

John 18:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Analysis

Jesus clarifies His kingdom's nature to Pilate: it is 'not of this world', meaning not originating from or operating by worldly principles. Had it been earthly, His servants would fight to prevent His arrest. This demonstrates Christianity's spiritual nature—advanced by truth and changed hearts, not political power or military force. Christ voluntarily submits to crucifixion because His kingdom is established through sacrificial love, not conquest.

Historical Context

Pilate represented Rome's power; Jesus represents God's kingdom. The contrast is stark: Rome ruled by sword, Christ by truth. Pilate's question (v. 37) shows confusion: a king who won't fight to defend his kingdom defied understanding.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How should the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom shape the church's methods and goals?
2. In what ways are Christians tempted to advance God's kingdom through worldly means?

Interlinear Text

ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς Ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν
answered G611 G3588 **Jesus** G2424 G3588 **kingdom** G932 G3588 **My** G1699 **not** G3756 **is** G2076

ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου
of G1537 G3588 **world** G2889 **this** G5127 **if** G1487 **of** G1537 G3588 **world** G2889 **this** G5127

ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οἱ ὑπηρέται ἂν οἱ
were G2258 G3588 **kingdom** G932 G3588 **My** G1699 G3588 **servants** G5257 **then would** G302 G3588

ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· νῦν
G1698 **fight** G75 G2443 G3361 **I should** G3860 G3588 **to the Jews** G2453 **now** G3568

δὲ ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν
but G1161 G3588 **kingdom** G932 G3588 **My** G1699 **not** G3756 **is** G2076 **from hence** G1782

Additional Cross-References

John 6:15 (Kingdom): When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

Romans 14:17 (Kingdom): For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Daniel 7:14 (Kingdom): And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Daniel 2:44 (Kingdom): And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

1 Timothy 6:13 (References Jesus): I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

Zechariah 9:9 (Kingdom): Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Matthew 26:53 (Parallel theme): Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

Luke 12:14 (Parallel theme): And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

John 8:15 (Parallel theme): Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.