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Essay Paper

THE CENTRAL FOCUS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:
GOD'S ULTIMATE VICTORY OVER EVIL

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INTRODUCTION

New Testament Biblical Theology refers to the main theological message found in the New Testament as described by the biblical authors in their own historical setting, terms, categories, and thought forms.¹ The New Testament consists of five logical divisions based on major literary groups: Synoptic Gospels, Johannine Literature, Acts, Pauline Epistles, and other New Testament writings. Conservative scholars attribute thirteen of the New Testament letters to the Apostle Paul and most do not include the book of Hebrews. Therefore, the literary group of "other New Testament writings" consists of Hebrews, James, 1st and 2nd Peter, and Jude. New Testament theology spans all five of these literary groups.

Various scholars put forth a good effort in determining the central theme or focus of the New Testament. The first such attempt was by C. H. Dodd, who showed that the "kerygma" is the unifying center of the New Testament.² Oscar Cullman presents "salvation history" as the main unifying principle of the New Testament.³ Several scholars, such as O. Loretz and F. C. Fensham, see the concept of "covenant" as the unifying principle.⁴ Gerhard Hasel documents several other themes, concepts, or motifs that other scholars regard as unifying the New Testament including the resurrection, "rulership of God, kingdom of God, rule of God and communion between God and Man,

or promise."⁵ Yet, scholars have not reached a consensus on which concept is the center of New Testament theology.⁶

A prominent theological theme in the New Testament is the kingdom of God, which refers to "God's reign,"⁷ "the rule of God" or "the divine [kingly] authority and rule given by the Father to the Son (Luke 22:29)."⁸ After Christ carries out His rule and conquers God's enemies, He will return the kingdom to His Father.⁹ Evil came into the world of humanity when Adam and Eve sinned by yielding to Satan, and ever since that time God has been battling Satan, sin, and evil. The kingdom of God came into this evil age with a vital purpose of prevailing over evil in people and triumphantly overpowering evil in general.¹⁰ Ladd expresses this soteriological aspect by saying:

The object of the divine rule is the redemption of people and their deliverance from the powers of evil. 1 Corinthians 15:23-28 is definitive. Christ's reign means the destruction of all hostile powers, the last of which is death. The kingdom of God is the reign of God in Christ destroying all that is hostile to the divine rule.¹¹

In a primarily spiritual sense, the kingdom of God is already present in the Church Age in the person and work of Jesus Christ, but the physical establishment of the kingdom of God is not yet complete.¹² Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God as present¹³ and future,¹⁴ but it will not be "fully manifested"¹⁵ until the future, after Christ's Second Coming, when God finally eliminates evil in victory at the End of the Age.

This paper will show that the central focus of the theology of the New Testament is God's ultimate victory over evil, especially as the New Testament reflects this focus in the kingdom of God theme. Evil "is under the direction of a single will whose purpose it is to frustrate the will of God."¹⁶ As God establishes the kingdom of God, He causes evil to flee and to be defeated. This paper will show support for a central theological focus of God's ultimate victory over evil from the five major literary groups: Synoptic Gospels, Johannine Literature, Acts, Pauline Epistles, and other New Testament Writings.

SUPPORT FROM THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

The Synoptic Gospels support the idea that the central focus of the theology of the New Testament is God's ultimate victory over evil, as evident by the abundant presence of the kingdom of God theme. The Synoptic Gospels contain similar accounts when compared side-by-side and consist of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These Gospel writers express the center of Jesus' message and ministry using the equivalent terms "the kingdom of God" and "the kingdom of heaven."¹⁷ Matthew used the term "the kingdom of heaven" often in his Gospel, which he wrote to a primarily Jewish audience. According to George Ladd, "the kingdom of heaven" is simply a linguistic variation of "the kingdom of God," since "Jewish idiom often substituted a

suitable term for deity (Matt. 21:25; Mark 14:61; Luke 15:21; 1 Macc. 3:50).¹⁸ Thus, the kingdom of God, which occurs mostly in the Gospels of Mark and Luke, is synonymous with "the kingdom of heaven" that is used in Matthew; together, both terms are used a total of approximately one hundred times in the Synoptic Gospels.¹⁹ This dominant theme of the "kingly reign of God"²⁰ in the Synoptic Gospels refers to the "regime of God which will destroy the present course of the world, wipe out all the contra-divine, Satanic power under which the present world groans," and thus bring salvation for God's people.²¹ The Synoptic Gospels show evidence that Jesus ushered in the kingdom of God through his life by his teachings, miracles, exorcism, and his death and resurrection.

First, the teachings of Jesus ushered in the kingdom of God. Prior to Jesus' arrival, Israel had a great expectation for the arrival of the kingdom of God, as predicted in Old Testament days. After Jesus' baptism and wilderness experience, Jesus began his ministry proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."²² Jesus fulfills past expectations of the promise of Isa. 52:7; 61:1 by proclaiming the good news²³ that God's rule has now come into history, and He encourages others to repent in full surrender to God and believe this gospel concerning God's rule.²⁴ According to Marshall, "the proclamation [of Jesus] itself, both

in word and accompanying deed, is the manifestation of the reign, the means by which it is brought about."²⁵ Jesus constantly taught parables to describe and picture the kingdom of God, using "clusters of images and metaphors,"²⁶ often comparing it to events from daily life.²⁷ Jesus portrays one of the characteristics of the kingdom of God as being "based on divine grace rather than human merit"²⁸ as shown in his metaphors of a treasure discovered hidden in a field,²⁹ a pearl of great value being found,³⁰ and the practice of an owner paying workers equally for work in his vineyard.³¹ Martin Luther believed that the realm of divine grace, as often proclaimed by Jesus, was equivalent to the kingdom of God³² and thus evidence that the presence of the kingdom of God had come.

Second, Jesus' miracles showed evidence of Jesus being the Son of God, as well as the Messiah, and His ushering in of the kingdom of God. "Jesus exercises his dominion in nature, over people, over sickness and over the powers of darkness."³³ Matt. 11:5 says Jesus miraculously healed the blind, lame, lepers, deaf, and raised the dead. The miracles illustrate in a very real way that, through Jesus' ministry, the power of the kingdom is breaking into history and progressively eliminating evil. "The 'coming' kingdom of God, like the establishment of human kingdoms, implies the displacement of other kingdoms. It comes

with the violence of conflict and triumph over an enemy."³⁴ Jesus displaced demonic forces as He performed miracles of exorcism.

Third, Jesus' power over demons and evil forces showed evidence of the presence of the kingdom of God in Himself. Demon possession is evidence of the Satan's power over people.³⁵ When accused of exorcising demons by a Satanic power, Jesus claims that He has power over demons because of the power of God upon Him, and thus He states that the exorcisms are evidence that the kingdom of God is in their midst:

But, when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons. And knowing their thoughts He said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."³⁶

Richardson says it is "absurd" to suppose that Jesus casts out demons by a power stemming from Satan's kingdom "because it presupposes civil war in Satan's kingdom."³⁷ The true explanation for the demons fleeing is that the "strong man," or Satan's kingdom, is not able to protect his property because someone stronger than he has overpowered him, namely Jesus with the power of the kingdom of God.³⁸ Jesus has power to cast out demons because He is the anointed one who God filled with His presence and power.³⁹ The kingdom of Satan expresses its power over humans through demon possession.⁴⁰ Jesus entered into a conflict with

Satan, the prince of demons, and He successfully exorcised evil spirits, thus clearly demonstrating a sign of the kingdom of God.⁴¹ Thus, "the exorcisms demonstrate that the reign of God is putting to an end the reign of Satan."⁴² As the kingdom of God takes ground in the battle, an intense assault occurs on the front lines as suggested by Matt. 11:12 and Luke 16:16.⁴³ Furthermore, as Jesus hears how the seventy returned with joy that they had cast out demons using His name, He envisions Satan falling from heaven in defeat⁴⁴--for these exorcisms show it is "the dawn of the annihilation of Satan."⁴⁵

Even though the kingdom of God was manifested in Jesus' ministry to a certain degree, He taught His disciples to pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven."⁴⁶ This prayer implies that God accomplishes His will perfectly in heaven and, although God rules the universe, His kingdom rule is not yet fully realized in some places on earth since the devil is the temporary ruler of the world. According to the Synoptic Gospels, at the End of the Age, God will judge the wicked, bringing destruction to Satan and evil, and defend the righteous, giving them an inheritance in the presence of the glory of the Son of Man.⁴⁷

SUPPORT FROM THE JOHANNINE LITERATURE

The Johannine Literature supports the idea that the central focus of the theology of the New Testament is God's ultimate

victory over evil. The Johannine Literature consists of the Gospel of John, the three Epistles of John, and Revelation. In the Gospel of John, Jesus references "the ruler of this world,"⁴⁸ which shows the devil⁴⁹ to be "temporarily supreme" in the world.⁵⁰ John views the world as loving evil and opposing Christ and his followers.⁵¹ In John 18:36, Jesus says His kingdom is not of this world; yet, out of love for the world in 3:16, the Father sent the Son into the world to die as "the Lamb of God" to take away the sins of humanity⁵² to enable those who believe in Him to have eternal life and to enter God's kingdom.

In the Gospel of John, in a conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus shows that the privilege of seeing and entering the kingdom of God is dependent upon a miraculous birth from above.⁵³ At the end of the dialogue, Jesus explains the purpose for his upcoming death, using an Old Testament analogy of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness.⁵⁴ Just as the Israelites looked upon the bronze snake and God physically healed them, so people should look upon the Son of Man being lifted up on the cross, in faith and belief that God is doing something significant through it (i.e. dying for peoples' sins), and subsequently God will heal them spiritually and grant them eternal life.⁵⁵ Within this passage, there seems to be a correlation between entering the kingdom of God by being born again and having eternal life by believing. From this point on, starting with the famous verse of

3:16, John's Gospel continuously shows "eternal life" as the main message of Jesus. Although the kingdom of God terminology only appears twice in the Gospel, John Wyckoff says it is reasonable to say that John was thinking about the kingdom of God throughout his writings. Supporting this, Wyckoff makes a keen observation saying that the main message of the Gospels is the kingdom of God, whereas the main message of Jesus in John's Gospel is eternal life; therefore, the kingdom of God and eternal life are parallel and equivalent.⁵⁶ Leon Morris supports this saying, "John frequently speaks of eternal life, and for him the possession of eternal life appears to mean very much the same as entering the kingdom of God as the Synoptists picture it."⁵⁷ In spite of the sparse references to the phrase "kingdom of God," Marshall says "the concept of Jesus as king and therefore the ruler of a kingdom (Jn 18:36) is powerfully present."⁵⁸ Thus, the kingdom of God is central to John's Gospel.

The Apostle John discusses the kingdom of God in his epistles by giving practical applications and instruction on how to relate to one another and to God about eternal life and the kingdom of God.⁵⁹ In Revelation, John envisions a day when the "kingdom of the world" shall become "the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ,"⁶⁰ thus implying great opposition between the two and that the kingdom of the world must be conquered. John shows that the forces of evil are strong, but God will overpower

all evil in the end, for John foresees the futuristic completion of the kingdom of God at the End of the Age, with a portrait of the new heaven and new earth.⁶¹ Regardless of one's views of the steps leading to the final events of history,⁶² all Christians agree that God will consummate the kingdom with Christ's return⁶³ and reign victorious over evil in the age to come after binding Satan, then casting him into the lake of fire,⁶⁴ and then destroying death.⁶⁵

SUPPORT FROM ACTS

The book of Acts supports the idea that the central focus of the theology of the New Testament is God's ultimate victory over evil. The book of Acts stands out in its own literary group as theological history. Six times in Acts, Luke presents the kingdom as the central message of the risen Christ and, subsequently "in summary form,"⁶⁶ of the apostles, as shown in Acts 1:3; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; and 28:23, 31.⁶⁷ Although Luke uses the kingdom of God terminology less in Acts than his Gospel, the focus of Acts is on the risen exalted Christ reigning and ruling in glory on earth.⁶⁸ The resurrection of Jesus is a prominent theme,⁶⁹ signifying the "commencement of the general resurrection—the intrusion of the new age and the new creation," whereby Jesus now rules and reigns the world as Lord and Christ "by virtue of His resurrection and exaltation."⁷⁰ Although the King, Jesus, has gone away for a while, Christ

continues to rule and advance His kingdom in the power of the Spirit through the church, and He has promised to return to inaugurate His eschatological kingdom.

The book of Acts, like the Gospel of Luke, shows that the deliverance of Satan's victims from his power is an important concern of Jesus, the apostles, and the other evangelists.⁷¹ Acts 10:38 says, "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him." Jesus desired to use Paul "to open [people's] eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins."⁷² Like Jesus, His followers drove out evil spirits from people in Acts 8:7, 16:18, and 19:12. Luke's message in Acts, according to Thielman, shows that God's power is successfully moving against evil forces that try to hinder God's saving purpose to heal the sick, open people's hearts to receive the gospel, and free people from Satan's bondage.⁷³

SUPPORT FROM THE PAULINE EPISTLES

The Pauline Epistles support the idea that the central focus of the theology of the New Testament is God's ultimate victory over evil. The Pauline Epistles consist of all letters written by the Apostle Paul, from which conservative scholars include Romans, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians,

Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Paul's letters are occasional documents written to address practical needs or real problems in the churches as they grew throughout the Roman Empire. All these epistles are practical application of the kingdom of God principles and help to bring about the kingdom as people follow those principles.⁷⁴ Therefore, concepts related to the kingdom of God are prevalent, even if the precise terminology is not as prevalent. Paul directly mentions the kingdom of God eight times,⁷⁵ though he uses the Greek term *basileia* (translated "kingdom" or "reign") fifteen times, or seven times without appending the phrase "of God."⁷⁶ Most scholars agree that the kingdom of Christ in Col. 1:13 and Eph. 5:5 is synonymous with the kingdom of God.⁷⁷ According to Larry Kreitzer, "While the explicit expression 'kingdom of God/Christ' is not widespread within the Pauline letters, the idea is a fundamental component of Paul's eschatological perspective and underlies the whole of his teaching."⁷⁸ According to Wyckoff, "For Paul, the kingdom of God is the Messianic rule of God in Christ."⁷⁹ From Paul's perspective, Jesus' mission to establish the kingdom of God began at His resurrection and ascension, and the mission will be finalized when all of Jesus' enemies are destroyed as shown in 1 Cor. 15:24-25.⁸⁰ "The kingdom is primarily invisible now but will become visible at the eschatological appearance of the King (2

Tim. 4:1)." ⁸¹ Paul proclaims the kingdom of God as a present reality for Christians in Rom. 14:17 and 1 Cor. 4:20, but he also presents the kingdom of God as awaiting future consummation in passages such as 1 Cor. 6:9; 15:50; Gal. 5:21; 1 Thess. 2:12; and 2 Thess. 1:5.

Paul writes about "this present evil age" ⁸² ruled by "the god of this world," ⁸³ Satan, and how all of creation suffers and anticipates redemption from the corruption of evil. ⁸⁴ People, especially, need to overcome evil, but Paul did not have any confidence in their own ability to overcome evil, for "he saw evil forces in many places. There is the power of sin, of the flesh (the enemy within), and of the evil one and other wicked spirits . . . [and] the sway of death." ⁸⁵ In contrast, Paul saw God breaking into history in Christ and delivering people from the predicament of sin, using such words as "redemption, reconciliation, propitiation." ⁸⁶ Thus, Paul says in Col. 1:13-14, God has "delivered us [believers in Christ] from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Guthrie says this deliverance is "the same kind of dynamic overthrow of the powers of evil as is found in the synoptic exorcisms." ⁸⁷ In the end, God will be victorious over evil as He supernaturally destroys Satan and death ⁸⁸ and raises the righteous dead in incorruptible bodies to inherit the blessings of the kingdom. ⁸⁹

SUPPORT FROM THE OTHER NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS

The other New Testament writings, not covered yet, also support the idea that the central focus of the theology of the New Testament is God's ultimate victory over evil. The other New Testament writings, not covered yet, are grouped together and include Hebrews, James, 1st and 2nd Peter, and Jude. The epistle to the Hebrews is "permeated with the idea of inheritance" and says in 12:28, believers receive an unshakable kingdom, "which suggests both a present experience and a future hope."⁹⁰ James mentions "heirs of the kingdom,"⁹¹ while 1 Peter references "an inheritance which is imperishable,"⁹² and 2 Peter references "the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."⁹³ 2 Pet. 3:7 says God will judge and destroy ungodly men and bring about a new righteous order at the end of time.⁹⁴ Although God has already partially judged Satan, Jude cautions people about slandering the devil and thinking that he has no power on earth at this time.⁹⁵ Jude further warns that judgment will fall on the last day upon those who give themselves over to evil.⁹⁶

Although the kingdom of God terminology does not appear much in Hebrews and the General Epistles, they do speak of the kingdom in general concepts as Jesus breaks in and develops the church.⁹⁷ Similar to the Pauline Epistles, Wyckoff says that the General Epistles "address situations and circumstances that God's people are dealing with relative to the kingdom of God."⁹⁸

CONCLUSION

This paper shows that the central focus of the theology of the New Testament is God's ultimate victory over evil, especially as the New Testament reflects this focus in the kingdom of God theme. The kingdom of God is the reign of God, thus wherever God is ruling, there the kingdom of God is. The New Testament shows that evil permeates much of the world, but evil flees as the kingdom of God breaks in and manifests itself. While the kingdom has (and continues to) come into history to a certain degree already, the New Testament shows that God will consummate a powerful, physical and spiritual kingdom of God at the End of the Age, which will dispel Satan, demons, sin, death, and all evil. For now, Christ rules and reigns in the hearts of believers, but Christ will eventually put an end to Satan and his control, thus gaining ultimate victory over evil. The five sections of the New Testament focus around God's ultimate victory over evil, especially as seen in the kingdom of God.

The Synoptic Gospels clearly and abundantly show that Jesus' central message was the kingdom of God.⁹⁹ These Gospels—Mark especially—show that Jesus, with the power of God, came into a world enslaved by Satan to battle against evil and not just to show mercy to humanity.¹⁰⁰ Jesus exemplifies the presence of the kingdom of God by his proclamations about the kingdom and by performing miracles and exorcisms. Among the Johannine

Literature, the Gospel of John shows Jesus' main message to be eternal life--the equivalent of the kingdom of God. The world is in the grip of Satan, but Jesus brings deliverance from sins. John's epistles give practical applications in reference to eternal life and the kingdom of God. In Revelation, readers see a great conflict between the forces of God and evil, and they see how God's kingdom ultimately prevails over Satan, death, and evil. The book of Acts shows that the central message of the risen Christ and of His apostles (in summary form) was the kingdom of God. Further, Acts shows how believers, with the power of God, expelled demons. In the thirteen Pauline Epistles, the concepts related to the kingdom of God are prevalent. Paul explains how Christ has delivered believers from sin and translated them out of darkness into His great kingdom. In addition to a present spiritual reality of the kingdom, Paul shows that Christ will ultimately defeat death and evil at the End of the Age. The book of Hebrews and the General Epistles speak of the kingdom in general concepts and that believers will inherit the kingdom. Further, God will judge and destroy the wicked. Therefore, the five sections of the New Testament reflect a central theological focus of God's ultimate victory over evil, especially in light of prevalent references to the kingdom of God, which dispels evil as God reigns.

NOTES

¹ George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed., edited by Donald A. Hagner (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993), 20.

² *Ibid.*, 8-9.

³ Gerhard F. Hasel, *New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978), 151; Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 9.

⁴ Hasel, 153-54.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁷ Alan Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (London, UK: SCM Press Ltd, 1958), 84.

⁸ George Eldon Ladd, "Kingdom of Christ, God, Heaven," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter A. Elwell (2001; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 657.

⁹ *Ibid.*; 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

¹⁰ John Wyckoff, "Pervasive Themes of NT Theo-Pt 1," (lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, July 14, 2006), Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/jwyckoff/the5313jwyckoff/Pervasive%20Themes%20of%20NT%20Theo--Pt%201_140706162107/class/Sun.htm?Watchid=1224075784453 (accessed October 15, 2008).

¹¹ Ladd, "Kingdom of Christ, God, Heaven," 658.

¹² C. H. Dodd suggests a "realized eschatology" where the kingdom of God is primarily spiritual and already fully present; whereas G. W. Kummel, Albert Schweitzer, and Johannes Weiss emphasize a futuristic eschatological kingdom; and many other scholars, including Ladd, realize that the Bible holds both views in tension in such a way that the kingdom of God is both present and future. Graeme Goldsworthy, "Kingdom of God," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al.

(2003; repr., Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 617-18.

¹³ Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20; Matt. 16:28-17:9; Mark 9:1-10; Luke 9:27-36.

¹⁴ Mark 9:47; 10:15, 24-25; 14:25; cf. Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2.

¹⁵ Eric J. Sharpe, "Kingdom of God," in *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*, ed. Alan Richardson and John Bowden (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 317.

¹⁶ Ladd, 48.

¹⁷ Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 154; Richardson, 85; Hans Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., trans. John Bowden, New York: Harper and Row, 1969, originally published as *Grundriss der Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1968), 108. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1981), 409.

¹⁸ Ladd, "Kingdom of Christ, God, Heaven," 657. Similarly, Richardson says the phrase "kingdom of heaven" is a "reverential avoidance of the use of the word 'God'" (85), and Guthrie says "heaven" was substituted "for God out of typical Jewish reverence for the divine name" (409).

¹⁹ Goldsworthy, 615.

²⁰ Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Charles Scriber's Sons, 1971), originally published as *Neutestamentliche Theologie I* (Teil: Die Verkündigung Jesu, 1971), 96. Likewise, Guthrie describes the kingdom of God as "the activity of reigning" instead of emphasizing an area being reigned (409).

²¹ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 vols. (1951-55, repr., Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 1:4.

²² Mark 1:14.

²³ According to I. Howard Marshall, "the good news from God is concerned with salvation, that is, the well-being in the

truest and fullest sense of human beings": I. Howard. Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004), 57.

²⁴ Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, vol. 34A of *Word Biblical Commentary*, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Nashville: Nelson Reference & Electronic, 1989), 43, 45.

²⁵ Marshall, 580.

²⁶ Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Temper Longman III, eds., "Kingdom of God/Kingdom of Heaven," in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1998), 480.

²⁷ For example, Matt. 6:39-44; 8:1-9, 11-12; 13:24, 31, 33, 44-47; 18:23; 20:1; 22:2; 25:1; Mark 4:26-29; 4:30-32; 13:33; 14:25; Luke 13:18-19, 20-21, 28-29; 14:15-24; 22:18.

²⁸ Ryken et al., 480.

²⁹ Matt. 13:44.

³⁰ Matt. 13:45-46.

³¹ Matt. 20:1-16.

³² Sharpe, 317.

³³ Goldsworthy, 616.

³⁴ Ryken et al., 480-81.

³⁵ Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 49.

³⁶ Matt. 12:24-28.

³⁷ Richardson, 98.

³⁸ Matt. 12:29; Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21-22; Richardson 98.

³⁹ Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20.

⁴⁰ Matt. 12:26; Luke 11:18; Ladd, "Kingdom of Christ, God, Heaven," 658.

⁴¹ Ryken et al., 481; Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20.

⁴² Richardson, 98.

⁴³ Ryken et al., 481.

⁴⁴ Luke 10:17-18.

⁴⁵ Jeremias, 95.

⁴⁶ Matt. 6:10.

⁴⁷ For example, Matt. 12:32; 13:39-40, 49; 24:3; 25:31-46; 28:20; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; 20:35.

⁴⁸ John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.

⁴⁹ John 8:44; 13:2; 13:27 (reference to Satan).

⁵⁰ R. V. G. Tasker, *John*, vol. of *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, ed. R. V. G. Tasker (1960, repr., Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 173.

⁵¹ Leon Morris, *New Testament Theology* (1986; repr., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 280.

⁵² John 1:29.

⁵³ John 3:3, 5.

⁵⁴ Mark 1:14.

⁵⁵ Mark 1:15.

⁵⁶ John Wyckoff, "Major Pervasive NT Theological Themes-Pt 2," (lecture, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, TX, July 19, 2006), Tegrity video file, http://tegrity.sagu.edu/tegrity/jwyckoff/the5313jwyckoff/Major%20Pervasive%20NT%20Theological%20Themes-Pt%202_190706131613/class/Sun.htm?Watchid=1224171658328 (accessed October 15, 2008). Thomas Schreiner also concurs as he quotes further agreement from Kostenberger that "eternal life" is essentially equivalent to the "kingdom of God" as seen by their parallel use of Matt. 19:16, 24: Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 95. Ladd also observes the major emphasis of the Synoptics and the Gospel of John and sees a resemblance between the kingdom of

God and eternal life: Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 290, 295, 334.

⁵⁷ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, rev. ed., vol. of *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 190.

⁵⁸ Marshall, 581.

⁵⁹ Wyckoff, "Major Pervasive NT Theological Themes-Pt 2."

⁶⁰ Rev. 11:15.

⁶¹ Rev. 21:1 - 22:5.

⁶² Such as pre-millennialism, post-millennialism, or a-millennialism.

⁶³ Rev. 19.

⁶⁴ Rev. 20:10.

⁶⁵ Rev. 20:14; Ladd, "Kingdom of Christ, God, Heaven," 659-60.

⁶⁶ Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 369.

⁶⁷ Goldsworthy, 616.

⁶⁸ Wyckoff, "Pervasive Themes of NT Theo-Pt 1."

⁶⁹ For example, Acts 2:24-32; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40-41; 13:30-37; 23:6-10; 24:15; 26:8.

⁷⁰ Schreiner, 29.

⁷¹ Frank Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 126.

⁷² Acts 26:18.

⁷³ Thielman, 127.

⁷⁴ Wyckoff, "Pervasive Themes of NT Theo-Pt 1."

⁷⁵ Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 4:20; 6:9; 15:50; Gal. 5:21; Col. 4:11; 1 Thess. 2:12; and 2 Thess. 1:15.

⁷⁶ 1 Cor. 6:10; 15:24; Eph. 5:5; Col. 1:13; 2 Tim. 4:1, 14, 18.

⁷⁷ McKim, 154; Bertold Klappert, "King, Kingdom," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2 G-Pre, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 388.

⁷⁸ Larry J. Kreitzer, "Kingdom of God/Christ," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 526.

⁷⁹ Wyckoff, "Pervasive Themes of NT Theo-Pt 1."

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Gal. 1:4.

⁸³ 2 Cor. 4:4. Ladd emphasizes that 2 Cor. 4:4 must be seen "in light of the fact that God remains the King of the ages (1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 15:3)": Ladd, "Kingdom of Christ, God, Heaven," 658.

⁸⁴ Rom. 8:20-23.

⁸⁵ Morris, *New Testament Theology*, 325.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Guthrie, 428.

⁸⁸ 1 Cor. 15:26.

⁸⁹ 1 Cor. 15:50.

⁹⁰ Guthrie, 429.

⁹¹ James 2:5.

⁹² 1 Pet. 1:4.

⁹³ 2 Pet. 1:11.

⁹⁴ 2 Pet. 3:13.

⁹⁵ Jude 8-12.

⁹⁶ Jude 5-16; Schreiner 36-37.

⁹⁷ Wyckoff, "Major Pervasive NT Theological Themes-Pt 2."

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 54, 368.

¹⁰⁰ Jeremias, 94.

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