

An answer to the FIVE exception passages concerning the kingdom which are used to prove the kingdom is spiritual and not literal

There are 5 main passages in the New Testament that are used by those that believe that the kingdom of God is spiritual and in the hearts of men rather than a physical, literal, and future kingdom on this earth that shall last one thousand years. The passages are: **Luke 17:20-21; Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20; Colossians 1:13; and Revelation 1:9.**

One thing to keep in mind is that these are exceptional passages. The phrase **kingdom of God** appears in 68 verses of the New Testament and the single word **kingdom** appears 158 times in 150 verses. The majority of passages on the kingdom can be easily proven by plain reading to be something that is literal and future that will last **a thousand years** on this earth.

A basic ruler of Bible interpretation is that if the majority of texts teach one view and there are several apparent exceptions to the rule which seem to contradict the others, then the proper approach is to consider possible interpretations of that exception that harmonizes with the clearer texts. One thing is for sure God does not contradict Himself in the Scriptures. In this study we will seek to show that these exceptional passages harmonize with the majority.

I. Luke 17:21

Luke 17:20-21

20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, **the kingdom of God is within you.** (KJV)

Many of those, such as amillennialists, point to the questionable translation of the Greek word **entos** which has been translated by the King James as **within you.**

They say that the kingdom of God is spiritually or mystically inside a person. However, in the context Jesus is responding to the Pharisees not His disciples! Jesus is answering the Pharisees question, **when the kingdom of God should come??**

He later in the same context turns and addresses His own disciples in verse 22. The Pharisees were not his disciples! The Pharisees rejected the signs that Jesus had given to prove that he was the Christ, the Messiah. How could God's spiritual kingdom be within them? If the kingdom of God was within anyone spiritually it surely would not have been in the unbelieving Pharisees but rather in his disciples.

So this verse completely goes against the view, that the kingdom of God is within the hearts of people that have accepted Jesus as the Messiah, because the only time in the scripture that it is used, it is used in reference to those that had rejected Jesus to be the Christ.

The English translation **?within you?**

does not make any sense because the Pharisees had reject Christ as their Messiah. The 1611 KJV translators were not sure how best to translate this word, so they included a marginal note with the alternate reading, **"among you."**

This is obviously the true meaning of the word in this context. It is translated **"among you"** or **"in your midst"** in various other translations such as the NASB, RSV, BBE, NLT, NJB, NET and the Rotherham translation.

The Lord Jesus also used similar terms in other passages.

Matthew 12:28

But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then **the kingdom of God** is come unto you.

Luke 10:9

And **heal the sick** that are therein, and say unto them, **The kingdom of God** is come nigh unto you.

Jesus, the Son of God was the King of Israel (John 1:49). He was preaching to the Jewish people the kingdom of God was at hand. It was being offered to the nation of Israel on the condition of repentance and accepting Him as the Messiah. He was claiming to have the full absolute authority to establish the kingdom in their midst upon the acceptance of Him. He proved His claim by demonstrating the power of the kingdom by supernatural and miraculous signs. One of those signs was His full authority of the demonic realm.

Jesus commanded His apostles:

Matthew 10:7-8

7 And as ye go, **preach**, saying, **The kingdom of heaven** is at hand.

8 **Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils:** freely ye have received, freely give.

The signs of the kingdom were given to the Jews to demonstrate that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel (Mat.11:2-5; Jn.3:2; 9:32-33; 20:30-31; Acts2:22). The King was present and the kingdom could be established on the fulfillment of its conditions, repentance of Israel. In Matthew 12:28, Jesus as **the King** was referring to Himself as being the embodiment of **the Kingdom** at that time. This kind of language is also found in other passages in the gospels.

Mark 11:10

Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

Luke 19:38

Saying, **Blessed be the King** that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

So, when Jesus the King had come unto Israel it was the kingdom offer that had come unto them. The signs proved it! You cannot have a kingdom without a King. They did not have to wait any longer for the kingdom to come. However, the unbelieving Pharisees were being antagonistic toward Jesus and to the suggestion or proposal that He would be the One to fulfill the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets concerning the coming Messiah King that would sit on David's throne and reign over the nation of Israel. By them questioning Him, **?when the kingdom of God should come?** they were seeking to trap Him by His words and discredit Him in front of the people. In other words they were saying, **"If you're the Messiah, where is your Kingdom?"**

The question was irrelevant and inappropriate because Jesus, the Messiah was standing in their midst was the one who could set up the kingdom and the signs He demonstrated proved that possible. They did not have to go looking **?Lo here! or, lo there!?**

The healing of ten lepers in Luke 17:12-19 that preceded their question should have been enough to prove the fact that he was the King of Israel and that they should not be going around looking for any other signs. That is why He said, **"behold, the Kingdom of God is in your midst."**

He was basically saying, "hey, you're looking at the Kingdom of God!" All they had to do was look at the signs! The Messiah was present in their midst, He was the embodiment of the Kingdom and all the miraculous signs He was doing should have proved His claim. In their case the kingdom of God was not going to come **?with observation?** because He had already shown them the signs of the kingdom and no other signs were needed. This was all of the kingdom that they were going to see at His first coming.

By the statement **?The kingdom of God cometh not with observation?**

Jesus did NOT mean the Kingdom of God will never **"come with observation."**

That would completely contradict His words in other places where He plainly and clearly said that His kingdom would come with power and great glory (Mat.24:30). However, what He meant was that His Kingdom would not come in this manner **YET**

, at His first coming. Jesus of course knew that His physical literal Kingdom would not come to this earth until His second coming after His rejection. This is apparent from other statements by Jesus. For example:

John 18:36

Jesus answered, **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.**

The key word here is **"NOW."**

Jesus is saying that at His first coming His Kingdom would not be a physical Kingdom. The implication is that it

will come later. Jesus did not

deny the coming of His literal glorious Kingdom on the earth. Rather, He taught that its arrival was delayed until His second coming.

Revelation 11:15

And the seventh angel sounded (the last trumpet is at the second coming); and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign** for ever and ever.

This is further revealed in Luke 19 in the parable of the pounds, two chapters after Luke 17.

Luke 19:11

And as they heard these things, he (Jesus) added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they (His disciples) thought that **the kingdom of God should immediately appear.**

In the parable of the Talents that follows, Jesus indicated that He must go away for a time (approximately 2,000 years) leaving His servants in charge. But, He would return at some point **"having received the Kingdom,"** and would then judge His servants. The rewards given to the faithful in His absence would be authority as rulers in His coming Kingdom. This would be at His second coming or at **?His appearing?**

(2Tim.4:1). His second coming will come with observation. That is clearly shown in Luke 21 when Jesus told His apostles about the signs of the end of this present age and His second coming to this earth in order to establish His kingdom.

In Luke 17:22 onwards Jesus turns away from the Pharisees and begins to address His very own disciples.

Luke 17:22-26 And he (Jesus) said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of **the days of the Son of man**

, and ye shall not see it. 23 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven;

so shall also the Son of man be in his day. 25 But **first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation**

. 26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

Notice here Jesus did not tell His disciples **?the kingdom of God is within you?**

but rather He tells them that days are coming when, you my disciples would want to see **?the days of the Son of man,?**

but will not be able to, which means right then they could see the days but in future they will not be able to. The reason for this is in verse 25, because the Son of man **?FIRST must he suffer and be rejected of this generation.?**

This generation is the generation of Jews that Jesus offered the kingdom to in His first coming. Then He begins to reassure His disciples and to explain to them exactly when **again** they will be able to see the days of the Son of Man, **after he has been rejected**

. He gives them the signs of His second coming and the kingdom all through chapter 17 up until Luke 18:8.

II. Romans 14:17

Romans 14:17

For **the kingdom of God** is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The parallel passage to Romans 14:17 is Matthew 6:31-33. Both passages mention eating and drinking and also the kingdom of God and righteousness.

Matthew 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the **kingdom of God**, and his **righteousness**; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Putting **Romans 14:17** and **Matthew 6:31-33**

together, Paul does not mean that the kingdom is right now on the earth, or something mystical we experience in the heart. Just like Jesus did not mean, that the kingdom is present some where in the earth or in the heart that we should run and seek it.

When Jesus said **seek ye first the kingdom of God,** he meant be diligent **to do things** that will give you entrance into the future coming kingdom. Seeking the kingdom first is not to be pre-occupied with what we will eat and drink, but to be occupied with seeking righteousness. We are **not living in** the kingdom now, but we must live **for the kingdom now** if we expect to enter into it in the age to come.

The apostle Paul meant the same thing in **Romans 14:17**

. In the context this makes perfect sense. In the chapter Paul is telling the brethren not to make food habits a big issue in the church specifically with another brother. Eating or not eating certain foods is not going to commend us to God (1Cor.8:8), neither is it going to give us an entrance into the future kingdom.

In other words those that are seeking the kingdom **FIRST** are not occupied with eating and drinking, but they are following after righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, **Romans 14:17** understood in the light of **Matthew 6:31-33** can be read this way:

Romans 14:17

For [seeking] the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but [seeking] righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 For he that in **these things** [righteousness, peace and joy] **serveth** Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

The **righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit** which Paul is writing about is not a mystical position or an invisible feeling in my heart. These are things one can experience now in one's practical daily walk by seeking first the kingdom. In fact, verse 18 defines the righteousness, peace and joy in verse 17. It is in reference to SERVING CHRIST in an acceptable way. To be acceptable to God we must serve the Lord in righteousness, peace and joy.

The phrase IN THE HOLY SPIRIT speaks of the source. The person of the Holy Spirit today works indirectly in our lives through the means of **the word of God** which is called **sword of the Spirit** in Ephesians 6:17. The Holy Spirit never works in our lives apart or separate from the written scriptures which He moved the holy prophets to write. If He did work directly today in our lives why then would we need the written scriptures? The word of God which is **living and powerful** defines righteousness, peace and joy so one can apply these terms to his daily living. Only then our works will be works of faith. We can be approved of men, if we are serving them in peace and joy. We cannot be approved of the brethren if we are lording over them and trying to be preeminent.

If the kingdom of God is now a spiritual experience in the heart through righteousness, peace and joy, than what happens when I do not experience these things? In that case, has the kingdom ceased to exist? Or does it mean I am no more in the kingdom?

Putting it together, a disciple of Christ is seeking to enter into the future kingdom at the second coming of Jesus Christ by not being occupied with meat and drink. We seek the future kingdom by serving the Lord in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

III. 1 Corinthians 4:20

1 Corinthians 4:17-20

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways, which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

18 Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

The apostle Paul was teaching **in every church** the message concerning **the kingdom of God.**

In 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, he defined **the kingdom of God**

as the future inheritance which is to be received by the faithful elect at the second coming of Jesus Christ:

when the Son of man shall come

in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom. (Mat.25:31-34).

That kingdom shall last for **?a thousand years?**

(Rev.20:6). The preaching and teaching of the kingdom addresses the present lifestyle of those in the local churches of Jesus Christ. It warns the saints against sinful and worldly living, which could disqualify them from the future inheritance. This message was contrary to the puffed-up speech and worldly wisdom of those at Corinth who caused division and contention. Paul's teaching on the kingdom of God was not **?in word,?** meaning that it was not foolish, empty, or barren talk, but rather it had the power to transform one's life.

This is what Paul wrote to the Corinthians in chapter two:

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

4 And **my speech** and **my preaching** was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of **power**.

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

The message of the kingdom of God came **?IN POWER.?**

It had the ability to produce fruit and change the lives of those that embraced it as the truth.

The parallel passage of **1 Corinthians 4:20**, which helps us to understand it, is **1 Thessalonians 1:5-7**:

1 Thessalonians 1:5-7 For our gospel came not unto you in word only **6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord**, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in power

, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

Paul's Gospel, which he ministered at the church of Thessalonica, was the same good news he ministered at the church of Corinth. The message he preached **?in every church?** was the good news concerning the future kingdom of God.

1 Thessalonians 2:12

That ye would **walk worthy** of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

This Gospel was not delivered to them **?in word only, but also in power.?**

That power is the grace of God, which gives us the ability to change our former way of living and serve the Lord acceptably (Acts 20:32; 2Cor.12:9; Heb. 12:28). It was demonstrated in the lives of those at Thessalonica. The brethren there **?became followers? of the Lord?** and **?were examples to all that believe.?**

That revealed to Paul that the Thessalonian Christians had received Paul's Gospel of the kingdom, not **?in word only, but also in power.?**

The power of the Gospel caused/enabled the Thessalonians to make changes in their lives and prepare for the return of God's Son:

1Thessalonians 1:9-10 For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; 10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered is delivering us (present tense) from the wrath to come.

IV. Colossians 1:13

Colossians 1:13

Who hath delivered us from the power [authority] of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son :

Many have wrongly been led to think that the above passage teaches that the kingdom is not future or literal but rather now and spiritual. Let us break down the verse into two parts and thus **cover both clauses.**

1. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness??

What does it mean when Paul says that God the Father **delivered us from the power of darkness??**

The word **?power?** can be translated as **authority**

. An authority is someone or something that we submit to or yield ourselves to in order to obey or follow. Therefore, whoever or whatever we let control and guide our behavior is the authority over our lives. For example, the Roman centurion, in Matthew 8:9, had soldiers under his authority.

Matthew 8:9 For I am a man under authority, **having soldiers under me** : and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

The Roman centurion had soldiers under his authority. Those soldiers listened and obeyed his commands! Therefore, to be under **?the power of darkness?** means that darkness is controlling ones life. It means to be controlled by darkness.

The apostle John, in 1John 1:6, tells us that **?walking in darkness?** is the opposite of practicing **?the truth.?**

1 John 1:6

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and **walk in darkness**, we lie and **do not practice the truth.**(NKJ)

The Apostle John is writing to saved people. Saved people can **?walk in darkness.?**When John refers to **?the truth?** it is in reference to future things or **?things to come?**(specifically **?the reward of the inheritance,?** Col.3:24) which the Holy Spirit, **?the Spirit of the truth,?**reveals to our understanding (Jn.16:13; 1 Cor.2:9-10; Eph.1:18).
John 16:13

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of [the] truth
, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

Paul was preaching the truth about **?things to come?**
at the church of Colosse. This is the message or good news that the saints at Colosse were hearing,
?the word of the truth of the gospel,?in Colossians 1:5.
Colossians 1:5

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.

Paul says **?the truth?**contains the good news about **?the hope which is laid up for you in heaven.?**
This hope is the inheritance which is defined for us by comparing it with 1 Peter 1:3
1 Peter 1:3-4Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath **begotten us again unto a lively hope**
by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (He was raised from the dead, exalted, and given glory, 1Pet.1:21 He received His inheritance, Acts2:33), 4 To [towards] an inheritanceincorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

The inheritance is in reference to **THE KINGDOM**
reward which comes to the earth when Christ comes again in His glory to rule. Those that inherit the kingdom will rule as overcoming sons with Christ in that kingdom.

Matthew 25:31,34When the Son of man shall come in his glory
, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 34 Then
shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom
prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Colossians 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Revelation 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Revelation 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Therefore, to be to be under **?the power of darkness?** or **?walking in darkness?** means that I do not live according to **?the truth.?**

It means that although I may come to know about the truth and the reality of future things, I choose rather to live according to my flesh **?earthly minded.?** I live a lifestyle not at all prepared or even concerned about these future things, such as the judgment seat of Christ, the resurrection, and ruling and reigning with Christ, **?in that day,?** in His glorious kingdom at His second coming. I live only for the things of this present world, blinded by its fleshly pleasures, pride and ones own pursuits. I am under the authority of **?the rulers of darkness of this world?** which are demons, in Ephesians 6:12.

This specific deliverance **?from the power of darkness?**

did not happen to the Colossian saints when they first got saved and became Christians, as is commonly taught. This was a deliverance made possible sometime *after* their initial salvation by teaching and preaching unto them

?Christ in you, the hope of glory,? in Colossians 1:27. This was the message that Paul labored to make known to the saints.

Colossians 1:27-29

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

28 Whom which we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; **that we may present every man perfect** in Christ Jesus:

29 **Whereunto I also labour**, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

When Paul writes about **?the glory,?**

in verse 27, it is in reference to the second coming of Christ and His coming kingdom on this earth.

Mark 13:26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and **glory**.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Paul labored preaching and teaching so that those in the churches would have Christ IN THEM, which is not something mystical, but rather, it is **?the hope of glory.?** He defines **?the hope of glory?**

in Colossians 3:4. That is the message that delivers one from the power of darkness.

Colossians 3:4 When **Christ**, who is our life, **shall appear**, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

God the Father, through Paul's ministry of the word of the truth, the hope of glory, is now making FIT or ready a group of people to be partakers of the inheritance.

Colossians 1:12-13 Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified [or made fit] us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light

.13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Notice that Ephesians 5:8, which is a companion passage to Colossians 1:12, shows us that deliverance **?from the power of darkness?** is so we can walk as children of light.

Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes **darkness** (living in the vanity of the mind), but **now** (delivered from the power of darkness, Col.1:13) are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Those that are called **?THE SAINTS IN THE LIGHT,?**

in Colossian 1:12, are they that have been delivered from the power of darkness. They were once in darkness but now they are **?light in the Lord.?** In other words, being **in the light?** is the opposite of having one's lifestyle under **?the power of darkness.?**

Paul defines **?the light,?** in 2 Corinthians 4:6, which is consistent with his writings in Colossians.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give **the light of the knowledge of the glory of God** in the face of Jesus Christ

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is in reference to **?the hope of glory?** mentioned in Colossians 1:27. It has to do with hope of hearing **?well done thou good and faithful servant?** (Mat.25:21). It was **?the light of the knowledge of the glory of God?** which shined into the hearts of the Colossian Christians, making **?the saints in the light,?** delivering them from the power of darkness which formerly had blinded their minds from seeing the light of the truth.

2. Hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.?

This portion of Colossians 1:13 has resulted in a good deal of confusion. It has caused many to believe that the kingdom is here now in a spiritual form and all Christians enter into the kingdom at the point of initial salvation. There can be nothing more further from the truth. The kingdom is not spiritual. Rather, it is literal and it comes to this earth at the second coming of Christ. Even the thief on the cross that was next to Jesus understood this reality when he said unto Jesus, **?Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom?** (Lk.23:42). The kingdom comes when Christ comes again, **?the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom?** (2 Tim. 4:1).

This is also why Paul declared in 1 Corinthians 15:50

?that flesh and blood (physical bodies) cannot inherit the kingdom of God.?

In other words, the kingdom awaits the future resurrection of the body. It is also recorded that Joseph of Armathea, **?a good and righteous man,?** who buried the body of Jesus was someone that **?waited for the kingdom of God,?**

in Luke 23:50-51. If the kingdom of God is now

why would Joseph of Armathea be waiting for it? The literal kingdom reign of Christ is future, not present, and it will last **?a thousand years?** (Rev.20:6).

All the kingdoms of the world are presently under Satan (Lk. 4:5-6). At the second coming of Christ, they shall be taken over by the Lord Jesus Christ,

?The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever,? in Revelation 11:15. Whoever thinks he is ruling in the kingdom today, he would be ruling under Satan and not the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are several ways to show that that **?the kingdom of His dear Son,?**

mentioned in Colossians 1:13, is future and literal, instead of present and spiritual.

First, take careful notice that **?the kingdom of His dear Son?** is synonymous with **?the inheritance of the saints,??** mentioned in Colossians 1:12.

Colossians 1:12-13 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of **the inheritance of the saints** in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into **the kingdom of His dear Son:**

Comparing scriptures with other scriptures proves that the inheritance is the future kingdom of God.

Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

1 Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?

James 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

In the same context in the book of Colossians, Paul writes, in Colossian 3:24, that the inheritance, which is **?the kingdom of His dear Son,?** shall be received as a reward for serving Christ.

Colossians 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive **the reward of the inheritance**: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Scripture teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ does not reward His servants now in this present age but rather in the age to come when He returns in His glory to establish His glorious kingdom.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Revelation 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Secondly, the phrase **translated into,** in the Greek text, can be rendered differently. The word **translated** is the Greek word *methistemi* which can be rendered in the English language to mean: **to change.** The preposition **into** (*eis* in the Greek text) can also be translated **for,** as in Colossians 1:16, just three verses later.

Colossians 1:16 all things were created by him, and **for** [*eis*] him?

This translation of the preposition is supported also in Colossian 4:11 where Paul makes the only other mention of **the kingdom** in the book of Colossians.

Colossians 4:11 these are the only fellow workers **for** [*eis*] **the kingdom** of God who are from the circumcision; and they have proved to be an encouragement to me (NASB).

Therefore, the phrase **hath translated us into the kingdom** can be translated **hath changed us for the kingdom.** This translation makes more sense within the context and is also consistent with Colossians 4:11. We are not changed **into** the kingdom of His dear Son, but rather, Gods elect are changed **for** the kingdom of His dear Son. We need to be changed NOW if we desire to enter into the future kingdom of His dear Son. That change takes place through hearing **the word of the truth the gospel,** which produces **fruit** in the lives of those that hear it and believe it.

Colossians 1:4-6 Since we heard of **your faith** in Christ Jesus, and of **the love which ye have** to all the saints, 5 For **the hope** which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof **ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;** 6 Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and **bringeth forth fruit,** as it doth also **in you, since the day ye heard of it,** and knew the grace of God in truth:

The saints at the local church of Colosse had been changed by **the gospel** which they had heard from Paul and they were showing forth that change by their life style of faith in the Christ Jesus and continual love for the saints. This change was produced in them because of the good news of **the hope which is laid up for them in heaven.??**

Therefore, a better translation of Colossians 1:13 would be:

Colossians 1:13

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and **hath changed us for the kingdom** of his dear Son:

This translation supports the context of Colossians and remains consistent with the whole of Scripture which teaches that the kingdom is literal and future when Jesus Christ returns to this earth.

V. Revelation 1:9

Revelation 1:9I John, who also am **your brother**, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Some use this verse to jump to the conclusion that John was referring to himself as being in the kingdom of Jesus Christ while writing the Book of Revelation. By doing this they have failed to take the entire verse into consideration. If John was in the kingdom, then the question that needs to be answered is, why was he also experiencing tribulation? How could John be experiencing the joy of the kingdom and also the sufferings of tribulation at the same time?

This verse gives no hint of John saying that he was in the kingdom while suffering as an apostle of Christ on the island of Patmos.

There are several other clear verses in the Book of Revelation, which tell us exactly when the kingdom of Christ is established.

Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

In Revelation 11:15, the kingdom is established at the seventh trumpet, which marks the end of the tribulation and the second coming of Christ.

Revelation 12:10And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

In Revelations 12:10, the time of Christ's kingdom to be established comes after Satan is cast down from heaven. Until then the kingdoms of the world belong to Satan.

Thus, the kingdom will be established at the second coming of Christ. This is in harmony with all Scripture. John was waiting for the kingdom to come. Is it any wonder that his last prayer, in Revelations 22:20, was 'Come, Lord Jesus.'

To what then does Revelation 1:9 refer?

I believe that the answer lies in comparing Revelation 1:9 with other verses which talk about the **relation between tribulation and the kingdom for a disciple of Jesus Christ**

. There are many passages, like Acts 14:22, 2 Timothy 2:12, and 2 Thessalonians 1:5-7, which explain this relationship.

Acts 14:22

Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

2 Timothy 2:12

If we suffer [**now**], we shall also reign [in the kingdom in future] with *him*: if we deny [**sufferings**] *him*, he also will deny us [**reigning**]:

2 Thessalonians 1:5

Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye **also suffer**:⁶ Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; ⁷ And to you who are troubled [like Paul] **rest with us**[**companions with Paul in the kingdom**], when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

From the above verses we can see that the entrance into the kingdom is through enduring tribulation. To be a brother and a companion in the kingdom **in future** you have to be a brother in tribulation first. Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 1:7, is very clear in explaining that the kingdom of God is a rest for the people of God from all tribulations. In the kingdom there will be no tribulations, until then we must suffer. The phrase **?rest with us?** signifies companionship in the kingdom with Paul and other faithful disciples who have endured trials and testing. Concluding our thought on Revelations 1:9, the Apostle John is saying that he is one of the brethren, like many in the world, who are enduring tribulations for the word of God and for their testimony of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 5:9

Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

These people will be the same group who will be companions in the kingdom, and he, John, will be one of them.

1 Peter 5:1

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a **partaker** [same root word as in Rev. 1:9 for companion] of the glory that shall be revealed:

In 1 Peter 5:1, Peter was confident that he would be a partaker of the glory in the kingdom, because he was a witness of the sufferings of Christ. John is showing the same confidence in Revelations 1:9.

One can be a brother in the kingdom, as long as he is faithful in tribulations and afflictions. Just like someone can be in the book of life (Phil. 4:3) because he was a fellow laborer with Paul. Yet, being in the book of life does not guarantee an entrance into the kingdom. One can fail to overcome and thus be blotted out of the book of life (Rev. 3:5).