

THE EQUIP INSTITUTE

Theme: Baptist Beliefs

Topic: BF&M (2000): Article IX: The Kingdom

Winter 2026

Introduction

The Equip Institute exists to equip members of Taylors First Baptist Church to think rightly about God and his Word for the sake of living rightly before God in his world. The topic this week is Article IX in the Baptist Faith and Message (2000), which is on the Kingdom.

Article IX

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

Key Biblical Texts

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. (Isa. 9:6-7)

⁵"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'" (Jer. 23:5-6)

²⁹I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matt. 26:29)

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)

¹And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." (Mark 9:1)

²⁰Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, ²¹nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." (Luke 17:20-21)

⁴² And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." (Luke 23:42)

³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again^[a] he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." (John 18:36)

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. (Acts 1:6-7)

²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. ²⁸ When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24-28)

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son (Col. 1:13)

²⁸ Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe (Heb. 12:28)

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet. 2:9-10)

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. 11:15)

Observations

Exposition of Article IX

Historical Context

While many historic Baptist confessions have referenced the kingdom, all three editions of the Baptist Faith and Message dedicate an article to the theme. There was minimal development between the 1925 and 1963 editions of the BF&M, and no changes from 1963 to 2000.

Among evangelicals in the English-speaking world, the kingdom has become an important theme since the mid-nineteenth century, in part because of debates about eschatology (end times). Many Baptist scholars have been key participants in these kingdom debates.

Evangelical Baptist theologians—most of them Southern Baptists—have been key shapers of evangelical kingdom theology. This article in the BF&M (2000) has not been controversial, though it is also silent in some ongoing areas of debate among theologically conservative Baptists.

Key Ideas

The kingdom represents the sphere of God's sovereign rule

In general, God is King over the entire created order and rules over it providentially

Thus, there is a sense in which the kingdom extends to all creation

More particularly, God is the King of all those who faithfully acknowledge his rule

Individuals enter into God's kingdom via salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ

Thus, there is also a sense in which the kingdom includes only those who are saved

Christians advance the kingdom by proclaiming the gospel to those who have not yet believed

Christians should long prayerfully for the fullness of the kingdom, when God's will is done on earth as in heaven

This kingdom fullness will only be realized upon the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the present age

Consensus and Debates

The BF&M (2000) offers a good "merely evangelical" account of the kingdom. There is widespread agreement on several key points. The kingdom represents God's rule, over God's people, in God's place, for

God's glory. At the heart of Jesus's ministry was his proclamation of the good news (gospel) that God's kingdom was dawning. The kingdom is an "already/not-yet" reality in that it is already present but not fully realized. To be a Christian is to be one who acknowledges the Kingship of God through Jesus. Christians advance the kingdom through evangelism.

There are some aspects of kingdom theology debated by Southern Baptists (and other evangelicals). For Southern Baptists, while these debates might affect which church someone joins, they have not been a point of contention in terms of our cooperation. In general, there are at least five big questions.

1. How do the biblical covenants relate to God's kingdom?
2. How does Israel (past, present, and future) relate to God's kingdom on this side of Jesus's earthly ministry?
3. Will there be a future millennial kingdom on earth that anticipates the kingdom fullness of the new creation, or is the present spiritual reign of Christ among his people the only foretaste of the kingdom?
4. Do other ministries besides evangelism play a role in advancing the kingdom?
5. Are there points of tension between our citizenship in God's kingdom and our citizenship in earthly kingdoms?