

Two Kingdoms

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Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. Rom. 6:16-18 niv

“Who am I?” is a baffling and evasive, but persistent whisper in the deepest part of man. A “two-kingdom” world view is essential to answering it, and it has everything to do with our response to current and future events in America.

The God Shaped Hole

God is a spirit and Satan is a spirit. God designed man with a body, a soul and a spirit. ([I Thess. 5:23](#)) This is a spirit-dominated world ([Eph. 6:12-13](#)) and the interface between God, man and Satan is spirit in nature.

By creation design, relationship with “one” greater than and outside of ourselves is an essential part of humanity. We sometimes refer to that as a “God-shaped hole.” What it is filled with becomes our source of identity.

This identity, or personal “validation,” tells us who we are personally and in relation to others. It shapes our sense of significance, personal worth, security and overall well-being.

We receive this identity from a spirit source, and in the Garden it came from fellowship with Creator God. However, Satan tricked Adam and Eve into thinking it could come through self-rule, although he failed to tell them that actually meant they came under *his* authority.

Two Kingdoms

Because Satan had won dominion over the earth, two opposing and mutually exclusive spirit kingdoms were now active in man's world. ([I John 5:19](#)) Satan became “the god of this world” ([II Cor. 4:4](#)) and is “the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.” ([Eph. 2:2](#))

Each kingdom has a distinct culture, and each has a lord. These lords compete for the affection and servitude of subjects in a spirit-battle that will continue until the event of [Rev. 20:10](#).

The kingdom that we believe to be superior becomes our personal identity source. The act of giving ourselves to the spirit source of our choice is called worship. Worship can be deliberate or subconscious, but it will be.

In “the fall,” man tumbled from the place where his identity had been supplied by Creator God. He became a lower form of humankind as his spirit-to-spirit fellowship with God, and his spirit side in general, were greatly diminished.

Man became “of this world” because he was disconnected from his “celestial” side. He was now most strongly directed through his soul (mind, will and emotions), the avenue through which Satan approaches us.

Man now gave himself to soulish pursuits such as seeking “stuff,” power, and the approval of others for example. Every such act and every sin are attempts to fill the hole in man's inner being.

The Good News

Jesus came to forgive our sins and to bring us back into communion with the Father. Through Jesus, God rescued us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. ([Col. 1:12-14](#), [Acts 26:18](#))

In that, we regained the identity that we were created to have as children of God. ([Gal. 3:26](#), [I John 3:2](#)) We are again members of His family and citizens of His Kingdom. ([Philip. 3:20](#))

When we are born again our spirit is made alive and active in Christ ([Eph. 2:1-10](#), [Col. 2:9-15](#)) and we are more fully “human” as God designed us to be. Its part of “the mystery of the ages” of [Col. 1:26-28](#) and [2:2-3](#). We can again live by the Spirit [Rom. 8:9-11](#) in a way that gives us victory over soulish desires. We can come into God's Presence ([Heb. 10:19-23](#)) and commune with Him, spirit to Spirit. “Wholeness” can be the new reality for humans as we are made complete in Christ!

Receiving the Father's love, affirmation and validation of our worth gives us true identity. When we abide in the Kingdom of God we need nothing from the world to answer "the question."

Our new-found identity changes everything including relationships, our source of joy, purpose in life, and response to troubles. One incredible benefit is that we are freed from bondage to the pursuit of the fantasy-lie of "just a little bit more."

But Beware

"Success" of various kinds can be the direct result of our Kingdom life, but when it is, it is given for God's purpose which is that others may know Him. However, success can quickly become an identity source and thus a false god, which is why Jesus said [Mt. 19:23-24](#).

Yes, we enjoy human relationships and it feels good to be appreciated by others, but we don't depend on that for our sense of well-being. And we appreciate and enjoy "stuff" but refuse to let it tell us who we are.

A good way to test if something or someone has become a false god to us is to consider if we could have our joy without it/them! Another identity source indicator is in what tells us if we are having a good day or a bad day!

We can also tell a lot about that by watching where our mind goes as we consider possible troubles. Is our first concern about our comfort, our stuff, our rights or even our life – all things of the earth that will soon pass away? Or are we concerned that we will remain faithful to God and to each other, and that we will be able to serve Him well in difficult times?

Conclusion

Only when we understand the two kingdoms and the great [Luke 16:26](#) chasm between them, will we understand the implications for America as our leaders increasingly offer themselves in servitude to false gods. Even wicked gods.

Many Christians are deceived about our sins and the sins of our land because our discernment is dulled by our craving for the very things that discernment would have exposed to us as gods.

The preserving salt and guiding light of [Mt. 5:13-14](#) express the life of the Kingdom of God.

At this point the American church's salt and light deficiency has made us spiritually anemic and unable to positively influence our nation and we are now facing the consequences.

There is no political solution to America's problems because they are spirit in nature. Clinton's victory on Nov. 8 would be consistent with Obama's second election and both would confirm America's rejection of God, as manifested in the June 26, 2015 SCOTUS ruling on "gay marriage." Given its present momentum it seems unlikely that America's trajectory will change.

Trump's victory might slow our decline a bit but it would give Christians false hope. Many know he is a corrupt man but they still like him because they think he can bring change that will help preserve their earthly comforts and freedoms.

We are unprepared for troubled times. [II Chron. 7:14](#) repentance is essential to our being able to stand strong personally; to encourage and be true to each other; and to glorify God in that time, but only He knows if it could save America.

It is imperative that we now turn our hearts toward God. Renouncing all earthly identity sources is part of that process, and that is what Jesus spoke of in [Luke 9:23-26](#). And we must embrace the mindset of [Col. 3:1-10](#), [Philip. 3:7-11](#), and [Heb. 10:32-11:39](#).

God is calling men and women to Himself in unusual ways these days. Muslims are coming to Jesus by the thousands. Bible translations that formerly took 20-30 years now take two years. A great harvest is taking place and in troubled times many will be looking for answers and for hope. However, as Jesus said, the workers are few. ([Mt. 9:35-38](#)) Does that matter to us?

We who find our identity in the Kingdom of God have incredible opportunity to partner with Him. The reward of that, for now and for all eternity, is the polar opposite of the reward of the earthly option, but as Jesus said in [Mt. 7:13-14](#) the gate into that Kingdom is narrow.

[James 4:8](#) - [I Peter 2:4-5](#) - [Deut. 4:29-31](#)

Ken Stoltzfus, July 30, 2016

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[Unlocked Literal Bible](#)