

# The Reflector

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## MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD!

When questioned by Pilate as to whether or not He was a king, Jesus answered and said *"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."* (John 18:33-36) Jesus was simply saying that His kingdom was not earthly in nature, for if it was His servants would have fought an earthly battle to keep Him from being arrested by the Jews. The truth is that Jesus had not come to build an earthly kingdom, but rather a **"spiritual kingdom in which mankind could be saved from their sins."** That is apparent from the fact that it takes a **"spiritual birth"** to enter the kingdom of Christ according to John 3:1-12. After Jesus performed the miracle of feeding 5000 people in John 6:1-15, some of the Jews wanted to take Jesus and **"force Him to be their king"**, but Jesus ran away from them. Why did He do this if He had come to be an earthly king?

Jesus did indeed establish a kingdom when He came to earth, but again it was **"spiritual in nature"**, not an earthly kingdom. Colossians 1:13 speaks of how the Colossians had been **"...translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son."** And according to Matthew 16:18-19, the **"kingdom and the church"** are one and the same thing. Yet we read in Acts 2:47 that the **"...Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."** The teaching that says that Jesus has yet to establish His kingdom but will do so in the near future is false. When Jesus comes back it will not therefore be to build His kingdom, but to judge all mankind by the word of God! (John 12:48) **ARE YOU A PART OF THE LORD'S KINGDOM TODAY?** If not, then you need to be **"born again of water and the Spirit in order to enter the kingdom of God."** (John 3:1-7)

## ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S BIBLE QUESTIONS:

Hiram the king of Tyre was the king that sent workers to build a house for David. (2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 5:11)

Isaiah was the prophet of God that spoke to Hezekiah and told him that he was going to die. Hezekiah then prayed to God and God heard his prayer and increased his life by 15 years. (2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 20:1-11/Isaiah 38:1-9)

## QUESTIONS FOR THIS MONTH:

How many plagues did God bring upon Egypt in order to cause Pharaoh to let the Israelites go? (What was the final plague that brought about their release?)

What is the name of the man who interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh? (What man interpreted the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar?)

What two people in the New Testament sold a piece of land and pretended to give all of the money for that land to the Apostles? (What happened to these two people?)

## CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND THE BIBLE!

Although there are a lot of religious people who oppose the Death Penalty today, in reality the Bible and therefore God approve of the practice. During the Patriarchal Age, the following statement is found in Genesis 9:6: ***"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man."*** In the Mosaic Age the following statement is found in Exodus 21:12: ***"He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death."*** And in the Christian Age the following statement is found in Romans 13:1-4, especially verse 4: ***"For he (civil government) is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."*** It was in this light that Jesus recognized Pilate's authority to put Him to death. (John 19:10-11) Furthermore the Apostle Paul recognized that certain crimes were indeed worthy of death. (Acts 25:11) If the commandment ***"Thou shalt not kill"*** (Exodus 20:13) is a prohibition against capital punishment as some people say it is, then why in the very next chapter did God give instructions that murderers should be put to death? ((Exodus 21:12-17) A literal translation of the Hebrew text of Exodus 20:13 reads this way: ***"Thou shalt do no murder."*** This commandment therefore is not opposed to the death penalty at all, but is opposed to the murder of innocent people, for which crime God demanded the execution of the murderer.

## ARE YOU SURE OF YOUR SALVATION?

Have you ever thought seriously about whether or not you are really saved? Or is this a matter you have just taken for granted? The truth is, this is the one matter you cannot afford to take for granted. Whether we like it or not, someday we are all going to stand before the ***"Judgment seat of Christ"*** to be judged. (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:10) We may not experience physical death if Jesus returns first, but we cannot escape the Final Judgment. But once we die, or once Jesus returns, there will be **"no 2<sup>nd</sup> chance"** to make our lives right with God! That is why we cannot afford to take our salvation for granted. In Matthew 7:21-23 Jesus talks about a group of religious people who apparently thought they were saved, but it turned out that they were lost. Listen to what these verses say: ***"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*** Are you a part of a religious group today that claims to do the kind of things that Jesus spoke of in these verses? Are you sure that you are really saved? Or maybe you're just one of those people that Jesus was talking about in these verses that just thought they were saved, and yet in reality were never truly known by Jesus; therefore lost? It certainly is something worth thinking about!

There is one sure way to know whether or not you are truly saved. That is by looking at what the Bible says you must do in order to be saved and then doing those things. For example listen to the words of Jesus Himself in regards to the question of **"how to be saved."**

John 8:24 – ***"...For except ye believe that I am He, ye shall die in your sins."***

Luke 13:3 – ***"...Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish."***

Matthew 10:32 – ***"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, Him will I confess before my Father in heaven."***

Mark 16:16 – ***"He that believeth, and is baptized shall be saved..."***

If you have done these things in the manner that the Bible says they should be done, then and only then can you know that you are truly saved! Salvation doesn't come **"by faith only, or through the sinner's prayer, or through infant baptism, or even by accepting Christ as your personal Savior"**, but comes only through **"obeying Jesus Christ"**, who is the **"author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him."** (Hebrews 5:9)