

# What Is the New Testament About?

Crucial Questions

**R. C. SPROUL**

What Is the New Testament About?

Crucial Questions booklets provide a quick introduction to definitive Christian truths. This expanding collection includes titles such as:

Who Is Jesus?

Can I Trust the Bible?

Does Prayer Change Things?

Can I Know God's Will?

How Should I Live in This World?

What Does It Mean to Be Born Again?

Can I Be Sure I'm Saved?

What Is Faith?

What Can I Do with My Guilt?

What Is the Trinity?

TO BROWSE THE REST OF THE SERIES,  
PLEASE VISIT: [LIGONIER.ORG/CQ](http://LIGONIER.ORG/CQ)

CQ

# What Is the New Testament About?

R. C. SPROUL



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

*What Is the New Testament About?*

© 2025 by the R.C. Sproul Trust

Published by Ligonier Ministries  
421 Ligonier Court, Sanford, FL 32771  
Ligonier.org

Printed in China

Amity Printing Company

0000225

First edition

ISBN 978-1-64289-646-6 (Paperback)

ISBN 978-1-64289-647-3 (ePub)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the publisher, Ligonier Ministries. The only exception is brief quotations in published reviews.

Cover design: Ligonier Creative

Interior design and typeset: Katherine Lloyd, The DESK

All Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024945857

## Contents

<b>One</b>	The Kingdom of God. . . . .	1
<b>Two</b>	Salvation . . . . .	13
<b>Three</b>	The Church. . . . .	25
<b>Four</b>	Mission. . . . .	35
<b>Five</b>	The Second Coming . . . . .	41
	About the Author . . . . .	55



## Chapter One

# The Kingdom of God

If there is a consensus among New Testament scholars on any topic, it would be in the area of the centrality of the kingdom of God throughout Scripture. But that's about where the agreement ends. The disagreement starts as to what the meaning of the kingdom of God is or when it appears.

Even so, the kingdom of God is a concept about which we find very little discussion in the wider Christian world. It doesn't seem to draw Christians' attention as much as it did



for the biblical authors. So it is worthwhile to give a brief sketch of this concept that is so central to the New Testament.

The theme of the kingdom is found at the very beginning of the proclamations in the New Testament. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” was the message proclaimed first by John the Baptist and then by Jesus at the start of His public ministry (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). Luke’s gospel speaks to the central significance of the theme:

And [Jesus] arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

And when it was day, he departed and went into

## The Kingdom of God

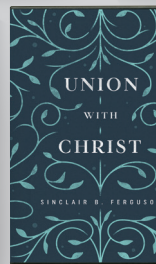
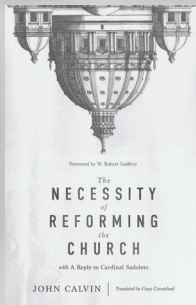
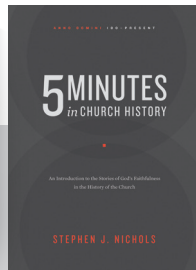
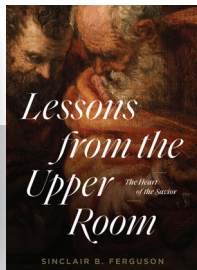
a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” (Luke 4:38–43)

In Jesus’ self-consciousness, according to His own self-testimony, one of the principal reasons that He came to this planet in the first place was to proclaim the kingdom of God. And what is the kingdom of God? Is this a startling new concept that emerges suddenly and spontaneously out of the soil of the New Testament? No, the idea of God as King—someone who reigns over a people and over a place, which is what a kingdom is—is deeply rooted and embedded in the Old Testament.

We may be tempted to fix the beginning point for concern for the kingdom of God with the emergence of the monarchy in Israel. Before Saul was anointed king over Israel, the nation was a loose tribal federation ruled over by charismatic leaders called judges. Then the people came to God and beseeched Him that they might have a king because they wanted to be like the other nations.

Yet Israel didn’t have a king because Yahweh was the

We want to see men and women  
around the world connect the deep truths  
of the Christian faith to everyday life.



Order your copy of this title, download the digital version,  
or browse thousands of resources at **Ligonier.org**.