



[Rev. Steven S. Billings](#)

*Sermon for The Last Sunday of the Church Year
November 23, 2025*

Whose Kingdom Shall Have No End Colossians 1:13–20

¹³ [God] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. ¹⁹ For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, ²⁰ and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

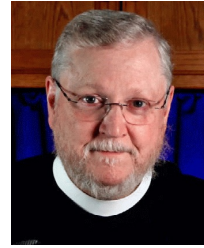
All good things must come to an end. This week we come to the end of the church year. This time of year our focus turns to the last things, the end times. The Day is surely drawing near, that day when Christ shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead.

But if we just stop there, at the Last Day, we've not gone far enough. There's more. The end is not the end. Think about that phrase from the Nicene Creed, "to judge both the living and the dead." What comes right after it? "Whose kingdom will have no end." No end! Christ's kingdom has no end! It's a never ending kingdom, an everlasting kingdom. Today we want to find out more about this kingdom and how we get to be a part of it.

The first question is, Who's kingdom will have no end? Clearly, the kingdom belongs to the Coming One, the one who is coming again with glory, the one who is the subject of the entire Second Article of the Creed, namely, the Lord Jesus. It's His kingdom that will have no end.

One of the realities of life is that, whether we're among "the living" or "the dead," you and I *will* have an end. We may be "living" now, but we'll be "dead" eventually. None of us can outrun Old Man Death. He'll catch up to each of us sooner or later. Our little kingdoms, which we fashion in this life, will certainly come to an end.

But it's worse than that. There is a kingdom in which we were trapped, where physical death is only part of the story. It's worse than that. St. Paul refers to it in today's Epistle, calling it "the power of darkness." The power of darkness – that's where we were trapped



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and couldn't get out. The power of darkness – the dominion of darkness – is viewed as a sphere of power, a realm that has us in its sway, in its thrall, under its control. It's the ultimate "Evil Empire," if you will. The power of darkness is wielded by the devil, who had us enslaved, captive, in darkness and disobedience, death and damnation. We were in the dark, lost, and unable to see where we were going. You know, people in the dark bump into each other and hurt each other. People in the dark cannot see God for who He is. It's like all the lights were out, which didn't really matter because we were blind anyway. That's what the power of darkness is like. That's the natural state in which we once lived. Gloomy, thick darkness, as far as the eye can see – or can't see, more like it. Trapped in the domain of darkness. If that kingdom were to have no end for us, we would be lost forever.

But here's the good news: You and I have changed kingdoms! Not that we did anything to get ourselves out of the power of darkness. God did it for us. It's like Paul says: "*He* has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." There's a change of citizenship in this. We've gone from one kingdom to another, from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son. We've been "delivered," "transferred." God has delivered us from the power of darkness. It was a rescue mission. You and I were trapped in the dark, and God came and brought us into the light.

How did He do it? Through the Means of Grace – the preaching of His Word and the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Through these the Holy Spirit brought you to faith in Christ.

And when He did that, He conveyed – transferred – your citizenship over to a new realm, a realm totally different in its character and its lordship from the old domain. This is the kingdom of God's beloved Son. The power of darkness was characterized by darkness and blindness. The kingdom of God's beloved Son is characterized by light and the ability to see. The power of darkness was a place of despair and doom. The kingdom of God's Son is the realm of hope and salvation. The power of darkness – enslavement under the power of the devil. The kingdom of God's Son – freedom in the light of Christ. The power of darkness is hemmed in by death. The kingdom of God's Son opens up into life – eternal life.

"The kingdom of the Son of His love." What more is there to know about this beloved Son whose kingdom it is. Paul tells us. He speaks of this eternal Son in lofty, cosmic terms:

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and



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for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”

Here we must catch our breath and stand in awe, so grand is the Person of God’s eternal Son. This is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God in all of His infinite majesty. We come back to the wording of the Nicene Creed to try to express it:

“. . . one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made.”

By the way, that phrase “by whom all things were made” is paraphrasing what Paul says here in Colossians: “For by him” – that is, by the Son – “all things were created.” “All things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things consist.”

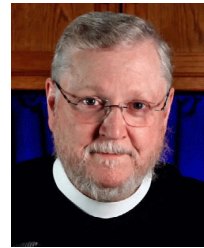
“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.” When Paul says the Son is “the firstborn over all creation,” he’s saying that Christ, with the full authority of the firstborn Son, has absolute supremacy over all created things. In other words, the Son is true God, the Lord of all creation. *That* is whose kingdom is being spoken of here. It is into His kingdom that we have been transferred. *Christ* is the one “whose kingdom shall have no end.”

But why? How did God deliver us out of the domain of darkness, that death-kingdom where we were trapped? By what right could we – sinful rebels that we were – be allowed to visit, let alone remain in, reside in – such a magnificent kingdom?

Here’s where the Son of God’s love comes in. For He did indeed come into our hall of death, this gray, gloomy land of rebels, on His divine rescue mission. Christ, the eternal Son of God, entered our slave-camp, to set us free. God’s beloved Son, in whom God was well pleased, took upon Himself all of God’s displeasure and wrath. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” He cried out on the cross. Why indeed? Because it would take the death of God’s own Son to pay the price for our rebellion. Nothing less would do. We were trapped on Devil’s Island, with no way off. We couldn’t see a way of escape, and even if we did, we wouldn’t be able to swim from that Alcatraz to the shore of safety. So Christ became the Prisoner in our place. He took the death penalty we deserved.

Now, if the Son of God dies for the sins of the world, His holy death is sufficient. It is of such infinite worth that it is able to rescue us and restore all of fallen creation. Paul puts it like this:

“For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness [of God] should dwell, and by Him to



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reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

Here again we must pause in wonder. For the Son of God’s love, the eternal Lord, to stoop so low as to shed His blood on a cross of shame, for me and for my sins – I can hardly take it in. And Christ did this for you, too! Ponder the mystery and praise His name! God has transferred you into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom you have “redemption, the forgiveness of sins!”

Redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace – all these great gospel words are here in this passage! Think of it like this: What kept you a prisoner on Devil’s Island was your sin. Christ paid the price for your release with His holy precious blood shed on the cross. Now you’ve been set free, and with your sins removed, you are qualified for entrance into the kingdom of God’s Son. Or think of it like this: We rebels were warring against God’s kingdom, but now God has reconciled with us; the war is over, the peace treaty has been signed with the blood of Christ. Use whatever language you like, we have been transferred into the kingdom of God’s beloved Son.

Now we say that this kingdom “shall have no end.” How so? Because of the one whose kingdom it is. Paul says of Him: “And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead.” He is “the head of the body.” Where the head is, there the body will be. Since Christ the head lives forever, so also will His body, the church. He is “the beginning.” And if He is the beginning, then His kingdom will have no end.

He is “the firstborn from the dead.” Just as He is the firstborn of all creation and thus has absolute supremacy over all created things, so also Christ is the firstborn from the dead, and He has supremacy, full authority, over death and hell. By His death He has destroyed death, and by His rising again to life He has restored to us everlasting life. And so we the church – we will “live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives, and reigns to all eternity.”

“Whose Kingdom Shall Have No End.” This never-ending kingdom, this kingdom of Christ, what will it be like? Well, we’re already in it now, but it’s only going to get better. Take away all the bad stuff that bothers you now – your lingering sin, the sorrow and pain that you cause yourself and that others cause you, the sickness and death you suffer, the tears – take all those things away. And then multiply the good – many times over! We’ve been delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed into the kingdom of God’s Son, where there is only light and life. Alive with Christ and with His church forever, in the kingdom of the beloved Son, we ourselves God’s beloved children – this is only a hint of



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how good it will be! And we'll have all eternity to experience it and to discover how wonderful this kingdom really is!

All good things must come to an end. Or must they? In Christ, "whose kingdom shall have no end," the end is only the beginning. In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen