



**C O V E N A N T**  
T H E O L O G I C A L S E M I N A R Y

**BS 6005 CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM**  
**Dr. Will Ryan**

# Covenant Theological Seminary

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## COMPLETED WORK IS TO BE SUBMITTED IN A SINGLE PDF DOCUMENT

1. A cover page which includes:
  - a. Name of course, author and instructor's name with title
  - b. Student's name, degree working toward, and the date completed
  - c. Facilitator's complete title/name the seminary's name and location (Greenville, NC)
2. Separate page & heading for each new section, capitalized at top center of that page SUMMARY, PRECIS, PAPER
3. All papers are to be typed with .5" margins using font & size: Calibri 11 pt. Summaries and book reports are to be double-spaced
4. Grading will be percentage based on questions, outlines, grammar, and theological and philosophical thought and execution of writing forms.

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# JESUS UNTANGLED

By Keith Giles

## Jesus Untangled by Keith Giles

In this book, Giles explains how the Church has become increasingly entangled in politics and the pursuit of power in this world. They have abandoned the primary focus of the body of Christ by going after the “American dream” and trying to gain influence in culture in ways that Jesus never prescribed to. You can’t convert a culture that has already converted you. Giles shows how the Kingdom of God is not of (like) this world and we are to seek first His kingdom instead of infiltrating and taking over the kingdoms of this world. We are called to live lives set apart as salt of the earth and a city on a hill.

(ISBD -13: 9781938480218)

**VIDEO:** Watch the YOUTUBE EXPEDITION 44 Citizens of the Kingdom Playlist

## ASSIGNMENTS BS 6005 CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

1. **OUTLINE:**  
The additional book by chapter, using the author’s outline, with each chapter heading displayed in Roman numerals, i.e., Chapter one, I, chapter two, II. etc., placing the subpoints as A, B, etc., then to 1, 2, etc., but no deeper, unless the book gives enumerated items.
2. **WATCH:** The x44 Youtube playlist (Go to youtube and search for “youtube expedition 44 theology Citizens of the Kingdom Playlist”)
3. **PRECIS:** write a book report
  - a. Master: 3
  - b. Doctorate: 5
4. **PAPER:** write a paper comparing and contrasting the two books in the course and formulating your ministry/theological vision and worldview as it relates to your personal life and the calling of the church in this culture. Pages according to degree work per degree for book report requirement:
  - a. Master: 5
  - b. Doctorate: 8
5. **TEST: TAKE 15 QUESTION TEST**

## Course Overview

In this course we will be examining strategies for impacting our culture for the Kingdom of God. We will explore the role of the Church and the people of God within society and discern our calling in how to affect those around us for the Kingdom. We invite you to consider the view that Christians are exiles and aliens in this world and part of the Kingdom of God. This calls us to untangle ourselves from the systems of this world and live in a way that is set apart. The Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom is the only power that will transform people. Legislating morality and ethics will not change hearts. We are called to radical allegiance to God's Kingdom alone in this view because it is impossible to convert a culture that has already converted you. We are called to serve one master and not get involved in civilian affairs.

We must examine our paradigm and worldview through a kingdom perspective in order to live as Salt and Light in Babylon.

## **Jesus Untangled**

By Keith Giles

### Book Outline

1. The Problem: How Nationalism Hinders the Gospel
  - a. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of America are not congruent
  
2. A Matter of Perspective
  - a. Flat bible reading doesn't work
  - b. Jesus centered Bible reading
  
3. The Way We Were: The Church Before Entanglement
  - a. The politics of the early church (First 300 years)

**PLEASE CONTINUE THE OUTLINE**

## **Jesus Untangled (SHORTENED SAMPLES)**

By Keith Giles  
Precis (Book Report)

Jesus Untangled's message is that the Church has been caught up in American Christianity which cannot divorce their nationalism and patriotism from their Christian religion. Giles shows in this book how Jesus' message was to be counterculture in the midst of empire and not to take over the empire through attaining political power and influence in the major centers of culture. We are called to seek first God's kingdom.

### **The Problem: How Nationalism Hinders the Gospel**

Paul tells Timothy as a soldier of the Lord that he was not to get entangled in civilian affairs but be focused on the Kingdom (2 Tim 2:4). The church has gotten tangled up in the affairs of America and this is hurting the Gospel that Jesus is king because we are pledging our allegiance to a country and the ways of this country over the ways of Jesus. Giles contends that we are to live here as exiles and aliens (Heb 11:13-16) and to occupy until Jesus comes back (Luke 19:13).

### **A Matter of Perspective**

In the second chapter Giles explains the way he views scripture in a very Jesus centered way. He shows how a flat Bible reading is not possible because of the revelation of Jesus. Too often people use Moses to trump Jesus. He shows that Jesus is the Word of God (John 1) and we should filter all things through Jesus. The Old Testament should be filtered through the lens of Christ. He brings up that many things are biblical (slavery, polygamy, war, etc.) but not all things are Christlike.

### **The Way We Were: The Church Before Entanglement**

Historically the Church has viewed the state as an adversary, yet a necessary evil. In this chapter Keith Giles goes through the first 300 years of the church following the destruction of the temple with many quotes from early Christian writer (Early Church Fathers) and shows how they refused to participate in government and the army (war). He also demonstrates how the early church refused to baptize those who served in

government or the army without them renouncing their position within the government because the early church knew that one could not be part of two kingdoms.

### **How We became Confused About Who We Really Are**

During the first 300 years of the church, Christ followers gave up their lives for Jesus under great persecution. When Constantine came into power, he had a vision of a cross in the sky and heard it said that “you will conquer in this sign”. He essentially made the Roman world Christian by making Christianity the national religion. Yet Constantine didn’t get baptized until he was on his death bed, nearly twenty years later, knowing that one couldn’t be emperor and a Christian. This edict brought a sense of safety and power resulting from the merging of the church and state and began to corrupt the church through hierarchy (Catholic church) and the striving for political influence.

### **The Weakness of Politics as an Agent of Change**

Giles shows in this chapter how the political process can truthfully bring very little change, yet to American Christians separating faith and politics is absurd. Giles looks at quotes from many modern Christian leaders and their view that we need to be in positions of power to influence and “turn America back to God” and what this requires is political power. Franklin Graham suggests that if a Christian occupied the highest offices in the land and culture that our nation would be turned back to a “Christian Nation”. But this is not true. Laws never changed anyone’s heart and the Bible shows this with the Torah. An example is the abolishment of slavery still hasn’t solved the problem and racism, and sex trafficking, a form of slavery is still a major issue in America. These are heart issues and not something we can legislate. The job of the Church is to work with the Spirit on changing hearts and not think that power over the political process will be the answer.

### **The Supremacy of Christ and the Gospel**

The Church’s quest for power and influence runs against the message of Jesus. We are shown in scripture that Jesus became a servant even unto his death and we are called to pick up our cross and do the

same, living a life as he lived. This is an upside-down way of thinking and living. It is power under and not over living, which flies in the face of gaining political power for “the kingdom”. The gospel calls us to abandon the weapons of this world (war, power, and greed) and follow the way of Christ; the way of peace. The way of allegiance to King Jesus.

### **The Conspiracy of Entanglement**

In this chapter Giles looks at how the Church has been entangled in the conservative republican party since Reagan. Over the last 40 years the party has been playing the Church by dangling the carrot of overturning Roe vs. Wade but even with a majority of conservative appointed judges in the last 49/50 years no action has been made. Giles lists many other issues such as business and shows how the American Church as been coopted into this conspiracy by thinking change will come through power. Joining the Democratic party is also not the answer, re-focusing our eyes on Jesus and placing our faith in him and his plan to change heart is.

### **How the American Empire Works**

Empires exploit the poor in their own country and other (third world) countries. Giles shows how this has been done in the history of America and how America has become a superpower through loaning weaker countries money and then assuming power through capital. These business ventures do not benefit the poor but make the rich wealthier. Giles asks us to consider if we stopped exploiting these countries and thus, they would not have to immigrate to America, in other words what if we blessed them instead of exploiting them.

### **Why Your Vote Doesn't Count**

The author shows in this chapter how the opinions and preferences of voters actually don't count due to lobbying. In America is it legal to buy political influence. Lobbyists even write the bills for our congressmen and congresswomen. The only way out of this is to make corruption illegal and if Christians participate in



government, even they often become part of this. Greed motivates our political system. Your vote will not bring change when those who you vote in are being influenced by the system of greed.

### **The Power of Fear**

When people are afraid, they are easy to manipulate. Our political system is built on fear and we are taught to be pitted against others out of fear, but Jesus calls us not to be afraid and this is not a spirit from Him. These fears come in the form of tribalism and national identity. We are told who our tribe is based on the way we vote or believe and anything that might take that away from us drives us to be unloving and abandon the way of Jesus.

### **Our National Identity Crisis**

Other than just Constantine's influence on Church and state the Reformers have a lot to do with the way that Christians view themselves in regard to nationalism. The Reformers saw themselves as both Nationalist and Christians and used their power to murder the Anabaptists who saw the way of Jesus as wholly other than the affairs of the state. And through this way of thinking they believed they were taking their countries "back for God". This way of thinking still plagues the Church today and many Christians are ok with violent tactics and tribalism to bring this about. These are things foreign to the way of Jesus. Christianity and nationalism cannot be mixed.

### **One Holy Nation**

America is not the kingdom of God. We cannot expect America to become the kingdom of God by having the top influential positions in government. In Revelation it shows us that there is only one kingdom and all the other nations, not just the "bad" ones, will be replaced by God's kingdom. This will not happen by Christians taking over their governments. The one holy nation of the Kingdom of God doesn't happen when nations become a little more Christian or adopt moral laws.

## **Tribalism and Violence**

Until we abandon our tribalism, we will never truly understand what it means to live in Jesus' kingdom. Jesus gave a parable of the good Samaritan which spoke of everyone as our neighbor. The Samaritans were hated by the Jews for their nationality, practices, and theology. Jesus is calling us to love our neighbor and we cannot do this when we think in an us vs. them paradigm. Christ is not divided, and tribalism is one step away from violence. American politics create this kind of worldview where republicans hate democrats a vice-versa. As a Christian we cannot bear these labels because our identity is with Jesus who is love incarnate.

## **America: An Un-Christian Empire**

When we look at the founding of America, we will see much ungodly behavior that is filtered through a worldview of violence and power. We often hear that America is a Christian nation that was founded on principle of the Bible but when we look closer is this true? Giles shows how much of the America we experience today was built on slavery and genocide. If our founders were truly Christlike would there have been a slaughter of natives and the enslavement for the sake of the expansion of colonies and the economy? Christians set people free and do not murder and exploit. When we look at this through the lens of the gospels can we say that God help build America, when he says, "whatever you did to the least of these you did to me?"

## **Just War?**

Most consider World War 2 to be a just war. Giles points out that American soldiers were surprised to find that the Germans were driving trucks manufactured and sold to them by Ford Motor Company. Their planes were also fueled with gas bought from American companies. Greed fueled WW2 and could have been ended before it started if these companies valued life more than money. Simply by avoiding the temptation of greed this war would have been avoided. Just war is an oxymoron. As Christians we are called to be

peacemakers, forgive, and pray for those who persecute us. Jesus equates love with obedience and when we love our enemies there is no excuse for believer to support war.

### **Living Untangled**

The Gospel of Jesus is the most effective weapon against evil. If Christians believe that they won't give into fear. We are called to live as exiles and seek the good of our nation but not get involved in things that are not part of our marching orders for the kingdom, such as politics. The kingdoms of this world are fading away and when our king returns, he should find us already living in his kingdom and not participating in the kingdoms of this world.

## Jesus Untangled Test Questions

- Mixing Christianity with politics is a way to make the world a better place
  - True
  - False
- The reason Evangelical today can justify war, torture, violence, militarism, and nationalism is because they appeal to:
  - Jesus and the New Covenant
  - Moses and the Old Covenant
  - A Biblical Worldview
  - The Reformers
- If Jesus couldn't bow down and worship Satan by entering public office, we shouldn't either.
  - True
  - False
- Constantine's influence on the church produced two major things:
  - Christlikeness and love
  - Faith and power
  - Hierarchy and entanglement
  - Persecution and fear
- The attitude of many Christians in America today reveals a desire to seize control of the American government by taking power over our enemies and exerting the necessary political pressure to turn our nation back to God. This is a biblical mindset according to the author.
  - True
  - False
- Our quest for power and influence runs exactly \_\_\_\_\_ the example and message of Jesus.
  - Parallel with
  - As a mirror image of
  - Against
  - Within
- According to the author, if our passion is to end abortion in our nation, the best way to do it is to \_\_\_\_\_, and to love our neighbor as Jesus commanded.
  - Circumvent political processes
  - Repeal Roe vs. Wade
  - Pass a law
  - Protest
- One reason Christians in America are vulnerable to political scare tactics is due to the fact that we have an identity crisis.
  - True
  - False
- Because Christians who align themselves with the state have the power of the sword, historically they have used that power to imprison, torture, and even put to death any who disagree with them- even their own brothers and sisters.
  - True
  - False
- The rights of a Christian are \_\_\_\_
  - To share in the sufferings of Christ and to give up their individual identity
  - To love and serve as Jesus did
  - In the Bill of Rights
  - A & B

11. In the New Testament we see hints that it is ok to have dual citizenship as a citizen of the world and a citizen of God's kingdom.
- True
  - False
12. Nationalism is \_\_\_\_\_.
- Idolatry and a denial of Christ's kingdom
  - Acceptable as long as you vote biblically
  - Acceptable because America is built on Biblical principals
  - A non-issue to God
13. Jesus was very interested in political freedom; He came to bring a regime change in the government.
- True
  - False
14. The idea of a violent, nationalistic Messiah blinded the Jews from seeing \_\_\_\_\_.
- That Jesus came just to save their souls
  - The things that make for peace
  - That kind of messiah comes in Revelation
  - Their sins
15. \_\_\_\_\_ is the most effective weapon against evil, corruption, violence, hate, and fear.
- A Republican President
  - A Democratic President
  - The Gospel of Jesus
  - The Constitution