

2016-07-23

Random Thought, Dominion Theology #1

Hi all,

In some circles people are prophesying abundant prosperity to the USA and world when Trump wins the US election, which will usher in a time when Christians will dominate the '7 mountains' (see below for definition) in a new era of blessing and prosperity. This comes from what is generally called 'Dominion Theology' or 'Kingdom Now'.

I'm getting a lot of emails asking me to comment on Dominion Theology, but many may not even be aware such a thing exists, so let me first define it, then next week I'll share scripture point by point on the matter.

What it is

Dominion Theology believes Christians will take over or 'have dominion' over the world. Though there are various 'streams' under the umbrella of Dominion Theology, the founding belief sounds reasonable at first glance: Adam was told to have dominion over the world in Genesis 1:26-28, but by his sin brought the world under a curse. Then Jesus came and reversed the curse, bringing the kingdom of God into the hearts of mankind; therefore we have Adam's mandate to have dominion over the world and bring the kingdom to man.

Another way to say it is that they believe God lost control over the world when Adam sinned, and has been trying to get it back. Therefore 'prayer warriors' praying down the kingdom and against demonic strongholds, 'covenant people', 'overcomers' and other phrases like 'Joel's army' are used to identify this way of thinking.

As such, they believe the rapture is merely a joyous feeling we will experience when Jesus returns, the prophecies about Israel are actually about the church, and therefore the kingdom comes first in the hearts of believers, and some of those believers, the overcomers, will turn the earth over to the Lord at His return.

Dominion Theology believes the kingdom of God will come to the world through Christians gradually taking over the '7 mountains' or 7 spheres of influence.

The 7 mountains

The 7 mountains they believe Christians will take over, first in the US and then the rest of the world, are: Religion, family, government, education, media, business, arts & entertainment.

With emphasis on 'apostles' in these 7 areas, those apostles being part of the '5-fold' ministries, the idea is Christians will rise under the leadership of these apostles in the 7 mountains to turn this world around. Variations exist within the Dominionists, but the idea is the '5-fold' will lead the US in a sort of democratic theocracy back to God in a great national and then world-wide revival.

How 'apostles' function in the 7 mountains

Take a look at those 7 mountains and let us pick one, say arts & entertainment. Their idea is that Christian films and art will gradually begin to infiltrate, saturate, and then be the dominant influence in Hollywood, Broadway, and so on. Citing various Christian and conservative artists now active in each, Dominionists can point to apparent progress as proof their theology is correct.

In politics the Trump candidacy with its Constitutional core values, can be pointed to as progress, with the hopes a Trump administration will appoint believers in Cabinet level positions to reverse years of liberal policies, thus bringing elements of the kingdom of God to the federal government.

In business the hopes and prayers are for CEO's of larger companies to be or become Christians, who will then institute conservative policies and Christians freedoms in those companies...and on it goes.

In this way of thinking, Trump is an 'apostle' set to influence the mountain of government. A Christian CEO is an 'apostle' over his company. Christian actors and producers and people of influence in Hollywood would be 'apostles', leading Christian influence there, and so on.

Does wanting greater Christian influence make a person a Dominionist?

Just because someone believes Christians should rise to greater influence in society, or the '7 mountains', doesn't make them a Dominionist. The average Christian would love to see Christians in places of authority in those 7 mountains in their nation - but it doesn't mean they believe we should create a kingdom now to hand the earth over to Jesus at His return so He can take it from there.

And just because a pastor's sermon is about Christians being active in one of those 7 mountains, doesn't mean he is a Kingdom Now preacher. In the same way a person thinking about buying a certain model of car and then suddenly notices that model all around them, there are those who zero in on anything remotely sounding Kingdom Now, so we have to look at the larger picture, the larger ministry, the larger message.

Modern prosperity gospel

The reasons Dominion Theology has taken hold in the US are multi-faceted. One is that it counters the way of thought seen in the US federal government today, the 'liberal agenda'. Tired of having non-Christian laws, policies, and culture forced upon a general population that doesn't agree with that agenda, Dominion Theology is seen as the political counter-force.

Another is economic. A simple Internet search or by just listening to economic news tells the story of how far the US economy has fallen in the last 8 years: 50,000,000 on food stamps, 100,000,000 not in the work force (nearly 1/3 of the US population is not working), half of all households in the US are receiving some form of unearned government assistance.

Recent studies show that Americans work longer hours than any other developed nation, with over 25,000,000 working over 49 hours per week (over 1 in 5 workers). Many of those hours are from 2 part-time jobs because of lay offs due to the enforcement of health care laws and corporate and personal tax increases. In 2016 the US government will take in 3.3 trillion dollars - yet still spend more than they take in.

The US population is angry at both Republicans and Democrats and this rage has fueled the candidacy of Donald Trump. So it is natural that the Dominion Theology proponents would include a strong element of the prosperity gospel in a sort of theological stew mixing in every facet of life.

It is this modern update to the prosperity gospel that seems to be a driving force for many, as seen in the personal prophecies proclaiming riches and blessings in the near future.

Any fad movement has to have prophecy to lend credibility...

'Personal prophecies' in abundance have always been the 'stamp of approval' for whatever the newest fad in the charismatic world happens to be. Any fad movement bases their belief on what they think they see in the Word, but then they need the Spirit to go along, hence the abundance of personal prophecies.

In the 42 or so years I've walked with the Father I've seen every single charismatic movement also accompanied by personal prophecy that agrees with whatever spin on the Word that 'newest move of God' presents, so I'm not surprised to hear of all the prophecies about a new era of abundance and peace coming to the US and world with this election cycle.

But the question today isn't political, rather is Dominion Theology's understanding of the Bible correct? Is this a scriptural understanding of New Testament Christianity? Will 'overcomers' hand the world to Jesus at His return? Does Israel matter?

And I'll pick it up there next week, until then, blessings,
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2016-07-30

Dominion Theology #2

Hi all,

Last week I outlined the basic beliefs of Dominion Theology, also called Kingdom Now, and this week I want to outline some basic differences by looking at the Word.

First a review - Dominion Theology (DT) or Kingdom Now (KN) as it is also called, believes God lost control of the earth when Adam sinned, but now through Christ we are called to take dominion over the earth by infiltrating 7 areas of influence, called the '7 mountains'. This is led by 'apostles' in the 7 areas, and those submitted to them are 'overcomers', and having taken dominion in these areas, will present the earth to the Lord upon His return. Those 7 mountains are: Government, education, business, media, arts & entertainment, church and family.

While there are variations under the umbrella of Dominion Theology, I've found many who identify themselves with DT or KN don't know what they believe - many are just wrapped up in the prophecies of a new age of prosperity for themselves and the nation and world and that's all they know.

There are some variations, but generally here are a few key beliefs:

1) The Tribulation is not taught as a time when anti-Christ will rule and persecute Israel and believers in Jesus, but rather a time of God's judgement on earth brought through His people. Many therefore believe then that anti-Christ isn't a person, but a system, using I John 4:3 to ground their belief, which mentions the spirit of anti-Christ which denies Jesus, is already in the world. Therefore anti-Christ isn't a person, but merely a spirit governing ungodly governments, business, education, media, arts & entertainment, church, and family.

2) The church has failed in the last 2,000 years. Jesus came to do the work of the cross, then left the church to take dominion over the earth's 7 mountains listed above. But now we've come to understand the gospel correctly. Jesus told us to be witnesses, demonstrating the kingdom to the world, which means take over the 7 systems of the world to bring His kingdom to fruition as part of our witness.

They often use I Corinthians 15:25-26: "He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet..." From there they say we are the body of Christ, and even His feet rule over His enemies, therefore as His body we must take dominion over the earth.

In order for this to happen we must have the proper church government, which is overcomers submitted to apostolic leaders in the 7 mountains. Once God's government is set, helped along by prayer warriors pulling down strongholds to make the way, then Christians can move into position to take over those 7 areas.

3) No rapture. This is explained as a rapturous feeling of joy upon Christ' return.

4) The church is Israel. Most would agree the church is spiritual Israel, but Dominion Theology does away with the importance of the nation of Israel altogether, appropriating Old Testament and New Testament verses to mean the body of Christ.

5) Emphasis on our prayer to pull down strongholds, and teamwork with angels and those in Christ who have died and are now in heaven in order to usher in heaven on earth. In early stages I saw this thinking in conventions where they said if they just get enough people together to pray, just yell and shout loud enough, God will hear and send revival. Along the way some of it has morphed into making God our adversary, One who must be convinced to send revival, and impressed by numbers of people all praying the same thing.

Does the Bible prophesy Christians will dominate the 7 mountains?

Jesus said in Matthew 24:37 the earth will be as in the days of Noah at His return. You may recall Noah wasn't dominating the earth at that point, but was dominated by the ungodly around him. In fact only his family survived the flood.

Israel is the point, not the USA

It is clear throughout the whole Bible that Israel is the point, not any other nation including the USA. Jesus said in Luke 21:24 when prophesying of the 70 AD destruction of the temple, that "Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled." Israel took control of the city in 1967, marking the start of the end of the time of the Gentiles. It could be argued Israel doesn't

directly control east Jerusalem and that Jesus' prophecy has only been partially fulfilled, but either way, it is about literal Israel.

Paul said in Romans 11:25-26, "I don't want you to be ignorant nor conceited so I tell you this mystery, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the full number of Gentiles (non Jews) is fulfilled, then the remnant (of Israel) will be saved." So God is waiting for the maximum number of Gentiles to be saved as possible, and then the end of the focus on Gentiles will come, and His attention will shift to Israel. That isn't spiritual Israel for the sentence wouldn't make sense. Literal Israel is important.

The 2 who spoke to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration of His upcoming death* were Moses and Elijah, representing the law and the prophets. When Jesus was resurrected He spoke to the 2 on the road to Emmaus* out of Moses (the law) and the prophets. *Luke 9:30-31 and 24:27, 44-45

The 2 witnesses in Revelation 11:4-6 are Moses (law) and Elijah (prophets), who have 1) the power to hit the earth with plagues and turn water to blood, and 2) stop the rain from falling. (Which explains why Jude v9 tells us Michael, the Archangel in charge of Israel* took possession of the body of Moses after the Lord Himself buried him** rather than let it decay. *Daniel 12:1 **Deuteronomy 34:5-7

In Zechariah 12:10-11 and 13:6 it is prophesied when Messiah returns to the nation of Israel (not a spiritual Israel) they will ask how He got those wounds in His hands and He will tell them 'in the house of my friends'. and they will grieve as one mourns the death of an only child and the death of the firstborn child. There is no way to spiritualize those verses to make them mean 'the church'.

Personally speaking

I find it a daily challenge just to walk in the Spirit* in love, joy, peace, gentleness, long suffering, goodness, meekness, faithfulness, self-control, and adding to my faith** virtue, knowledge, patience, godliness, brotherly love, and unconditional love so that I walk in the Spirit and abound in the faith.

*Galatians 5:22-25, **II Peter 1:5-8

I take my hat off to those who have mastered walking in these things and have time to get caught up in each new 'move of God'. Looking back at 4 decades of 'moves of God' like the charismatic renewal with accompanying goofy personal prophecy, shepherding movement, Word of Faith, prosperity, apostolic, prayer warriors, messianic to the exclusion of New Testament truths, open heaven and go to heaven at will errors, and so many more, that I marvel these people have evidently mastered walking in the Spirit and are now able to move on from walking in the Spirit to pursue such peripheral teachings. I still have my hands full and it takes my full attention just walking with the Father and Lord daily, applause to those who have mastered that and have the luxury of pursuing other teachings.

What are we called to?

We are called to be saints, ever-learners (disciples) of Jesus Christ, pursuing only those things and those people that move us deeper into Him. We are also called according to HIS purpose (not ours), called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ, called to the liberty not of the flesh, but called to the liberty of loving one another in Christ, called to fight the fight of faith while laying hold of eternal life, called to be holy, and called out of darkness into the light. (Quoting Romans 1:7, 8:28, I Corinthians 1:9, Galatians 5:13, I Timothy 6:12, II Timothy 1:9, I Peter 2:9)

Don't we have our hands full just learning to walk with God through our day? Haven't you noticed all these 'moves of God' and 'fad teachings', rise up quickly and die down just as quickly? Haven't we noticed that just as the hyper-grace teaching fades which took the place of the blood moon craze, and people come back to balance, the Dominion Theology rises to take its place? The Lord allows some immaturity in His body as we do with our own immature children, but eventually every good parent brings the kids back to the path. Concentrate on walking with the Lord, not putting attention to anything which distracts us from our Prime Directive.

New 'random thought' next week, until then, blessings,

John Fenn

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