

Defining the Words of the Kingdom

- I. By defining the word “kingdom” and related words, it can be determined that the local N.T. church is the kingdom of heaven, a spiritual nation-state with a unique constitution and governmental system (boldface added below for emphasis).
- A. kingdom: Kingly function, authority, or power; sovereignty, supreme rule; the position or rank of a king, kingship. An organized community having a king as its head; a **monarchical state or government**.
 - B. king: The usual title of the male sovereign ruler of an **independent state**.
 - C. state: **Commonwealth** (the whole body of people constituting a nation or state, the **body politic**). *the state* = The body politic as organized for supreme civil rule and government; the political organization which is the basis of civil government; hence, the supreme civil power and government vested in a country or **nation**.
 - D. body politic: The **nation** in its corporate character; the state.
 - E. political: Of, belonging, or pertaining to the state or **body of citizens**, its government and policy, esp. in civil, and secular affairs.
 - F. civil: Of or belonging to **citizens**; consisting of citizens, or men dwelling together in a community. 2. Of or pertaining to the whole body or community of citizens; pertaining to the organization and internal affairs of the body politic, or state.”
 - G. citizen: An inhabitant of a city or (often) of a town; esp. one possessing civic rights and privileges... 2. A member of a state, an enfranchised (**admitted to membership** in a body politic and to political privileges) inhabitant of a country, as opposed to an alien.
 - H. nation: An extensive aggregate of persons, so closely associated with each other by **common descent, language, or history, as to form a distinct race or people**, usually organized as a separate political state and occupying a **definite territory**.
 - I. constitution: The system or body of fundamental principles according to which a **nation, state, or body politic** is constituted and governed.
- II. The church that Jesus built is the *kingdom of heaven*. **MAT 16:18-19**.
- A. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. It will never be destroyed, as was prophesied of the kingdom in **DAN 2:44**.
 - B. Jesus connects the concept of the church in **v. 18** with the concept of the kingdom in **v. 19** with the word “and.”
 - C. The local church as it is described in the New Testament bears the features of a kingdom.
 - 1. It has a king.
 - a. God in Christ rules over the local church as its Head and King. **REV 15:3 c/w 1CO 1:2; COL 1:18; HEB 6:20-7:2**.
 - b. A king is also called a *head*. **1SAM 15:17**.
 - c. This is why it is called the kingdom OF GOD.
 - 2. It is a commonwealth. **EPH 2:11-13**.
 - 3. It has citizens. **EPH 2:19**.
 - 4. It has a constitution and a body of laws. **MAT 28:19-20; 2CO 3:6; GAL 6:2; JAM 1:25**.
 - 5. It has ministers to enforce those laws. **1CO 4:1-2; 2CO 3:6**.
 - a. minister: A servant, attendant; one who acts under the authority of another; one who carries out executive duties as the agent or representative of a superior.
 - b. Its ministers bear a sword to execute God's vengeance upon those who do

- evil. **ROM 13:1-5 c/w EPH 6:17 c/w 2CO 10:6.**
6. It has a tribute for the support of its ministers. **ROM 13:6-7.**
 - a. tribute: A tax or impost paid by one prince or state to another in acknowledgement of submission or as a price of peace, security, and protection; rent or homage paid in money or an equivalent by a subject to his sovereign or a vassal to his lord.
 - b. What one pays a minister is in reality a payment to God, which He designates for the support of His minister. c/w **NUM 18:8, 19; 31:41.**
 7. It has a court with a judge and jury to execute judgment upon lawbreakers. **1CO 5 & 6.**
 - a. The pastor, after Paul's pattern, presides as a judge overseeing the process and instructing the church in the law. **ACT 20:28.**
 - b. The church as a jury gives verdict.
 8. It has an army equipped for combat.
 - a. Gospel ministers are spoken of as soldiers at war. **PHIL 2:25; 2TI 2:3-4.**
 - b. Church members are in a battle with the flesh and the devil. **1PE 2:11; EPH 6:12.**
 - c. The church is equipped with spiritual armour for both defensive and offensive warfare. **EPH 6:10-18; 2CO 10:3-5.**
 9. It has a feast to commemorate and give thanks for its heritage. **1CO 5:7-8; 10:16-17.**
 - a. Jesus had promised His apostles that they would eat and drink at His table in His kingdom. **LUK 22:29-30.**
 - b. The Lord's Table or communion service is a local church ordinance.
 - c. Therefore, the local church is our Lord's kingdom.
 - d. This feast is administered by kingdom officials, Christ's stewards. **1CO 4:1-2.**
 - (1) steward: An **official** who controls the domestic affairs of a household, **supervising the service of his master's table**, directing the domestics, and regulating household expenditure; a major-domo.
 - (2) This is a corporate ordinance of kingdom protocol, not an individual ordinance.
- D. The church is the kingdom of heaven in that it is ruled from heaven, the throne of God. **MAT 5:34.**
1. The church on earth is an extension of the government of heaven.
 - a. It is an independent state under God its King.
 - b. The church continues its government under God regardless of the form of government of the country wherein it is located.
 - c. Therefore, the church must NEVER apply to a human government for incorporation as that would place it under another king.
 2. Its members have their citizenship in heaven. **PHIL 3:20.**
 - a. conversation: The action of living or having one's being **in** a place or **among** persons.
 - b. The Greek word translated "conversation" is "politeuma" (SRN G4175) and means "community" or "citizenship."
 3. Like an embassy on foreign soil, the church is the territory of heaven on this earth!
 - a. Ambassadors are officers who are charged with the duty of representing the

- kingdom's interests through its embassy in the foreign land.
- b. Ministers like Paul are *ambassadors* for King Jesus.
2CO 5:20; EPH 6:20.
- 4. The church/kingdom is a *nation*. **MAT 21:43 c/w 1PE 2:5-9 c/w 1TI 3:15.**
 - a. Per the definition, the church has a common descent and history from Christ and the apostles (**MAT 28:19-20**), a common language of faith (**ROM 10:8-12**) and is formed into a distinct (separate) people. **2CO 6:17.**
 - b. It has defined borders, immigration/naturalization officials and a citizenship process to determine who may become a citizen of the kingdom.
 - c. The "border wall" divides between the impenitent unbeliever and the penitent believer. **ACT 2:38-41.**
 - d. Christ's ministers are His immigration/naturalization officers who are uniquely authorized to grant entrance and citizenship in keeping with the kingdom's constitution.
 - (1) Christ's ministers serve as *porters*. c/w **MAR 13:34.**
 - (2) porter: One who has charge of a door or gate...
 - (3) The immigration/naturalization process in their power is examination of applicants and the granting of water baptism to the qualified to make one a citizen.
MAR 3:14 c/w MAT 28:16-20 c/w ACT 2:38-41, 47.
 - (4) It is a grave error to seize on kingdom authority and presume to do its official business. **HEB 5:4; ACT 8:19-22.**
 - e. Obviously, the local churches are Heaven's embassies on earth. They are the kingdom of heaven on earth.
- E. Therefore, to fight the church is to declare war on God's country and to slight the church is to slight God's government. **MAT 22:1-7.**
- F. In view of receiving this immovable kingdom, we are called upon to have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably. **HEB 12:28-29.**
 - 1. God is acceptably served with reverence and godly fear.
 - 2. God is a consuming fire not to be trifled with!
 - 3. God is obviously very serious about His church and we had better be serious about it as well.