

Abstract

The work has three main parts, one on the kingdom of God, one on hope, and one on the relationship between the kingdom of God and hope. The first part looks for all occurrences of the word “kingdom” in the New Testament and examines the differences between the terms “kingdom of God”, “kingdom of heaven”, and “kingdom of the Father”. It then turns its attention to the meaning and content of the term kingdom of God. The section on hope presents historical and contemporary definitions of hope, types of hope according to psychological research of the last two decades, looks for the difference between the object and the source of hope, describes the specifics of Christian hope, and looks for reasons why the word “hope” does not appear in the Gospels. In the next section, the thesis defines 16 classes of statements about the kingdom of God in the Synoptic Gospels, categorizes each verse into groups, and evaluates them according to their relationship to hope. It locates and presents the principles, called the building blocks of Christian hope, that are based on the kingdom of God presented by Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. It then draws from the results the benefits of hope for people in their efforts to enter the kingdom of God. The paper also presents some Gospel passages about the kingdom of God that work against hope in their content – or so they seem. It seeks to explain whether this paradox is real or merely apparent. The thesis concludes by summarizing all the types of connections found between the kingdom of God and hope and assessing their relevance to the Christian's life on his or her path toward God.