since we benefit from its fruit, we should do all we can to see His Kingdom come to earth as it is in heaven. The Kingdom comes as we: 1) disciple the nations, 2) apply the Biblical doctrine of work, and 3) fulfill the Cultural Mandate. As we do this, we will not only be answering the King’s call, but, along the way, we will experience the great blessings and fruit of that Kingdom we are working to establish.

\* \* \* \*

# End Notes

1. *Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, John Macquarrie, editor, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967, p. 189. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Eschatology (from *eschatos*, “end” and *logos*, “the study of”) is the study of future events, in particular dealing with the end times and the return of Christ. There are three primary views: amillennialism, postmillennialism, premillennialism (with two views: classic or historic, and pretribulational). [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. *Dictionary* *of Christian Ethics*, p. 189. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. See Mark Beliles and Stephen McDowell, *America’s Providential History*, Charlottesville, Vir.: Providence Foundation, 2010, for an overview of how God’s Kingdom has advanced in history. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. In Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994, p, 863. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Grudem, pp. 863-864. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. This providential view of history was the predominate view of the western world and was taught in schools, colleges, churches, homes, and elsewhere. With the secularization of western culture, fewer people in academia, and even the church, have a providential view of history. The consequences are immense. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. See *America’s Providential History* for these and other examples in history. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. W.E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1966, p. 294. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Hendrickson Publishers, 1993 (Edersheim’s work was first published in 1883), p. 187. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. For more see Bruce Anderson, Mark Beliles, Stephen McDowell, *Watchmen on the Walls*, Charlottesville, Vir.: Providence Foundation, pp. 27 ff. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. For more see Stephen McDowell, *Building Godly Nations,* Charlottesville, Vir.: Providence Foundation, Chapter 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. See *Building Godly Nations*, and Stephen McDowell and Mark Beliles, *Liberating the Nations,* both published by the Providence Foundation. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. See Stephen McDowell, *Equal Justice Under God’s Law, Building Nations with the Blueprint of God’s Word*, Charlottesville, Vir.: Providence Foundation, 2010. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Jock Purves, *Fair Sunshine, Character Studies of the Scottish Covenanters*, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, pp. 116-117. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Cornelius Plantinga, *Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be*, Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1995, p. 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. See “Fulfilling the Cultural Mandate,” Chapter 1, and “Biblical Principles of Business,” Chapter 14, in *Building Godly Nations*, for more on the Biblical work and calling. Also, see the upcoming *Providential Perspective* booklet on the *Biblical Doctrine of Work*, to be published in the summer of 2012. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. See Hugh Whelchel, “Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work,” unpublished article, May 2011. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Bavinck quoted in Art Lindsley, “Creation, Fall, Redemption,” *Knowing & Doing*, Winter 2009, C.S. Lewis Institute. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. *Sources of Our Liberties*, Richard L. Perry, ed., New York: American Bar Foundation, 1952, 94. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. See *Building Godly Nations*, chapter 1, and the soon to be published booklet by Stephen McDowell on the Biblical doctrine of work. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Engraved on his statue in the United States Capitol Building. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Martin Luther, *Selected Writings of Martin Luther*, Theodore G. Tappert, editor, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007, p. 430. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. See Stephen McDowell, *The Economy from a Biblical Perspective*, and *Liberating the Nations*, chapter on “Principles for Christian Economics” for why prosperity is the fruit of a Biblical society. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians*, *Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996, p. 252. Quoted in Hugh Whelchel, “Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work,” p. 28. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. See *Practicing the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. See Stephen McDowell, “Biblical Principles of Business, Exemplified by Cyrus McCormick,” in *Building Godly Nations*. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. This is not to say America was without fault, or did not struggle as it attempted to apply God’s precepts. The issue of slavery is one obvious example; it threatened the dissolution of the nation at our founding and during the Civil War. But ultimately the founding principles in the Declaration of Independence, such as the equality of man and Creator-endowed rights, prevailed, and liberty was extended to all and set an example for the rest of the world to follow.

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To join or receive more information email us or visit our website:

providencefoundation.com [↑](#endnote-ref-29)