

A Change of Allegiance - Part 2

by Dean Taylor

The two kingdoms concept is crucial for living a life of non-resistance and representing the kingdom of God in a world that often compromises with politics and power.

Duration: 40:03

Scripture: Matthew 5:44, John 18:36, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, Ephesians 6:12, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:2, James 4:4, 1 John 2:15

Topics: "Kingdom Of God", "Christian Citizenship"

Description

This sermon delves into the concept of the two kingdoms, exploring the shift from the Old Testament to the New Testament in relation to war, government, and Christian principles. It emphasizes the need to prioritize the teachings of Jesus, the kingdom of God, and the way of Christ over worldly politics and patriotism. The importance of living out the words of Jesus and being faithful ambassadors of the kingdom of God is highlighted.

Transcript

OK, someone asked, I think this is probably addressed to me, since we have the two kingdom concept wrong, how do we turn it around and make it practical, not only in our lives, but in the lives of our children? I'm glad you asked that question, because I don't think you have it wrong. I just brought up that point on the Garden City Confession, and maybe I could say this to get myself out of trouble a little bit. I'm very blessed to be an Anabaptist.

And I love being around the different groups of Anabaptists, and I love to see us working together. And the testimony of what I've seen in history through the years, through the 500 years, has blessed me. What I brought about that sometimes I think would come about the wrong way is that when you have something handed to you, that you tend to just replicate that without going back to the original source.

I think Frank Reid once had a message where he had this box, and he showed the first generation started the church directly from the teachings of Jesus. The next one, he showed a box that was boxed from that box, and it doesn't go back to the source. And my concern was, even in the Garden City Confession, and you see this in Coffman's Doctrines of the Bible, that it explains the faith in just a matter of theology.

The theology of this, the theology of that. And I would not be in a church that didn't believe those things that those things confessed, like the Nicene Creed. Those things are fundamentals.

However, it doesn't ask the question, the words of Jesus. And again, it's not so much what's said, but what's not said. And particularly with the Garden City Confession, and at the end of Coffman's Doctrines of the Bible, it actually caused these things, these Jesus-following things, the things of separation, restrictions.

And I'm concerned with that, that our children are going to say, well, let's just worry about what really matters, not all that stuff. And all that stuff are the teachings of Jesus. So that's the only thing I was trying to say.

I'm very blessed with the example, and that there is a living testimony today. I'm so glad that when I gave up lands, and families, and things, and this life, that I did find that hundredfold here on Earth, and in the Anabaptist churches. And so I'm blessed with that.

And so how can we bring it then to our children? What if Jesus really meant every word he said? Amen. To talk about Jesus. If maybe one of our brothers meeting once a year, we could read the Sermon on the Mount and say, OK, we doing that? We doing that? Instead of all of our typical debates that we have amongst ourselves, let's check ourselves with the words of Jesus.

Somebody asked me once when I was teaching at a Bible school, somebody was thinking it would be nice to bring in the creeds, again, to be said in our churches. What do you think about that? And I said, well, I don't have a problem with the creeds. And again, I'd leave a church that wouldn't believe those things of the historic creeds.

But it subtly does something in our minds that we think, if I agree with these things, then I'm a Christian. And that's the dangerous thing, that these things should be what the fruit, as your message shared this morning, should be producing what we see in the Sermon on the Mount. And I think if we're going to read something once a year, let's pull out the Sermon on the Mount and read it, and let the teachings of Jesus and the way of Jesus start having its rightful place again.

So any thoughts on that? It was probably addressed to me, and I'm glad I was able to clarify myself with that. OK, if the kingdom of God is here and now, then why did Jesus, in Luke 21, 25, give what are commonly known as signs of the end times and say that the kingdom of God is coming after those? Good question. The kingdom teachings are, as I've heard somebody once say, it's the now and the not yet.

That in the beginning, the kingdom was a garden. In the end, it shall be from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. It shall come in its totality and its completion.

But for now, it's a seed. And that seed is the church to represent, to show to the whole world what the whole world will look like when we all bow our knees to the King. And so this, it will one day come.

And so those teachings about the totality of the coming of the kingdom of God will be there. But now that the place of the church is to be that ambassador of that future kingdom here on this earth. What are y'all's thoughts on that? I think you said it well.

The kingdom that we have now, the realm in which we're living in God's kingdom now is not at its fullness. We're not in paradise yet. And thank God it's coming.

There will be a day when that kingdom is in fullness. But it doesn't mean that we as his children do not allow him to change us and to represent his kingdom well. We are ambassadors for his kingdom.

Of what's coming. Amen. Yeah.

Very good. Very good. OK, how do you present the story of David and Goliath, the children? What do you say, brother? I say this little guy got a stone and he killed a giant.

That's right. I think the question is probably rooted in how do you represent violence in the Old Testament? And I think the right way to look at that is to understand that scripture tells us that everything that was recorded in scripture, including the Old Testament, was done for our learning. Why God chose to let all those events happen in the way that they did, I can't suppose to know.

But I do believe, and I think scripture would bear this out, that those things point to the need for a savior. God worked with the children of Israel in a specific way, but everything was pointing to Jesus. And this was just one of those events.

You know, there are terrible stories in the Old Testament. To me, that is not a real bad one by comparison to some of the others. But that whole terrible picture shows how fallen and how desperately humanity needs a true change of heart.

So I think we present it to our children in that way. This is what happens when people are without Christ. Well said.

Yes. Nothing more. Amen, that's good, brother.

According to Romans 13, those working in law enforcement are God's ministers, but those people are part of the earthly kingdom. How does God's condoning of these people actions fit with 2 Peter 3.9? This goes back to the message that I had on Romans 13, and it's a biblical principle. It's a difficult one, but it's one that we must face as Bible-believing Christians, is that God governs this earth regardless someone is in his will or not.

He will not let just the world go into a muck and anarchy. In Romans 13, as I shared in the message, that if you go through those very strong words on talking about a minister of God and he's given to us from God, if we take and pause for a moment to realize who he's particularly talking about when he wrote a letter to the church at Rome and talking about who that minister of God was, it was Nero, a wicked king who was persecuting the church. And yet, the early Christians recognized the need for that government to be ran and recognized that Paul recognized that Nero himself was put there by God.

But we are to be of a different kingdom representing a new humanity, a new way of life, this ambassador of the new kingdom that we're here, and it's outside the perfection of Christ. In the Schleinheim Confession, which was said in 1527, and I really appreciate those brothers right early in the faith articulated it so well, that they talked about the concept of two kingdoms representing the fact that the governments and the structures of this earth with the sword were given to them by God. But they are outside of the perfection of Christ.

It's how we live without grace, kind of like what you were sharing earlier, without a savior. If we live by grace, then we have this inward law working within us and governing us. If we don't live by that, we're going to need to live by law and the fear of the sword and punishment.

And that's how from the very beginning, the Garden of Eden, up until to the day, until Christ reigns entirely, that's going to be there. And so it's there, it is of God, and to understand our two kingdoms, we're not

pacifists in the sense that we just believe that everybody, whether they're converted or not, should be following these things. We believe that there are these two kingdoms established by God, and the principles are there both in the Old and the New Testament.

This comes up a lot, it's a good question. Okay, kind of goes with it a little bit. Must the governments of this world, by their very nature, set themselves up as idols? I have in mind the sword function in particular, but another way, is the beast only governments gone bad or all earthly governments? It's a deep question.

What's your thoughts on that? That's a little hard to know how to answer, but the idea of an earthly government being an idol, now maybe we ought to look at it from this perspective. I suppose you could call it that, but when you have a civil government ruling over a nation, they are the authority of that land, and so everybody in their jurisdiction answers to them. And so as such, I guess you could say that's, they are definitely elevated in stature, they're there.

So I think the focus goes to a reminder that we do not, we live physically in that kingdom, but we're a part of God's kingdom. And so we can respect them without them being our idol. Maybe that's not the tenor of the question, but I think it recognizes the authority of civil government and the need for us to honor them, pay our taxes, pray for them, and yet we're living in the kingdom of God.

So that's probably not a full answer. I would welcome your input. Yeah, amen, I'd appreciate that.

One thing that kind of bothers me, especially when young people sometimes, or everybody, sometimes starts getting into some of these two kingdom thoughts or non-resistance or something, and sometimes it develops this kind of anti-authority, anti-government sort of feel, and it's really not of God. We see that that sort of a spirit is not right. The other one, it's an interesting concept, is the way of the beast, only government's gone bad, or all earthly governments.

You know what's interesting, a lot of times in my background growing up, we were really big into trying to find out what the mark of the beast would be. And back in 88 Reasons Why, Jesus was coming in 88, and they changed it to 89, and all those different things, and that was really big in the 80s when I grew up. And the thing that I think we miss in the beast, as it's called in the book of Revelation, is it's not just the government, it's an entire world system.

Particularly, it mentions the buying and the selling and the merchandises and these things, and the question I think that we should be asking ourself is, besides being ready for the beast, is how much are we participating in this beast already? And just the way we think and our attitudes, and are we living a two kingdoms life in all of these things that are called the beast, not just the government's structure? So yeah, it's a deep question, and I appreciate the question but it gets some good things. Read the beast and what happens when he falls in the Revelation there and how that comes. Yeah, it's good stuff.

Mr. Taylor, would you address the subject of voting in a national election and how it relates to non-resistance and the two kingdoms? Does Jesus' words, my kingdom is not of this world, refer only to military or to all things touching the government of this world? Is voting in a presidential election contrary to not serving under the commander-in-chief for whom one voted? Emmanuel, excuse me, Edmund Burke said, the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is good men to do nothing. How does this argument plan into the stance of non-resistance and the two kingdoms? And so, well-articulated question. So, and this one comes up a lot in talking about voting and I went ahead and tried to this morning to grab just a few scenes on a few slides from a previous thing, and this is just kind of grabbed together so if you bear with

me.

So, in the history of Anabaptist voting, I just have a few slides here that I'm gonna show us that, particularly anybody voting, and this is not just supposed to be for just for us, but it's a message that goes out for anyone, that Jesus warned, beware the leaven of Herod. He argued to beware the leaven of the Pharisees, but he also told us the leaven of Herod. This is where I'm gonna pick on us just a little bit.

All right, I feel that in sometimes that we who believed in those two kingdoms and believed in non-resistance and came from a persecuted background, now when things get comfortable and you get into the everyday life that we tend to start embracing this world and begin to think that the politics of this world have the answers. And this is where I think we've gone too far away from the teachings of Jesus and thinking that Jesus has the answers, the cure for humanity is in this way of Christ, but suddenly some good politician is presenting it. And there's several times, and particularly in Lancaster County, I remember where I was, I've just spent the last 12 years before the last three years, and during the revival times in the 1900s with Billy Sunday and all that, and prohibition began to come through, they began to knock on Mennonite's doors and Amish people's doors in Lancaster County and said, okay, you've just got to vote for this.

This issue is so bad that you surely have to vote for this one, and it began to grow and everything, and it worked, and actually in December 18th, 1917, Congress actually passed that 18th Amendment outlawing the sale of alcohol. And they thought, okay, this is doing something. We proved that this was effectual.

But it did something interesting, even in the 1900s, to the Anabaptist people. So all these little party groups in those days, what they call, all these meetings where they would get together to talk about the politics of abolitionists, not abolitionists, they would talk about not having alcohol and that type of thing, would do these things of getting people to vote. Well, it grew and grew and grew until finally we ended up with an Anabaptist governor of Pennsylvania.

That this man here, the Church of the Brethren, Martin Grove Roombaugh, who was very involved with those different elections, began to get more and more popular and he ended up being voted into the governor of Pennsylvania. And that was kind of surprising. After that, a riot broke out.

A riot broke out in Pittsburgh shortly after he was governor and he called out a militia to do something about him, breaking against his non-resistance attitude. He eventually ran for president against an early president there in the 1900s, Wilson, and then later on he even had his cabinet start having loyalty oaths. He brought this to his party.

And so the thing that it did though, when the Mennonites and the different people started going, particularly the Church of the Brethren people, went to become conscious objectors, they were saying, well, what do you mean you're non-resistant? Your guy's running for president here. Your bishop's running for president. And it really hurt.

And a lot of the, actually we fared worse as Anabaptist people during World War I than we even did during World War II of different persecution. And I think it was for some of this compromise that was happening right here. Two Hutterite boys were killed up north.

Lots of different persecution stories and the Mennonites and the Amish. And I think it was for loss of this two kingdom concept. It was something that went bad in our voting.

Another dark spot that happened in our history of getting involved in these things happened in the Anabaptist involvement in World War II. And World War II was interesting. What Hitler was saying he wanted to do over in Germany was to unite the German people.

And so he started doing some interesting things. 1933, he started a stimulus package. And Hitler canceled farming debts, which made him real popular amongst the Mennonite farmers.

And he made the German farmers actually part of the privileged class. Communist supporters were hauled off to concentration camps and the Mennonites were hearing terrible stories of what Stalin and the communists were doing there in Russia. And okay, this man is against this.

And it's actually recorded. It's in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's biography that when Austria took, there was such a religious fervor that happened in Germany that the top of the castle where Luther translated the scriptures into German is they took down that cross and put up a swastika on the top of that church. And it was such a fervor that people had in that time.

And I'm afraid that the Mennonite people, not just a few, but the vast majority of the Anabaptist people there compromised because they slowly began to get involved in thinking this guy has a solution. And here I have actually a telegram written by the Mennonites. It had a council in 1933, September 10th, on how they felt about what was happening in the news about this conservative godly man who was gonna make changes for our country.

And this is the telegram that the Mennonites sent to Adolf Hitler. And I quote, to Chancellor Adolf Hitler, Berlin, the Conference of East and West Prussia Mennonites assembled together and Tergenhagen, free state of Danzig fills deep gratitude for the powerful revival that God has given our nation through your energy and promises joyful cooperation in the upbuilding of our fatherland through the power of the gospel. Faithful to the motto of our forefathers, no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Sending to Adolf Hitler. I'm sure Hitler didn't have time to answer everybody to the Mennonites he did. And he wrote this, for your loyal and your readiness to cooperate in the upbuilding of the German nation expressed in your letter to me, I express my sincere thanks, Adolf Hitler.

This happened in Paraguay too, when the different things that were happening, they were hearing about these political changes and they didn't know all the bad stuff that was going on. And that's the point. They just heard all this stuff, they heard all this good conservative politics and they sent a letter from Paraguay.

With greatest excitement, we German Mennonites of the Paraguayan Chaco follow the events on our beloved motherland and experience in spirit the national revolution of the German people. We are happy that in Germany after a long time, a government that freely and openly professes God as creator stands at the head of the nation. With special sympathy, excuse me, with special sympathy, we hear that the current government takes seriously the realization of Christian principles in social, economic, and cultural life and especially emphasizes the protection of the family.

Incredible statement there. There was a little scene when there was a new group of Hutterites forming in Germany, which later become the Bruderhof. They wrote a letter to Hitler and antagonists, got kicked out, went to Paraguay, and they had all this trouble with the Nazis, into Paraguay, the Mennonite Central Committee of America and Canada helped them get to Paraguay.

They got to Paraguay, they went into the main capital church into St. John, walked into the church, and this is the picture they snapped that they saw. Over the pulpit is a picture of Adolf Hitler. Now, they didn't know better.

They didn't know the evils that were happening, or at least I hope not. And I will say this, that after this, the Mennonites publicly, and the different Anabaptist people there in Germany, publicly confessed that they were mistaken and wrong in this. And it wasn't just them.

When you read Dietrich Bonhoeffer's biography, all the conservative Christians, the Baptists, the Church of Christ, the Bible churches of every single kind, that you were a Bible-believing conservative, backed Adolf Hitler. It wasn't just the Mennonites. It was all the conservative Christians.

And that's the point. Today, when we start to hear this fervor, and you say, okay, this guy's got it. This guy, he's talking about the values.

I'm telling you, it's a mistake that has hurt us time and time again. And when the people of God get involved in politics, I'm telling you, both the church and the state suffer from it. And we need to stay from that and believe.

Manifest the kingdom of God publicly, and let the church be an answer to this world of what the world should look like, not conservative politics or liberal politics. The same thing could be said of the liberal politics as well. So that's my take on involvement of us in politics.

I think we need to be very careful with it. Matter of fact, I think we need to avoid it. Another one, so if God commanded thou shalt not kill, why did he also command Israel to go offensively to war against other nations? That's probably addressed to one of my messages.

The thou shalt not kill, I was finding when I was struggling through what the liberals were trying to turn the Old Testament in and what the conservatives were trying to turn the Old Testament in, I first tried to take that word thou shalt not kill and say, okay, in the Old Testament, there's a command to not kill. It's totally out of context. The same command, thou shalt not kill, the law goes on to say an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

It was obviously talking about unlawful killing. And in that context, we see that difference happening with Christ. It's clearly called for by God in the Old Testament and there's just simply no way to get around that.

We don't have to like that, but that's what the word of God says and there's no way to get around that and the change, not in character of God, not an attribute of God, but change in our way we fight happen under Christ. Any extra thoughts? I'm taking too much of this here, so y'all chime in here. Okay, we kind of already touched this.

How does the two kingdom concept affect our daily lives? Priorities, relationships, time and money management. Again, Jesus coming out and everything. What do y'all think on that? Just time management and relationships, priorities, all those types of things.

What would you think? I would just say again that being a follower of Jesus encompasses all of life. What doesn't it affect? That's it, amen. And so I think that it becomes one of our primary points of reference that I am an ambassador for the kingdom of God living in this kingdom of this world and I want to represent him as accurately as I can.

Yeah, amen, well said. You know when I was thinking of that paint gun analogy, regardless of whether or not it's wrong to have a bunch of boys shooting each other with paint balls in a thing, you know if we have time for that, if we have time to just be running to paint ball places and video games, it's the sin of neglect that we have a world that's needing the gospel. We have people that need to get ready and go forward and present the kingdom.

It's, how'd you word it, it's our point of reference for everything. And if that's where you are, that you have the time to go be shooting paints at each other, I think that's a problem in and of itself, you know? So yeah, good question. How far does a non-resistant Christian go in word fights, name-calling, when the other is clearly in the wrong? Oh boy.

Yeah, God help us, you know, as we do that. And you know that Jesus did make it very clear to even calling someone a fool, a rachah, which means like idiot or stupid, is in danger of hell fire. And if we have that kind of attitude, that kind of, you know, way that we're treating each other, it's not right.

You were talking about picking on us. Someone has said that we as Anabaptists have laid down our arms, but we haven't laid down our harmful tongues. Good brother.

And I think that it's easy for us to do that. But I think what we ought to remember out of that question is that being a follower of Jesus is an everyday thing, including the way that I talk to my family and friends and the people I meet. It's everything about who I am.

And that, you're talking about the Marine Code that would help determine whether or not someone's a conscientious objector. I would suppose that these kind of questions would be asked, that how does this person relate to the people around him? That's good. I think it will be, yeah.

Yeah, well said. How do you answer someone who says, how does it make you feel as a conscious objector to know that others have been wounded and killed for the freedom you have? Challenging question. That was thrown at Tonya and I a lot when we were getting out of the Army.

And there's another one that kind of relates to it in here a little bit too. And, you know, I'm very appreciative. And as I like to spend time with vets, I like to hear their stories.

And I like to hear the love that these people went out and did and the sacrifice that they made for me. And I dare not act, that I act disrespectful to them or indignant to them. And the sacrifice that they made is incredible.

On the other hand, I realize that they are a part of a philosophy that war begets war. And as much as I appreciate their personal sacrifice, personally, the idea of what this does further on in different ways has created more and more problem. And that's what it can lead to.

And we have to show the way of Christ even to those who have sacrificed greatly in that way. What are your summer thoughts growing up as a Mennonite and growing up around different people who had different thoughts and threw some of those things at you? The question asks, how does it make you feel? Okay. Which to me is a little bit of a leading thing because it's dealing with our emotions.

What I really think we ought to consider, what are the facts? The facts are I didn't choose where I would be born. And I consider it a great privilege to have freedom. And I think that we should not in any way disparage that.

And so I think the other thing it presumes is that it's making a dividing line where it can't be both ways. And I don't see that that's correct. What I would view that as, that we should be grateful for the freedoms we have.

To know that someone or many have fought for the freedoms we have in this country, I can be grateful for the freedom I have without saying I support the military machine that afforded me that freedom. We have many brothers and sisters around the world who don't have that freedom. And they didn't choose that either.

And so I think the focus ought to be what do I do with the opportunities I have? Gratefulness, absolutely. And it doesn't mean that just because I don't support the military effort that I'm not grateful, which I think that can imply possibly. And I think we do see in the word of God as we saw during that Old Testament sermon, ultimately it is God.

And as he said to the Assyrians, I'm gonna use them as my rod of my anger and they don't even know it. They're thinking I'm just conquering a country, not a few. But it's me who's using them.

And we need to, and it's when that pride thinking we did this gets us in trouble. Can you say a bit more about why the Old Testament wars didn't qualify as a just war? Many of us aren't familiar with the concept of a just war theory. Okay.

Basically what people today, as you get into the debates, or people, the general idea that surrounds modern American Christianity is the idea that we have some principles in the Bible and that we've always had that and the early Christians had them and all the doctors of theology have had these, that we have these principles that we can put into place that say, okay, this is a just war and this is not a just war. And we can get together and say, we are having this attack from, we'd like to perhaps deal with this attack in Iraq, is it a just war or is it an unjust war? The truth is, even on a practical level, it's nonsense. There's never been a country who's used that and said, oh, it's not a non-just war, let's not go.

But the arrogance that goes with it is that they claim, well, haven't you read the Old Testament? There's wars in the Old Testament. But if you look at the nature of these wars, and this is the distinguishing point, these wars were directly called for by God. And if in the New Covenant, Jesus directly called us that whatever you do, make sure you take Tennessee, then I would have no problem with, okay, this whole time of my life, I'm gonna make sure that we control Tennessee.

But that's exactly what he didn't say. He told us to lay down our weapon. He told us to not resist the evil.

He told us to love our enemies and that type of thing. So these commands of God are not what we see in the New Covenant. We see the same character of God, the same fervor and zeal of God, but we see a different warfare battle plan.

We see a different way to do that. And that's why it's totally unfair to call the teachings in the Old Testament something that has to go with a just war. Deuteronomy 20 is sometimes used, people will just quote the first two verses because it mentions a scene where they're about to go out and you can say peace to them.

And if they agree with you, then you can just make them be slaves and not just kill them. Just please read the whole context, reading through chapter 20 of Deuteronomy. And you'll see that there's no way in any stretch of imagination that this isn't a direct call for judgment of God being poured out on man and nothing

of a Thomas Aquinas just war theory that's trying to be even hinted of as a germinal sense that later is developed.

It's not in the Old Testament. It's not in the New Testament. It's not in the first 300 years of the church.

And we don't see it starting to be developed into the 400s. And that should concern people, I think. All right, just a few more left.

Okay, a couple of these ask about the idea of Daniel and Mordecai and Esther in the Old Testament. You wanna touch on that? My perspective on that would be that in the Old Testament, those examples that we would have of people involved in governmental positions were not there by their own choosing. They were placed there, I think, primarily as slaves or servants.

And they were put into those situations. And what we see is that they were faithful in those positions. Joseph was not mentioned on that question, but he would be a prime example of that where he rose next to Pharaoh in the land.

Very powerful position. I think the question isn't so much, are those examples of how we should interact with government today based on the whole picture of scripture? As we said, there is a change in the way that God works. Now, since Christ, what happens in a situation where someone, a Christian, may be forcibly placed into a position of authority, not of their choosing? I don't know what all scenarios you could come up with there but I think that if that's no choice on their part, their responsibility would be to be faithful to God and not violate any scripture, any biblical principle.

But I think that the point we could take from that is we do not seek that worldly kingdom because as you said, the answers are not in the worldly kingdom and in politics. We fall short every time to go that road. Jesus has the answer.

Yeah, well said, I appreciate that. Looking at that, that's, yeah, amen. I think that's a good analogy.

And these little foreshadowings that we have in the Old Testament are giving us the, we're finally given the full picture in Christ. And so, yeah, I like that. If that is thrust on us, we'll find, we'll look at the teachings of Jesus and we'll see how long we last.

We'll have a great new martyrdom story. So, praise God and that's, amen. Just a few more left.

Why is it a change in mission? I like what this person answered themselves. I talked, we just talked about that there's a change in the way God does this and I like the person's answer. They said, why a change in mission? Why did God do differently from the Old Testament to the New Testament? He said, is it because the people of God were not ready for the new way before the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? So, I think that's a good argument.

The idea, why did God change His battle plan for us to fight our wars? Does it have something to do with the resurrected life and the idea of eternal life? The person is saying, I think, yeah, it's a possibility. I don't know why, but it's a decent concept. When we realize we'll never die, it gives us such a boldness to go forth that I think it's a decent answer.

Yeah. God just knows. Yeah, amen.

Scripture says that in the fullness of time, He sent His Son. And so, why? I'm not sure why. Some people point to economic and social developments that had happened around the time of Christ that allowed for the gospel to spread rapidly.

Yeah, that's good. So, I think it's a fair question. Why did God change? He knew the right time, I think, is the best answer that a finite mind can come up with.

He knew when it ought to happen. Exactly, I like that, in the fullness of time. Now, God Himself didn't change, of course, but He changed His battle plan for us.

So, yeah, that's good. The rest are repeats. I just wanted to touch, just real quick, a word that's commonly come up.

And one of the ones is the thing on John the Baptist and the centurion. The soldiers came up to John the Baptist. John the Baptist didn't tell the soldiers to get out of the army.

So, why are you saying to get out of the army? The centurion was converted, and it didn't mention in Acts chapter 10 that he quickly got out of the army. So, therefore, Christians shouldn't get out of the army. And these are your classic arguments from silence.

And I think the centurion one is just ridiculous. We don't know anything that happened. He also would have been a, most likely, been involved in all kind of practices as being a centurion, that it didn't mention any of those things that were repented of.

And so, it's a total argument from silence. I think the John the Baptist argument's a little stronger because it's New Testament there, and he was so closely related with Jesus. But the interesting thing is that Jesus explains that the law and the prophets were unto John.

And after that, people have been pressing into the kingdom. It's interesting that he mentions that the kingdom started after John. John hadn't, when that was spoken, Jesus hasn't even preached the Sermon on the Mount.

That wasn't even said. And so, he was the, although the greatest of all prophets, he says, nevertheless, he was the last of the old covenant and not part of the new covenant. And so, I think it's good to look at those teachings.

And it's amazing how much damage has been done in trying to defend the silence of scripture when Jesus has so much beautiful things to actually say. So, all right, any closing words or thoughts from you, brother, as we finish up here? No, I don't accept that. This has been very interesting and challenging just to read questions.

And these kinds of things are very challenging for us all to consider and to keep thinking about. But in doing so, in coming up with answers on our own or whatever, seeking advice, sticking with the word. Amen, that's it.

And stay connected with the vine. Can't go wrong. I was thinking about it, I kind of pushed off that patriotism question on you guys.

That maybe wasn't fair. I'd like to just say one thing about that. And you brought some of this out in your story.

I have felt that patriotic fervor in my own soul. I grew up with a little bit of that flavor being acceptable, even though it was in a conservative Anabaptist setting. I know what that feels like.

The challenge I would have for anybody thinking about this realm of patriotism is do you have that same patriotic fervor and zeal for the kingdom of God? Does that drive you and excite you just as much? Because I think at the root of those questions and the activities we do, whether it's the national holidays or whatever in that realm, I think the big question is, what drives my heart? Amen. And is it following hard after Christ in his ways? Amen. Amen.

Thank you very much, brothers. And thank you for questioning. And let's do this.

Let's take the words of Jesus and just keep asking questions, putting it into everyday practice, and living out the words. What if Jesus really meant every word he said? Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/W4bNAKz9OVY.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dean-taylor/a-change-of-allegiance-part-2/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net