

# The Most Important Message You've Rarely Heard

The "Kingdom of God" is the central message of Jesus and the New Testament. It's not just a minor topic; it's the main theme.

**126** times in the Gospels



**34 times** in the rest of  
the New Testament



**160 total mentions**



***“When the Bible mentioned repeatedly...  
it is important.”***

# Three Reasons This Message Changes Everything

Understanding the Kingdom of God is not just an academic exercise. It fundamentally reframes our faith for three critical reasons. We will explore how it is:



1

## The Central Message of Jesus

The undeniable focus of His teaching and the apostles' mission.



2

## The True Meaning of 'Ekklesia'

Uncovering the original intent behind what we now call "church".



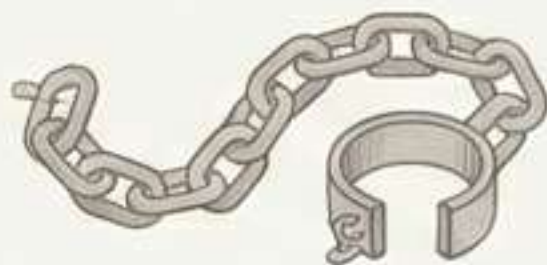
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## The Ultimate Supremacy of Christ

Recognizing Jesus as the undisputed King over a spiritual, not earthly, domain.

# The Kingdom Was the Unwavering Focus of the Early Church

Jesus made the Kingdom his primary subject.  
The apostles continued this mission with relentless passion.



## Apostle Paul

In **Acts 28**, while under house arrest, he “proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.”



## Apostle John

In **Revelation**, he saw “the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.” This signifies an invasion of God’s Kingdom upon the earth.

**The founders of the faith risked everything to preach this message.  
If it was central to them, it must be central to us.**

# Εκκλησία Church

## The Ekklesia is Not the Church.

To understand the Kingdom, we must first correct a fundamental mistranslation that has shaped centuries of practice. The word Jesus used, *Ekklesia*, has a meaning far removed from our modern concept of 'church'.

# 'Ekklesia': A Called-Out People with a Kingdom Purpose

## Original Greco-Roman Context

The term meant "ordinary citizens called out to legislate for the people of the land." It was a civic, governmental assembly.

## Jesus's Re-purposing of the Word

When Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my Ekklesia," he was declaring he would call people out of the world to be His assembly.

Their purpose: To advance the will and purpose of the Kingdom on earth.

## Core Characteristics of the Original Ekklesia

Organic, not an organization

Non-hierarchical

Non-ritualistic

The Original Ekklesia

Non-liturgical

Non-liturgical

Simply about *\*people\** gathered together

# From Organic Movement to Organized Institution

**1st Century:**  
An Idea Unimagined

The word 'church' is an "adulterated English translation"—a concept superimposed onto the original meaning of Ekklesia. This transformation wasn't accidental; it was a gradual process with specific historical drivers.

**Roman Empire:**  
A Pagan Influence

**5th Century:**  
A New Word,  
A New Concept

**15th Century:**  
A Political Translation

# A Timeline of Transformation



## 1st Century - The Apostles' Era

The apostles and early disciples would have *never* conceived of the Ekklesia as a special building or temple.



## 5th Century - The Linguistic Shift

The Greek word *kuriakon* (meaning 'belonging to the lord') became the root for the Old English word *cirice*, meaning "the Lord's house." This is the first introduction of a building-centric concept.



## 4th-5th Century - The Constantinian Shift

When the Roman Empire embraced Christianity, its pagan structures, institutional forms, and religious worship practices "crept into Christianity."



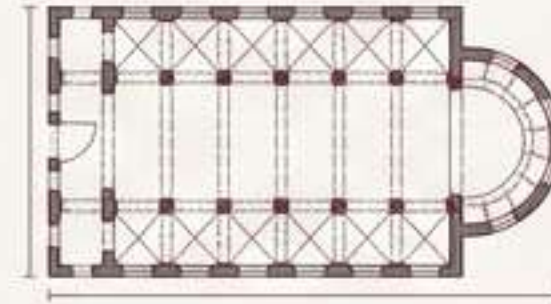
## 15th Century - The King's Translation

During the Reformation, William Tyndale sought to translate Ekklesia as "assembly." King Henry VIII specifically instructed that it *must* be translated as "church" to create an institution he could control.

# The Roman Blueprint in Modern Practice

The shift from Ekklesia to Church wasn't just about words; it changed how we gather, worship, and see ourselves. **Many traditions have roots in the Roman Empire, not the Upper Room.**

Architecture



Church buildings often follow the Roman Basilica model—a governmental structure copied from pagan temples.

The Pulpit



The elevated stage creates a performance dynamic, making the congregation "docile and passive."

The Lord's Supper



What began as a "love feast" (a full, shared meal) evolved into a highly ritualized ceremony, the Holy Communion.

Hierarchy



In the Ekklesia, there was "complete participation." The institutional model created a clergy/laity divide.

# If the Kingdom Isn't an Institution, What Is It?

Jesus provided a clear answer.

The Kingdom of God is not an earthly, physical, or visible system.

It is not something you go to; it is something that is in you.



*“My kingdom is not of this world.”*  
(John 18:36)

Spiritual,  
not physical.

Heavenly,  
not earthly.

Invisible,  
not visible.

Jesus taught that the Kingdom of God is *within us*.

# Reason 3: The Kingdom is About the Preeminence of One King

In a kingdom, there is only one King. The message of the Kingdom of God is fundamentally about the absolute supremacy and authority of Jesus Christ over all things.



*“For by him all things were **created**... all things were **created through him** and **for him**. And he is before all things, and in him all things **hold together**. And he is the head of the body, the Ekklesia... that in everything he might be **preeminent**.” - Colossians 1:16-18*

The Great Commission's True Context: Jesus declared, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”** He wasn't stating the obvious; he was declaring the reclamation of a stolen kingdom.

# The Outer Conflict Reflects an Inner Battle

Just as there is a difference between the institutional “church” and the organic “Ekklesia,” the Bible describes two kinds of Christians operating within the body of believers.



## **The Soulful Christian:**

Operates from the soul—the mind, will, and emotions.

## **The Spiritual Christian:**

Operates from the spirit, in communion with God.

Which one are we? Our answer determines whether we experience the power of the Kingdom or just the routine of religion.

# The Soulish Christian: Operating on the Power of Self



**Source of Power:** Relies on the soul: emotions, intellect (logic), and willpower.

**Motivation:** Driven by self. It's about personal effort, not dying to self.

**Results:** Can achieve temporary "spiritual success" through sheer willpower (a "pound of flesh"), but the results are always short-lived. This is why many fight the same sins for years with no breakthrough.

**Perception:** Has an "inability to perceive or discern spiritual things." They remain a spiritual baby, reading the same passage without new revelation.

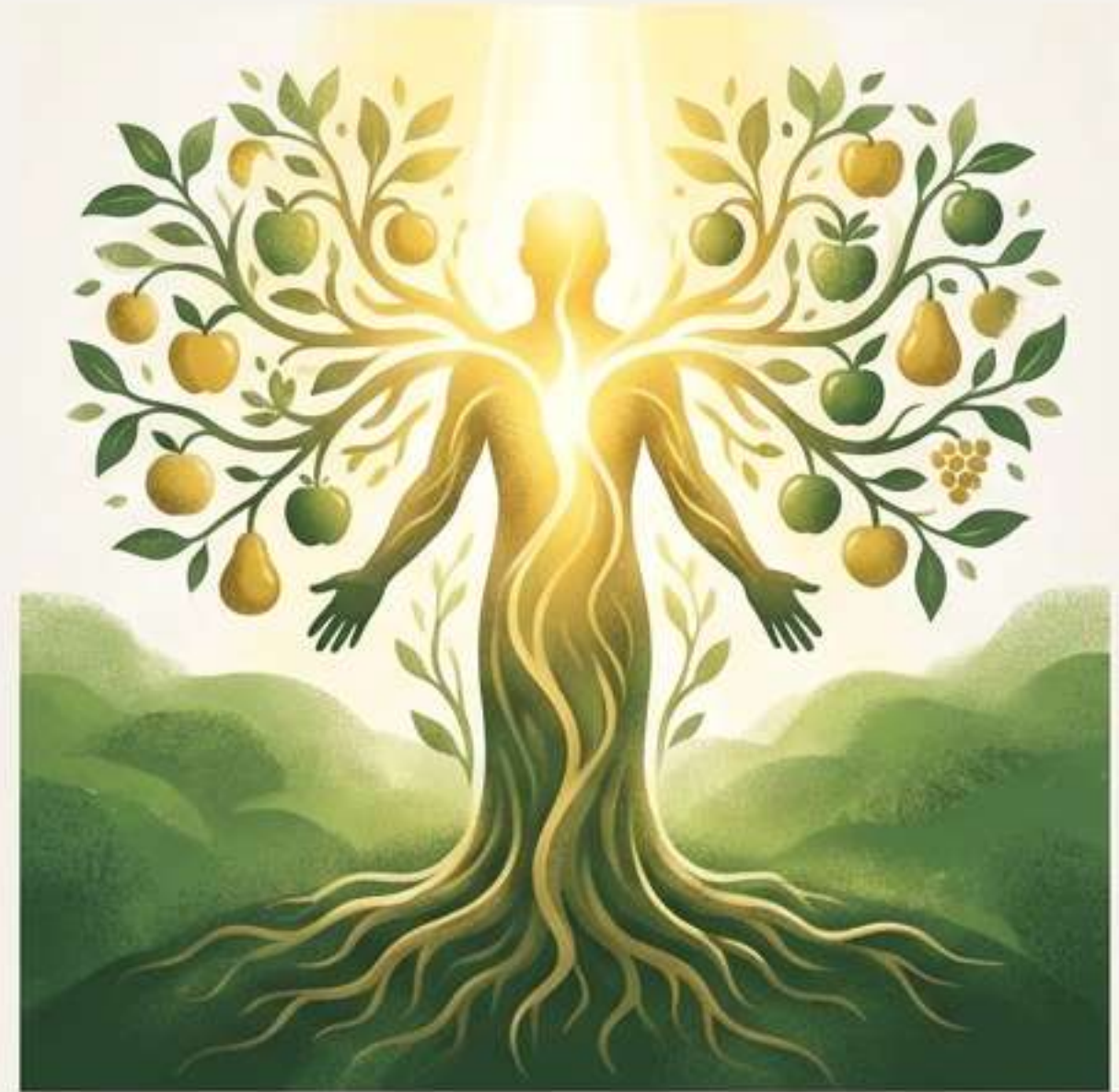
# The Spiritual Christian: Living by the Power of Christ

**Source of Power:** Lives by the spirit, which is connected to the nature of God. The Fruit of the Spirit becomes evident.

**Motivation:** The core principle is to “die to self.”

**Results:** Experiences genuine, lasting transformation and breakthrough. Grows from “glory to glory” with increasing insight and understanding.

**Perception:** Possesses spiritual perception and discernment to understand deep spiritual truths.



*“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but **Christ who lives in me.**  
And the life I now live in the flesh I live **by faith in the Son of God,**  
who loved me and gave himself for me.” - Galatians 2:20*

# The Turning Point is Moving from Savior to Lord

The transition from soulish to spiritual is not automatic at conversion. It requires a conscious, continuous decision.

## Jesus as SAVIOR



Many Christians receive Jesus as Savior—the one who forgives their sin and gives them a ticket to heaven. The “self” remains on the throne.

Die to Self

## Jesus as LORD



But they never make him Lord—the one who has total authority. This is the breakthrough moment when carnality is crucified and true change happens.

# The Kingdom Is Not Just a Future Promise; It Is a Present Power

Being saved by the gospel is more than a ticket to heaven; it's an **invitation to live heaven on earth**, right now.

We can experience the power and presence of God in our lives, free from the hold of our old nature.



## The Choice Is Not a Resolution, But a Resolve

New Year's resolutions are about trying harder in our own strength.

They always fail.

Like Daniel, we must **resolve in our hearts** that we will follow Jesus completely as the Lord of our lives.

**When Christ is truly King on the throne of our hearts, we stop *playing* church and start *being* the Ekklesia.**