

- Q26. How does Christ execute the office of a king?
A26. **Christ executes the office of a king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.**

Scripture References: Psalm 110:3; Isaiah 33:1-2, 22; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Acts 12:17, 18:9-10, 2:36

- DQ1: To whom is Christ a King?
DQ2: What are three things that Christ does as our King?
DQ3: Why should we obey Christ?
DQ4: What is the difference between Christ “subduing us” and obeying?
DQ5: What is the relationship between “ruling” and “defending” us?
DQ6: What is the meaning of “restraining and conquering all his and our enemies”?
DQ7: What is Christ’s Kingdom?
DQ8: Is Christ currently our King?
DQ9: What is the relationship between Christ’s return and His Kingdom?

Notes:

To say that Christ came as a king means that (1) there is His Kingdom and (2) there are the people of His Kingdom. Christ is indeed our King. Yet, His Kingdom is not of this world. Christ made it abundantly clear. “Jesus said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.’ ‘You are a king, then!’ said Pilate. Jesus answered, ‘You are right in saying I am a king.’” (John 18:36-37) Isaiah 9:6-7 describes the Messiah who was to come as a king.

There are three ways in which Christ executes his kingship over us. First, Christ subdues us. Second, Christ rules and defends us. Third, Christ restrains and conquers the devil.

What does Christ’s kingship mean to us? His kingship requires our obedience. Yet, A26 does not say that we ought to obey. Rather, it says Christ subdues us, i.e., Christ “made us to obey.” A king does not merely require obedience. A true king must receive obedience. In that sense, the Messiah is an absolute Ruler and His people must come to fully obedience. The kings of this earth may require obedience but may not always enjoy obedience of their people. They cannot force obedience. But, Christ must be able to bring His people to full obedience. This is the power of Christ, an Absolute Being.

The reason why we must obey Christ is because He is our King, who is able to subdue us and secure for Him our obedience. Therefore, being subdued is quite different from merely requiring obedience. We must obey Christ who subdues us. This is the true relationship between a king

and his people. There cannot possibly be any questions raised or a slightest disobedience against a king. So, it is with the kingship of Christ.

Christ, as our King, rules and defends (i.e. protects) us. Ruling and defending always go together. No ruler can properly rule without defending his people for protecting his people is one of the most important duties of a ruler. While Christ came as our Ruler, He also has come to defend us by serving.

Christ, as our King, restrains and conquers the devil. A king who is unable to lead His people to victory will lose his throne. In the final analysis, all earthly kings have lost their thrones. Yet, the Throne of Jesus the Messiah is secure and eternal.

Please read Matthew 13 and study in detail about the kingdom of God. What are the parables teaching us about God's Kingdom?

Is there a Christ's Kingdom right now? The answer is unequivocally "yes." Let us examine that what it means.

Read Matthew 7:37, Psalm 2 and Acts 4:25-26. What do they say about Christ?

Christ spoke of His Kingdom even as He hung on the cross. What did Christ say to the robber on His right side? Jesus said, "today, you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:42-43) Jesus referred to His Kingdom "today" not in the future. Christ's Kingdom is real now, not later.

Consider for yourself if Christ is indeed your King. Many say that Christ is returning as a King someday. This sounds fine but it is not accurate and is false. Christ is our King today and is returning as a King who will not be mistaken by anyone. This teaching comes from what is known as dispensationalism. While dispensationalists tend to be evangelical and conservative in their belief systems, they also have committed errors of dividing the Biblical history into seven dispensations or periods which are somewhat dialectical and/or disjointed. We will not study dispensationalism in details here but will point out two things to help us better understand God's kingdom.

The following are two ways in which we can detect the influence of dispensationalism: First, dispensationalists call the time of Moses as a period (or dispensation) of moral laws and the current time as a period (or dispensation) of grace. Some will say that we are under grace to mean that we are living in the dispensation of grace. It appears to sound fine but it is incorrect and is quite contrary to the Bible. Most dispensationalists will argue that God has redeemed His people in different ways in different dispensations. The Bible makes no such distinctions. How God redeems His people is and has been the same, whether in the Old Testament or in the New Testament. At no time, could anyone be redeemed by keeping the moral laws. Redemption has always been possible by Christ's death on the cross and by faith in Jesus Christ. On the contrary, the Reform Theology (or more narrowly the Covenant Theology) emphasizes the continuity of a covenant (or covenants) of God running through the Old and New Testaments. Dispensationalists are unable to see the Bible through the lens of such a covenant that runs consistently and continuously through the Old and New Testaments.

Second, dispensationalism does not believe that the Kingdom of God has arrived. They hold what is known as pre-millennial kingdom. They believe that Christ did come as a King of Jews but the establishment of His Kingdom was delayed due to the rejection of Him. They believe that God, through the church, is saving sinners while the church is awaiting the return of Christ. When Christ returns, they believe that Christ will establish a thousand year earthly kingdom that will be ruled by Christ before the end time.

The Bible's teaching is contrary:

First, Christ's Kingdom already exists. Colossians 1:13: "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."

Second, Christ's Kingdom is spiritual and invisible. (John 18:36, Luke 17:20)

Third, Christ's Kingdom is an eternal kingdom. His Kingdom does not end at the end of a thousand years. (Daniel 2:44, 2 Peter 1:11)

Dispensationalism speaks of Christ's Kingdom that is apart from His church. It is true that Christ's church is but a portion of His Kingdom but they cannot be separated. They believe that the dispensation of the church will end and a dispensation of Christ's Kingdom will begin.

On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church claims that Christ's Kingdom and His church are identical. This is why they believe that the Pope should rule all aspects of this world. They believe this is how Christ is the King over all things.

Clearly, the claims of dispensationalism and the Catholic Church are wrong. Christ is the head of both His Kingdom and His church. Therefore, they cannot be separated. An explanation of Reform Theology is that Christ Kingdom includes His church and that Christ is the head. Yet, the church does not need to rule over all aspects of this world. In other words, the church does not have to rule social, political, economic and educational arenas of our world. The role of the church is to be the light and salt of and in the world so that all aspects of our world may be cleansed and redeemed.

There are some commonalities between Christ's Kingdom and His church. First, Christ alone is the head of both. Second, only the truly redeemed is a member of both. Third, one cannot be a member of Christ's Kingdom without being a member of Christ's church.

There are some differences between Christ's Kingdom and His Church. First, His church is visible and His Kingdom is not. Second, Christ's church is the key to the door of Christ's Kingdom. (Matthew 16:19) Third, Christ's church brings people into Christ's Kingdom. But those who are in Christ's Kingdom will live according to the authority and requirements of God.

There are three most common evangelical millennial views: pre-millennialism, post-millennialism and a-millennialism.

Pre-millennialism teaches that Christ will return and first raise the believers and establish a thousand year kingdom on earth. At the end of the millennium, Christ will also raise the non-believers who died to render the final judgment of all people. Thereafter, the eternal state will

be ushered in. We do not follow pre-millennialism. It should be pointed out, however, that, while all dispensationalists espouse pre-millennialism, not all pre-millennialists are dispensationalists. To be sure, there are many pre-millennialists who believe that Christ's Kingdom currently exists.

Post-millennialism teaches that Christ's kingship will progressively increase in this world because of the ministry of Christ's church, through which the gospel will be spread throughout the whole world resulting in a world that is filled with righteousness and peace establishing a thousand year kingdom (although some apostasy is expected). Thereafter, Christ will return to raise the dead and render the final judgment of all people. Thereafter, the eternal state will be ushered in.

A-millennialism teaches that there is no earthly kingdom of Christ. Throughout history, both the good and evil will co-exist in this world until the time of the great harvest, i.e. the return of Christ, which will have without warning. At the time, the dead will rise and the final judgment will be rendered. Thereafter, the eternal state will be ushered in.

A-millennialism is superior over pre-millennialism and post-millennialism for the following reasons:

First, the Bible clearly states that no one knows the time of the return of Christ. According to post-millennialism, Christ will return after a millennial kingdom signaling the time of His return. (Acts 1:7, Matthew 24:36, 1 Timothy 5:1)

Second, the Bible tells us that we are now in the end time. (Hebrews 1:2, John 6:39, 11:24, 12:48, Acts 2:17, 2 Timothy 3:1) If this is true, then the end of time cannot be after a millennial kingdom.

Third, Christ said in his parable that the wheat and tares are to grow together until harvested. Then, the claims of the other views are justified.