

**Schedule of Meeting Times:**

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM  
*Speaker, Robert Emerson*  
 Study Sunday 10:00 AM  
 Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM  
 Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM  
*Singing every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday evening*  
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

**Preacher / bulletin editor:**

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“Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.”

— Acts 22:16

**Servants during May:**

**Songleader:** Larry (1), David (8), Peter (15), Stanley (22), Larry (29)

**Reading:** Mike B

**Announcements:** Larry

**Table:** Stanley, Marty, Mike M, Peter

**Wednesday Lesson:** Larry (4), Stanley (11), Kris (18), Larry (25)

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):** Kris (1), Marty (8), Stanley (15), Larry (22), Robert (29)

**Area Meetings:**

Jackson Drive, Bill Hall (8-13);  
 Brookhill, Don Patton (15-18);  
 Killen Park, 6:30pm, Shelter #3 (23)  
 —a Historical Perspective on Institutionalism, Part 2

**Hays Mill church of Christ**

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 Elkmont, AL 35620

# The Bible . Examiner

“Examine everything carefully...” —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

Volume 5

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Number 1

## The Kingdom of God is Within You

By Bryan Matthew Dockens

According to Jesus, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you,” Lk 17:20,21. Contrary to popular theory, the establishment of God’s kingdom would not be a visible event. The coronation of Christ the King would not be witnessed by millions on earth. Rather, the kingdom is seated in the hearts of men.

There are those who say that when Christ returns He will be enthroned in Jerusalem, reigning over the earth for a thousand years. However, the Lord Himself said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here,” Jn 18:36. Shortly before the kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonian captivity, Jeremiah prophesied that Coniah would be the last of the independent, sovereign kings of that nation: “For none of his descendants shall prosper,

sitting on the throne of David, and ruling anymore in Judah,” Jer 22:30. Jesus was the fleshly descendant of Coniah, also known as Jeconiah, Mt 1:11; therefore, Jesus will never rule from David’s throne in Judah. It is true that He reigns on David’s throne, Lk 1:32; Acts 2:3, but not in Jerusalem.

It is also believed that Jesus has yet to establish His kingdom, thinking it won’t take place until the end. However, in His life on earth, the Lord said, “There are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God,” Lk 9:27. Unless there are two-thousand-year-old people walking the earth, the kingdom of God was established a very long time ago. The reign of Christ certainly will not begin at the resurrection because that is when it shall cease, as it is written, “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His

feet,” 1 Cor 15:24,25.

Jesus is reigning now and those who obey have already entered His realm. Paul wrote that the Father “has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins,” Col 1:13,14. Entrance into this kingdom is predicated on rebirth, as Jesus declared, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God,” Jn 3:5, with the application of water being a clear reference to baptism, Acts 10:47; 1 Pet 3:20,21.

Kingdoms ruled by mere men are subject to being overthrown and replaced, Dan 2:39,40, but God assures us that “we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken,” Heb 12:28; indeed “the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it,” Mt 16:18,19. Hundreds of years before Jesus came,

Daniel foretold, “The God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever,” Dan 2:44. We can take confidence in the unshakeable and enduring nature of this kingdom because of who reigns over it. Isaiah prophesied of the Christ: “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this,” Isa 9:6,7. Are you in the kingdom, Jn 3:5? Is the kingdom in you, Lk 17:21?



# What About Your Parents or Other Loved Ones?

*By Harold Hancock*

Do you hesitate to be baptized for the remission of sins, Acts 2:38; 22:16; or even to admit that the scriptures teach that you should be baptized to be saved, 1 Pet 3:21, because your parents or some other loved ones have failed to do so and because you are concerned about their spiritual welfare? If so, you

may be risking your eternal salvation while doing nothing to enhance their eternal destiny.

It is natural for you to be concerned about the spiritual welfare of your parents or other loved ones. You must realize, however, that your obedience can neither save your loved ones nor

condemn them to hell. God will fairly judge each person according to their own works and according to His word, 2 Cor 5:10; Jn 12:48. Hence, Paul said, “For every man shall bear his own burden,” Gal 6:5.

What does love, honesty, and true devotion to God demand when you learn truths that are different from what you once believed and from what your family and close friends believe and practice? If you learn “the way of God more perfectly,” that is, learn more about God’s will than you knew before, does not honesty and true devotion demand that you change and obey the Word of the Lord just as Apollos did when he was taught “the way of God more perfectly,” Acts 18:26? And would not parents or loved ones who are honest and truly devoted to God expect a loved one who has learned “the way of God more perfectly” to obey the commands of God—even the command of baptism? To suggest otherwise would cast reflection upon and question the honesty and devotion of your loved ones.

You have no opportunity to teach “the way of God more perfectly” to loved ones who are dead. They will meet the Lord as they were when they died, however honest and just they were, and with the choices they made

while on earth. Your obedience or disobedience will not change their eternal destiny, only yours. Do not be so concerned with judging the dead that you fail to walk wherein you have attained, Phil 3:16, or fail to preach the gospel to the living.

If your parents or loved ones are still alive, you may still have opportunity to teach them “the way of God more perfectly.” If they are truly devoted to the Lord, they want all of the truth, Mt 4:4. It is very unlikely you will ever teach them “the way of God more perfectly” if you do not admit truth and obey it yourself.

You must remember, also, that while you love your parents and/or others here on earth, you must love Christ more and put Him first, or you cannot be His disciple, Lk 14:26; Mt 6:33. You will be judging yourself “unworthy of everlasting life,” Acts 13:46, if you allow your love for others to keep you from obeying God.

Love God with all of your heart, soul, and mind, Mt 22:37, and obey Him at all costs; do not be ashamed of His gospel, but share it with those whom you love. By doing so, you will save yourself, cause no loved one to be lost, and save those loved ones who will “hear” you, 1 Tim 4:16. Do not wait; be baptized for the remission of sins to be saved!

## *Remember in Prayer*

Betty has been diagnosed with cancer, and has an appointment shortly for evaluation; please pray for both her and Robert. The Beddingfield’s suffer from multiple health issues. Joyce still struggles with cancer; please continue to pray for her, as well as Carolyn Dennis

and Dot Hice.

Please continue to pray for those affected by the war; the leaders of nations; and the upcoming elections in the US, 1 Tim 2:1,2. Pray also for persecuted brethren throughout the world, 1 Thess 1:2,3,6.