

Kingdom Perspectives – Part 8

We're in the series on Kingdom Perspectives. We've covered kingdom roots and contents, views, attire, choices, glory, paradox, and model. Today we'll speak of kingdom afterlife. This will not be a detailed study of the afterlife. I picked key issues that we need to understand in order to be transformed into the image of Christ and be able to explain Him to the world that needs Him. We're going to take some perspectives that are projected from this life into the next life.

First Poster. This poster summarizes how we are all guilty before our Holy God. First we are guilty by being under Adam or in Adam. Adam is considered the head of the human race as the first man. Our sin in Adam is in I Corinthians 15:22 which tells us – for as in Adam all die; so also in Christ all shall be made alive. This is called imputed sin. The second level of our sin guilt is inherited sin. This is the sin nature which is inherited in all men, except for Jesus as the Son of Man Who was not a son of Adam. Psalm 51:5 – Behold I was brought forth in sin and in sin my mother conceived me. All men are born with the inherited sin nature. Thirdly, in our sin guilt are the individual acts of sin committed by me. These are personal sins. They are not imputed and they're not inherited. They are also innumerable. Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We have to understand our total sin guilt before our Holy God in order to understand judgment in order to understand the afterlife.

Next poster. This poster takes us from our sin guilt to the various judgments of God. God makes various judgments at various times on various people for various purposes. This is most easily understood by looking at judgment, first of all, in the major categories of the saved and unsaved. This categorization of the unsaved as opposed to the saved represents the major judgment of God because it truly has eternal consequences that are total. For someone who remains unsaved, the judgment of God is for eternal condemnation. This judgment is always just and never unjust. That's because of our sin guilt. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God as we were told in Romans 3:23. All men are guilty at all three levels of sin—namely imputed under Adam, inherited from Adam, and individually committed acts of sin both omission and commission. The other major category related to the judgments of God are the saved. We escape condemnation. But this is possible only because Jesus took our judgment. Sin is never excused. All sin must be dealt with meaning paid for. II Corinthians 5:21 tells us that Jesus Christ became sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God. Jesus Himself was judged as being guilty of all sins for all men for all time. That covers imputed sin, inherited sin, and individual sins.

The next judgment of God on the saved has to do with discipline. This relates to our timeframe on Earth after salvation. This discipline is not for condemnation. This discipline is to mold us into Christlikeness through purification. Hebrews 12:6 – Those whom God loves, He disciplines. This discipline is to keep turning us away from the flesh and into the spirit. In the spirit Jesus is our source, Jesus is our basis, and Jesus is the constant object of our gaze. It keeps us regarding the cross of Christ as the means by which Jesus has purchased for us every spiritual blessing for all eternity. Through that disciplinary process the Holy Spirit is loosed to then produce fruit by giving us gifts, illumination, and power. The purpose of this judgment is to progressively decrease the time that we walk by faith in self (in the flesh) and to progressively increase the time that we're walking by faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified which is the spirit.

The last category of judgment of the saved has to do at death. At that point, we again, are not judged for condemnation. Matthew 5:12 tells us – Your reward in Heaven is great. We are judged at this point to determine eternal rewards with nothing to do with condemnation.

Related to the judgments of God is the kingdom perspective on election. There are actually several elections that take place that are shown on the next poster. The first election related to God's creating man. God elected to display His love. He did this by electing to let all men elect. This is so that the relationship with man is not based on mechanical robotic slavery, but that it is based on love. It's to display the love of God that God has given man the right to reject Him. Recall the sequence. God is love; love is relational. In a relation choice is required because if someone has no choice to reject me, it cannot be called love. It is robotic slavery. If one choice is God, any other choice that God gives us is un-God, or ungodly in our present terminology. The basic election of God was to elect to allow man to be God determined or to choose to be self determined which is what Adam did. No matter which way man plays his cards in that regard, he is displaying the love of God that he's even given the choice to begin with. He is displaying common grace lavished upon all men that men should be given choice even to reject God.

The next election relates to the choice of man after God gives the initial choice. Adam and every man thereafter elected un-God. Man elects un-God in order to display self determination. Beginning with Adam, Adam self determined that he could be self determined. He did not have to be God determined. He did that to display that he is his own god. Man simply looks at God and looks at himself and says I can do this thing. I can determine what is in my best long term interest better than I can listen to God to let Him tell me what is in my best long term interest.

The next election is that of all men, all of whom have chosen un-God, God elects some to display His grace—not His common grace, but His special grace. This is beyond the common grace that is poured out on all men. This is a specific election to display ultimate grace. I Peter 1:2 in the KJV describes us as being the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. This display of grace is that the Son of God came to Earth as a man and paid the price for all the sin of mankind. God then elected some men to access this payment through His gift of faith by grace. I John 2:2 tells us that Jesus Christ paid for the sins for the whole world, not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. But not all men accessed that payment, because they are given by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, eternal salvation. He has elected some to display His special grace. That, in fact, became part of the testimony of God Himself to His creation that is part of His glory. Ephesians 2:7 describes in order that in the ages to come, He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. God has elected some for salvation in order to display His grace for the ages to come.

After that election, God then elects the rest of mankind to display His justice. God never dispenses injustice. John 5:30 Jesus simply says – My judgment is just. Grace is part of His glory. Justice is part of His glory. When all of these elections are viewed compositely and sequentially, then the following becomes clear. God has elected all men to display His glory at all times. He does this by beginning to elect all men to display His common grace by giving them choice that it may be of love. And love is part of His glory. He then elects some men to display the ultimate grace for the ages to come through salvation. That is the election to save

some men through Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Grace is part of His glory. He then elects the rest of men to display His justice in the lake of fire for eternity. Justice is part of His glory. The glory of God has different aspects. God created to display His glory. His glory is on display at all times in all men in one way or another. His love of man, His love of righteousness, His grace, His kindness, His mercy, His forgiveness, His truth, His longsuffering, and His justice are on display in one way or another at all times in all men. All of those qualities of the glory of God are listed in Exodus 34:6-7 as being part of His glory. That's how the glory of God covers the Earth as we're told that it does in Isaiah 6:3. The primary election of all elections is that God elected to display His glory. That's why He created. He does that in all men at all times. Men are just not aware of it. Even a man who functions in total self determination to declare that God does not exist is at that moment actively displaying the glory of God. God is allowing man to reject Him in order to display that man is given choice because God is love. God, being love, is displaying His love and that love requires choice which means the choice to reject God. So even when someone is 100% in self determination, they're displaying the love of God because God has allowed them the choice to do so.

Longsuffering is also part of the glory of God. God allows a finite created being to choose to be self determined. He then allows that man, functioning in his audacity, to step on the toes of God, to slap the face of God, and to spit in the eye of God to declare that he can judge God including declaring that he can judge that the Creator of himself does not exist. Every second that God allows that He is displaying longsuffering as part of His glory. The glory of God does indeed cover the Earth. When we choose God we display His glory. When we reject God we're displaying His longsuffering which is part of His glory. So now let's take that understanding of the display of God's glory and project it into the afterlife.

Next poster. This poster addresses the two major categories of the afterlife. By afterlife, today, I'm using the term to mean the time after physical death. I'm not using this poster to address all timeframes after death. I'm lumping things together in order to address all timeframes after death in a simplified manner for the purpose of this talk. What I mean by that is the following. Hell is the loose term applied to where all unbelievers will be after death. The reality is they will always be in a place of torment, but that place is not yet in the lake of fire. It will be in the lake of fire after the Great White Throne Judgment. Likewise by using the term Heaven, I'm referring to the present Heaven as well as to the later New Heaven, New Earth, and New Jerusalem. Using that terminology you can see that there are two places occupied by two categories of people for two reasons, for two goals, to accomplish one purpose. That ultimate purpose is to glorify God. Hell is occupied by the unredeemed to punish them for their sins, to display God's righteousness and justice, and therefore display the glory of God. Heaven is occupied by the redeemed to display that Jesus Christ paid the price for their sins, and thus, to display the grace of God as part of His glory for the ages to come.

Next poster. Let's never forget the role of man in making choice. I get to choose; but that's all I get to choose. I get to choose so that the relationship may be of love and not of robotic slavery. However, that is the end of it for the choice of man. Man does not get to not choose. If man tries not to choose, he defaults to the sin nature which is his default position. He also does not get to choose the choices. The choices are specified for us by our creator God. He also does not get to choose the consequences of his choices. The consequences of his choices are specified by

our creator God. He is always given two choices. If He gives more than two choices to man, man gets lost in the complexity. He has to give at least two choices so they can choose between God and un-God so that it may be of love. So God always gives us two choices, but we cannot not choose and we cannot choose both; because you cannot choose Jesus and non-Jesus simultaneously. You cannot choose spirit and flesh simultaneously. Always two choices, but only two and God ordains what those two will be and what the consequences of those two will be and that you're not allowed to not choose and you're not allowed to choose both.

Next poster. Men think of themselves as being free. The only thing that men are free to do is to choose; but beyond that the choices and consequences are determined by our holy, sovereign, creator God. Truth is how God views reality and not how man determines that reality is. In reality (which is how God views it) all men are slaves to one of two things. They are slaves to self, thus to sin, which makes up the flesh, which is in the system of this world, serving the master of this world, the god of this world, who is Satan. Or they are slaves to Jesus Christ. But all men are slaves constantly at all times to one of those two things. The paradox is man thinks he is free when, in fact, he's a slave constantly. The only way to escape slavery to self is by being a slave to Jesus Christ. So man, who declares himself to be free, is a slave to self; self determination, which is self on the throne, which is the root of the flesh, which is the root of the system of this world, which is the kingdom of darkness, ruled by its king Satan.

All men also walk by faith at all times in one of two things. They're walking by faith in self which is anti-Christ; they're functioning in self determination that they can look at what the Bible says and look at what other things say and they can self determine what truth is. They have faith (not in the other thing); they have faith that they can look at God and look at other things and they can self determine what truth is. That's self determination which is faith in self, not faith in something else. So all men walk by faith in self which is anti-Christ or they walk by faith in Jesus Christ. Likewise all men now and eternally will glorify Jesus. All men will display two aspects of the glory of God. It is unavoidable based on how God views reality. They will either display His justice in the lake of fire for eternity or they will display His grace in Heaven for eternity. Philippians 2:10 tells us that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those who are in Heaven, those who are on Earth, and those who are under the Earth. These are kingdom perspectives about Biblical afterlife.

Next poster. There are other descriptions of the afterlife which I've simply chosen to call unbiblical afterlife Conditionalism. These are unbiblical because they apply added conditions to the Biblical afterlife that I've just described. So let's look at some of these categories that man self determines to be true. The first type is what I call the Catholic category. This is purgatory. Purgatory is a place for the redeemed. It is an intermediate pit stop after death, but before Heaven. The purpose of purgatory, according to the Catholic view, is to purify the redeemed to prepare them for entry into Heaven. The second type is the Universalist which has several variations. The first variant is the purgative variety. This means that unredeemed men will all be purified and later sent to Heaven to join redeemed men so that all men end up universally in Heaven. This punishment, according to this category of Universalist, is for purification, not for payment. The second variant is what I call the retributive. This refers to unredeemed men who will be punished, not for purification, but to pay the price for their sin. The goal is not to purify. The goal is to balance accounts. Once they pay their debt, then they're cleared to join the rest of

mankind in Heaven. The third variant of universalism is neither. This basically says that none of these other categories have any meaning because God is apathetic about such a thing as sin. Because of that unconcern on the part of God about any departure from His character, there is obviously then no requirement ever for any discomfort, either to purify, to punish, or to pay. All men simply go to Heaven.

The third major category of unbiblical afterlife Conditionalism is the annihilationist. This type has two variants. The first type is the retributive. This person believes that the redeemed goes straight to Heaven; however the unredeemed will go to a place of retribution. The punishment can be to either punish them for sin or to pay the exact amount of punishment required to pay for their sin. After that—annihilation. Or it can be to punish or pay, but both end in annihilation. The next category of annihilationist is none of the above. This is similar to the none of the above type of universalism. This one simply doesn't believe in any afterlife. Thus all men are simply annihilated at death. Nothing else exists other than annihilation, and therefore, man never receives any pleasure or any punishment after death because there is nothing after death. There's one key component in our understanding of the afterlife that has to be addressed to help us understand it and to help us understand what is wrong with all of these aspects of unbiblical afterlife Conditionalism.

The next poster approaches the payment for sin. On the left side you can see there are only two types of sacrifice for sin—namely Jesus and non-Jesus. We're going to look at these two types in regard to the variables of value, wrath, duration, payment, and theology. First, look at Jesus. He is the Son of God. He is fully God as well as being fully man. The value of God is infinite. The value of the blood of Jesus shed on His cross is infinite. Infinite means without limit. It means that we can never assign any number that would equal or exceed the value of the blood of Jesus the Son of God on the cross. Now look at the wrath. Jesus received the fullness of the wrath of God that was deserved by all sin of all men for all time. I John 2:2 tells us that Jesus paid for the sins of the whole world. Likewise we have to regard the wrath of God received by Jesus as infinite. We cannot put a limit to the degree of wrath lavished upon Jesus by the Father God to pay the price for the sins of all men for all time.

Now look at the duration. I regard it as finite because as creatures of time we know that Jesus was in the tomb or on the cross for a total of equal to or less than three days. However in truth we need to remind ourselves that our Holy God exists outside of time and is not bound by time. He could pour out infinite wrath in a millisecond if He chose because He is a holy, sovereign God with no limitations that our natural mind might try to impose on Him. He is not bound by time. II Peter 3:8 – But do not let this one fact escape your notice beloved that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. But regardless of the duration of the punishment of Jesus we have to regard the payment as infinite. This is because the total punishment would be the value times the wrath times the duration to equal payment. Since the value is infinite and the wrath is infinite, then the payment is infinite regardless of whether the time is finite or not. The theology that that refers to is Biblical Heaven. II Corinthians 5:21 – Jesus Christ became sin for us that we might be made righteous. People who have the payment of Jesus assigned to their account will spend eternity in Heaven. That payment is accounted on their behalf by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Now drop down to the second category which is non-Jesus, and that has several variants. Before getting lost in the variants, I want to show you the unifying theme. If you look at the column headed by value, you will quickly see that the value of any non-Jesus sacrifice is zero. This is because all other sacrifices are contaminated by sin. That's why a spotless lamb without blemish was required in the OT sacrificial system. I Peter 1:19 – But you were redeemed with precious blood, unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. The lamb in the OT had to be spotless enough to be a foreshadowing of the totally spotless which was to come—namely the Lamb of God. Now look across at the payment column. You will see that the payment made by any non-Jesus sacrifice is zero. That's because the payment made is the value times the wrath times the duration equals the payment. Since the value of the sacrifice is zero, then the product will always be zero since any number multiplied by zero is zero. Given that preliminary understanding that the value and thus the payment for any non-Jesus sacrifice will always be zero, from this point on, on the poster, I've simply taken the last pertinent columns—namely wrath and duration, and listed the various hypothetical possibilities related to them in various combinations. The first is that wrath is finite and the duration is infinite. This is Biblical Hell. The punishment in Hell will never end in the lake of fire; thus, the duration is infinite. Why can it never end? It can never end because the payment is always zero. So no one who can go to Hell can ever pay for their own sin no matter how long they're there. The wrath is finite. That's because there will be degrees of punishment in Hell. If the wrath poured out on each person was infinite, then there could not be degrees of punishment.

The second hypothetical variant is that the wrath is finite, but the duration is finite. This is the attitude of all the types of non-biblical Conditionalism that I showed you on the earlier poster. The third and fourth variants I list for completeness. The third is that the wrath is infinite and the duration is finite. The fourth is that the wrath is infinite and the duration is infinite. I'm not aware of any theology that would match those last two; thus, I regard them as hypothetical considerations until I receive knowledge that there are categories that belong there.

Next poster. Now recall these four fallacies of the thinking of man in his self determination. There is no higher standard to which I am accountable. If there is a higher standard to which I'm accountable, then I will achieve it. If there is a higher standard and I do not achieve it, my shortfall will be excused. If my shortfall is not excused, then I will successfully pay in full for my shortfall. I hope you can see from all that has gone on before, the fallacy in each of these considerations. But these four fallacies are part of the behavior described in Judges 21:25. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. This is self determination. This is autonomy and this leads to death, including spiritual death for all eternity no matter how right it seems to a man in his self determination. Proverbs 14:12 – there is a way which seems right to a man; but its end is the way of death. The antidote for these four fallacies is to understand the prior poster related to the payment for sin. God is holy and He will punish all sin. There is a standard to which we are accountable. The standard is perfect holiness just like God. Your shortfall will not be excused. God never excuses sin. Any payment that you make is worth absolutely zero based on how God views reality even if you're there for eternity paying it. The value of any payment for sin is either/or. It is either infinite or it is zero. The only one that is infinite is Jesus. All other payments for sin are zero based on how God views reality. Therefore, let us live in the light of II Corinthians 11:3 and not be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Jesus. That includes Jesus as the infinite payment for all sin and the value of zero for all non-Jesus payments.

So let us be sure not to be led astray from the simplicity and purity of how God views reality on all these considerations. The antidote for darkness is light. I am the light. The antidote for deception is truth. I am the truth. The antidote for the way that seems right to a man is the way. I am the way. The antidote for death is life. I am the life. The antidote for sin is only one. It's the cross of Jesus Christ. The antidote for slavery to self is slavery to Jesus. The antidote for faith in self is faith in Jesus. The antidote for Hell is Heaven accessed through Jesus. The antidote for self determination is Jesus determination. The antidote for eternally glorifying God's justice is to eternally glorify God's grace.

We get to choose that it may be of love. But we never get to choose what the choices are. We never get to choose the consequences of the choices. We never get to not choose. And we never get to choose both. We are all glorifying God right now whatever we choose. We will all glorify God for eternity. But be very careful about what aspect of God's glory that you eternally glorify. Don't be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Jesus. For part of our kingdom perspective on all these things is Ephesians 1:10 – It is all summed up in Jesus. It is all summed up in Jesus either as our Savior or as our judge for eternity. Recall the Fram oil filter man, you can pay me now or pay me later. We will either bow to Jesus now in humility or we will bow to Jesus later in terror. But bow to Jesus we will. Why? Because everything is all summed up in Jesus, including the afterlife. So those are our kingdom perspectives about the afterlife.

My time is up and I thank you for yours.