

*subjects*—they are those who believe and obey him ; his kingdom is not of this world, for all his subjects have been born again—“born of water and spirit,” and only such can enter into his kingdom. Is there any impropriety in calling an institution a kingdom, when it has all the necessary ingredients for it ?

The kingdom of the Lord was said to be “at hand,” during the personal ministry of the Lord, and John the Baptist. But since then—since the day of Pentecost, it is invariably spoken of as “come,” and established. Hence Paul to the Colossians holds this language—“who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” Now, will any one dare to accuse the Apostle Paul with imposing on his readers by using language which meant something just the reverse of its general acceptance ? Here he says the Colossians were “in the kingdom of God’s dear Son ;” which could not be true if the Lord’s kingdom was *then* and is *now* future !

The Lord Jesus gave to Peter the “keys of the kingdom of heaven.” Can a Protestant suppose that this was the power to open the “everlasting kingdom” of God ? Do they not with one voice refer this to the setting up of the kingdom or church of God here on earth ? To Peter were committed the secrets, truths, or the way by which men should enter into the kingdom or church of the Lord. He breathed on his disciples and said, “receive ye the Holy Spirit. Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained.” John xx. That is, the truth which he would convey to their minds, or bring to their remembrance when they should be baptised in the Holy Spirit, would teach men what they should do in order to obtain pardon—disbelieving which, they would sin against greater light, and consequently remain in their sins. This being effected by the Apostle’s mission, it was properly said to be done by them. When they were baptised in the Holy Spirit, and had announced the gospel, the people enquire—“What must we do ?” Peter (being the speaker—having the keys or secrets of the kingdom of heaven) said, “repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” In this manner the Apostles “remitted” and “retained” the sins of the people—opened and unlocked the kingdom of heaven.

With reference to this was the Savior’s promise, Luke xxii. 29, “I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.” &c. After they had received it, and many had become citizens, the Apostle says, “We, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace to serve the Lord acceptably,” &c. Heb. xii. 28. The beloved Apostle John addresses the seven churches of Asia as a “companion with them in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ,” Rev. i. 9. Had the Apostle been with them in heaven ? Or had the kingdom then come ? We feel as though we were performing something like a work of supererogation ; but we are determined, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to set this question at rest. Are other testimonies called for ? The reader shall have one from the Lord Jesus, repeated by at least