



Kingdom Preaching (Eschatology)



Eschatology

- study of last things
- apocalyptic eschatology - Daniel, Revelation
- Sapiential eschatology - tied to Jewish wisdom tradition, many Jesus scholars see it in earliest layer of Q



Kingdom in the Gospels

- John - only uses phrase "kingdom of God" (God's Imperial Rule) twice, prefers "eternal life"
- Synoptics - "Kingdom of God/Heaven" show up more than 80 times
- Kingdom of God or Heaven? (125-6)
 - Language & Environment would suggest Heaven
 - Dissimilarity might suggest God
- Multiple attestation supports view that kingdom preaching was historical, but
- Was Jesus' eschatology future or realized?



Gospel views of kingdom

- Greek word for kingdom is *basilea* - means rule or reign – “imperial rule of God”
- Matthew and Mark tend to see it an imminent and future ; Mark sees repentance as a response to coming of kingdom whereas Matthew sees repentance as a condition to be fulfilled before kingdom comes
- Luke can be interpreted as seeing kingdom as already realized



Jesus' View of *basilea*

- *basilea* as future - evidence in Lord's prayer, parables that stress expectation, examples on p. 136 of Five Gospels
- *basilea* as present - "God's imperial rule is in your midst" (Luke 17:20-21); dissimilarity rules out future interpretation, see p. 137 of Five Gospels
- present & future – already, but not yet?



Four Theories of Nature of *basilea*

- *basilea* is spiritual-ethical rule of God in the heart of the individual, both present and future (already and more to come)
- *basilea* is futuristic, supernatural rule of God at the end of history, e.g., Schweitzer (not yet)
- realized eschatology - *basilea* present in Jesus who invited disciples [and us] to live in this new rule (already)
- inaugurated eschatology - *basilea* began in Jesus, but will be consummated by God in future; disciples live from the future in the present (already, not yet)
