

# A simple critique of Dominionism

There are several varieties of Dominionism flourishing today; some in conservative circles, other more extreme versions amongst Charismatics. What is Dominionism? It is the idea that the church will become so powerful that, in one way or another, will dominate the world; usually the idea is of a Christian world government.

Now Dominionism is usually associated with a postmillennial eschatology; that is, a belief that Christ will return after a prolonged golden age of the church (which may or may not be 1,000 years long). However, not every postmillennialist is a Dominionist. Some Puritans held postmillennial views that supposed the church would grow increasingly in numbers and influence and effect an age of righteousness in society before the Lord returned; but they, mostly, did not teach that the church would rule the world.

## Reformed Dominion theology

### Reconstructionism

The modern Reformed version of Dominionist ideas is called 'Reconstructionism' or 'Theonomy' and is taught by people like Rousas Rushdoony (now deceased), Gary DeMar, Gary North, David Chilton and Greg Bahnsen. It is a development of American Calvinism arising out of Reformed Presbyterianism.

'Reconstructionism' insists that the Bible (particularly the OT) must be applied to all areas of life and society reconstructed to obey this command. 'Theonomy' (from *theos* = God and *nomos* = law) refers to the idea that the civil laws of OT Israel are normative in all societies for all time, including death for adultery and homosexuality. The believer must keep the whole Mosaic Law to be sanctified and the civil law aspects are to be applied by the civil rulers. They deny Calvin's view that the civil and ceremonial aspects of the law expired with the OT Israel state calling it, '*heretical nonsense*'.<sup>1</sup>

These imply establishing a theocracy, the direct rule of society by God, just as occurred in OT Israel. They believe that a spiritual revival is required to implement these ideas, not a top-down fascism (but in practice their methods imply a top-down implementation). It is the desire to 'reclaim the ground' for Christ. They do not believe that a theocracy would be rule by priests or pastors, but rule by God through civil rulers who are ministers of God as much as pastors are. In this they differ from Charismatic Dominionists. This theocracy is set out in detailed principles covering all aspects of government (Rushdoony's institutes was 900 pages long). It includes such principles as, decentralised government, strong private property rights, abandonment of social welfare, isolation of education and business from government, re-introduction of voluntary slavery and a general right wing agenda. Criminal law would be Mosaic; including the death penalty for incorrigible children. Restitution of robbery would involve forced slavery when the felon could not repay.

According to Reconstructionists God's kingdom is now with us and has been since Christ entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Matt 21:5). This means that Christians and non-Christians are members of this kingdom. While correctly expounding the authority now given to Christ as king over all, it fails to see that God has decreed to not implement that on

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<sup>1</sup> Rushdoony, *Inst. Of Biblical Law*, p9, 304. Calvin considered this view '*dangerous and seditious*', *Institutes* 4:20, 14. While there are problems with Calvin's view, which is accepted by all Reformed confessions, it is true to say that it is unbiblical to fully apply the Mosaic Law as the standard of societal legislation. For a detailed explanation see my book, '*The believer's relationship to the law*'.

earth at this time (1 Cor 15:23-28). The consummation of Christ's kingly glory comes at his return. Christ does not directly rule over a sinful world but comes to a purified, restored earth with his bride to rule. Until then he waits in heaven until the elect are fully brought in from the world.

The seed-plot of Reconstructionism began in the 1960s under the influence of Cornelius Van Til, the Reformed philosopher at Westminster Theological Seminary, though he denied any association with the movement. Here the Reconstructionists established the basic concepts that God does not change and that his laws (which reflect him) are eternally binding on all people. The Christian's prime purpose is to have dominion over all the earth. Thus the movement has no place for other religious faiths or a pluralist society. They followed Van Til in holding to his presuppositional epistemology; that is they do not try to prove that God exists but hold the faith because the Bible says so and they do not convince the sinner that the Gospel is true but demand repentance. Faith is not based upon evidence but submission.

Though the Reconstructionist Movement only appeared in America in the 60s, it has grown substantially since then. One of the first, if not the first, books on the subject was Rushdoony's *Institutes of Biblical Law*, published in 1973. However, he had formerly established the Chalcedon Foundation in 1965 in California to promote these ideas. Bahnsen, considered the most brilliant of the group's thinkers, published *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* in 1977, insisting that the Mosaic Law should be applied to all areas of American life. He was dismissed from his post at the Reformed Seminary in Jackson as a result. He then pastored an Orthodox Presbyterian church in southern California.

Gary North is Rushdoony's son-in-law and has published many volumes in a pugnacious style. He also edited the *Journal of Christian Reconstructionism* until 1981. He then established the Institute for Christian Economics in Tyler, Texas, as well as 'Geneva Ministries'. The significant thing about North is that he penetrated the Charismatic Movement with Dominionist ideas after Robert Tilton's wife read one of his books and persuaded her husband to invite North to address 1,000 pastors, where he made many converts. Subsequent to this there have been groups where Reformed Reconstructionists and Charismatic Dominionists have made allegiances to work together towards a US theocracy.<sup>2</sup>

In the July/August 1985 issue of *Christian Reconstructionism* Gary North wrote an article titled 'A Letter to Charismatics', asking why Charismatics, and more particularly Word of Faith televangelists, had not abandoned Dispensational theology. He claimed that this theology is an excuse for the failure of Christians to change the world showing the clear contradiction between Word Faith success mentality and Dispensational pessimism / inactivity. Indeed, Dispensationalism does tend to produce a pessimistic bunker mentality, introspection and apathy. Clearly the message got through.

These, and several other initiatives, worked so that many Dispensational Pentecostals and Charismatics changed their eschatology, becoming postmillennial Dominionist activists. The degeneration of morals in American society encouraged people to support the principles of Reconstructionism in an effort to return to 'Christian morality'; to reconstruct

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<sup>2</sup> 'Since 1980 much of Pentecostalism has begun to adopt aspects of Reconstructionism or dominion theology. This is not an accident. Reconstructionists have sought to graft their theology onto the experientially oriented, and often theologically amorphous, Pentecostal and charismatic religious traditions. Following a 1987 Reconstructionist/Pentecostal theological meeting, Joseph Morecraft exclaimed: "God is blending Presbyterian theology with charismatic zeal into a force that cannot be stopped.'" Frederick Clarkson; article titled 'No Longer Without Sheep'; (1994), Talk2action.org. Hundreds of thousands of Pentecostals and Charismatics moved from being apolitical into the activist camp as a result.

society which has been dominated by sin. We will discuss the political implications of this later.

### *Summary of Reconstructionist principles*

- Calvinist in terms of the doctrines of grace.
- Theonomy – demanding the application of God’s law to all areas of life, as in the Mosaic Covenant; including the application of Israel’s civil laws to modern society.
- Legalism - ‘*Justified by grace; sanctified by law*’, Rushdoony.<sup>3</sup>
- Presuppositionalism.
- Postmillennialism.
- Dominionist – fulfilling the mandate to Adam, Abraham and Israel to subdue the earth.
- Reconstruction of every area in society presently dominated by sin, first in the individual, then in the family, then in the church then in society in general, so that the earth glorifies the Lord and comes under God’s authority. [This equates to the Charismatic ‘Kingdom Now Theology’, but without miracles.]

Note that if the Amillennial position on eschatology can be proved (which I believe it can) then this alone destroys all the principles of Reconstructionism.

### *Key problems with Reconstructionism*

1. The Mosaic Law is said in Scripture to be a temporary dispensation, which pointed to Christ and was cancelled as a covenant at the cross to be followed by the New Covenant. ‘**What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made**’ (Gal 3:19). It was never meant as a permanent statute for all people at all times. The civil laws in particular were only for Israel under the Old Covenant. The apostles never spoke about applying the law’s civil codes to foreign nations when they preached the Gospel to them. Calvin and all Reformed confessions also deny this secular application of the civil laws. The result is nonsense, such as demanding that every new house has a battlement for its roof (Deut 22:8) or garments cannot be made from mixed materials (Deut 22:11).
2. It fails to see that the law cannot be perfectly obeyed by men. The Israelites utterly failed and were judged by God in two exiles. ‘**Why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?**’ (Acts 15:10)
3. It fails to see that the purpose of the Mosaic Law was to magnify sin and thus direct people to seek salvation in a coming deliverer who would bear their sins for them. ‘**The law entered that the offence might abound**’ (Rm 5:20).
4. It fails to see that the ministry of the law produces death not life. ‘**The ministry of death, written and engraved on stones**’ (2 Cor 3:7). It is not the means of sanctification.
5. It ignores the fact that Jesus did not apply the Mosaic Law penalty when faced with a crime against it (Jn 8:1-11).
6. It contradicts the Bible’s statements that sinners are not part of the kingdom. ‘**Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.**’ (1 Cor 6:9-10).
7. It focuses people on earth instead of heaven. ‘**Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth**’ (Col 3:2).
8. The church is not called to change human society or create a peaceful world today but to preach the Gospel to snatch the elect out of the world and establish them in the church, which is not part of the world.
9. It fails to see the clear Biblical warnings about being set apart from the world, dying to the world, and the prophecies about a growing alienation from and persecution from the world.

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<sup>3</sup> Sic *Institutes of Biblical Law*, p4.

10. It fails to see that Biblical statements, such as ‘a city on a hill’ (Matt 5:14) are applied to the church separated from the world and not to human society.
11. If blasphemy and idolatry are capital crimes, it means the genocide of all adherents of false religions; billions of people.
12. The Bible is God’s story of salvation, not a blueprint for social re-ordering.

### **The ideas of Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920)**

Kuyper was an esteemed Calvinist pastor who later became Prime Minister of the Netherlands. He wrote many valuable books, such as a defence of particular grace<sup>4</sup> (forgotten by most modern Calvinists), but is best known as the originator of the modern idea of common grace. He penned a three volume work on this called *Gemeene Gratie*, to differentiate between his idea of common grace and the common grace of the modern well-meant free offer in the Gospel, to which he was opposed (something else modern moderate Calvinists fail to see).<sup>5</sup>

Kuyper agreed that his views on common grace were novel and not found in Calvin or Reformed confessions. This common grace prevented man from becoming a beast at the fall of Adam and enabled him to do good works that pleased God and were a benefit to the church, and even were of abiding value in the kingdom. This set him in direct opposition to Scripture, which clearly states that natural man can do no good at all, nothing pleasing to God, and can do no spiritual work. As Augustine and Calvin stated, sinners can only accomplish ‘*splendid sins*’. Even the ploughing of the wicked is sin according to the Bible.

The idea of common grace has been grabbed by postmillennialists to further Kuyper’s aims and enable the church to conquer the world.

Kuyper’s mistake was to leave the ministry and enter politics, where he was successful. He founded a political party, became the head, and won a place in the Lower Chamber but could not get sufficient members elected to get him the Prime Ministerial position. So he formed a coalition with the Roman Catholic party to secure enough votes and became Prime Minister. Kuyper had to justify this odd coalition where sentiment against Catholics was strong. He did so with his theory of common grace.

Kuyper was spurred on by his idealistic view of the Netherlands. He believed that the Reformed Church of the Netherlands was the true church because it was a state church (Erastianism). This church is responsible for the spiritual state of all citizens, even non-Christians – thus every baby was baptised and marriages conducted in church.

Kuyper considered the Netherlands to be a genuine Reformed country with a genuine Reformed Church supported by a Reformed government. He saw a future in which the Netherlands would become the fountain-head of a mighty stream of the Reformed faith that would flow throughout all the world and make of the entire world a Reformed community, with every sphere of life subordinated to the rule of Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Thus Kuyper wanted to be in the position of supreme power to enable the government to realise this dream; he could only achieve this in a coalition with Catholics.

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<sup>4</sup> *Particular Grace*, now available from RFPA. In this he utterly repudiates the idea of a free offer to all in the Gospel and interprets the universalistic texts in the NT (e.g. 2 Pt 3:9 and 1 Tim 2:4) in a particularistic way. Kuyper, in this early stage of his life, was soundly Reformed.

<sup>5</sup> The common grace that included a free Gospel offer to all was called *Algemeene Genade* (‘common grace’) while his view was *Gemeene Gratie* (‘general grace’).

<sup>6</sup> Herman Hanko, *Forum on Common Grace*; private blog.

This co-operation, in Kuyper's thinking, would begin in the Netherlands where all the citizens, under the auspices of a State Church, could promote the Reformed faith and from the Netherlands would come a great revival that would spread throughout all the world and make this world a better place to live. This thinking has been carried on in many places where, under the supposed banner of the Reformed faith, labours are put forth to improve this world.<sup>7</sup>

This compromise led to many evils, not least the theological justification of common grace. In the end Kuyper was only Prime Minister for two years and never achieved his aspirations.

Kuyper's dream where every country and every institution of society is subordinated to the rule of Jesus Christ is continued in other postmillennial dominionists and notably Reconstructionism. Kuyper also wrote another book called *Pro Rege* ('For the King'). The main thrust of this is that all creation and all institutions of society must be subjected to the rule of Christ. When this happened, as Kuyper expected, the kingdom of Christ would be realised in this world. This is a materialistic and worldly interpretation of God's kingdom, which Christ said is not of this world.

Dutch immigrants to the US beginning at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to a curious situation. Some held to a free offer of the Gospel coming from the Churches of the Secession of 1834, while others held to Kuyper's view coming from his new denomination. Both joined the Christian Reformed Church and this led to tension and indeed enmity. However, both these views contributed to the development of the current situation in modern Dominionism.

The historical context is important for us to understand Kuyper. The Netherlands had long had a strong Reformed, national church, *De Hervormde Kerk* (Reformed Church), and had a strong post-Reformation history. The Synod of Dort (Dordrecht), perhaps the most important synod in history which led to the Synod of Dort canons still used today as an authoritative Reformed confession, was held in Holland. The Netherlands fought long and hard against Spanish imperial oppression in order to maintain its Reformed faith. Also in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries the Dutch had expanded their colonial empire and trading companies throughout, Indonesia, America, the West Indies, South Africa and elsewhere. Missionaries set up stations and churches in all these places. It could easily be seen to be an ever-growing rise of postmillennial ideas coming to fruition.

Kuyper originally invented this idea of common grace because he was searching for a way to explain that there is a lot of seeming good in the world, which makes it possible for the church to survive. But Kuyper was also looking for some theological basis to justify co-operation between the wicked and the people of God; he found that theological basis in his theory of common grace. Because the Holy Spirit enables the unregenerate to do good, therefore the righteous may work along with the wicked in the pursuit of certain mutually desirable goals that can be realised in this world. These mutually desirable goals serve to bring about the kingdom of Christ here below.<sup>8</sup>

### *Summary of Kuyper's ideas*

1. Common grace enabling sinners to do good works and please God. These good works can be used to establish the kingdom of Christ in this world.
2. Common grace restrains sin in society.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Herman Hanko, op. cit.

3. Common grace enables believers to work hand in hand with sinners to achieve good works for a Christianised society.
4. The Dutch Reformed church, working with a Reformed government, was the true church which would come to dominate the world and lead to a global Christian revival.

#### *Criticism of these ideas*

1. Sinners cannot do good works and cannot please God.
2. There is no Biblical mention or description of the idea of common grace. It is a modern invention (by Kuyper).
3. Unbelievers cannot work hand in hand with believers to build the church. The church is a spiritual institution, in Christ, and is a mystery and unknown to the world. Only Christ can build the church using believers of his choice.
4. No state church is the true church. The history of the Dutch churches shows continual apostasy and fragmentation.
5. Christ's kingdom is not of this earth and will not appear until the Second Coming. There is no materialistic prototype of this kingdom on earth now.

## **Charismatic dominionism**

The Charismatic Movement in the UK gradually changed its eschatology. In the beginning there was a variation between two streams; the denomination led by Terry Virgo (New Frontiers) aspired to be Reformed (though it was never really Calvinistic at all and did not formally subscribe to any Reformed confession). As such there was a strong tendency towards amillennialism amongst the leadership, though in reality many members held mixed views. There was no pressure to correct these mixed views (including Dispensationalism) in order not to lose members on secondary matters [even though Dispensationalism and other views were completely at odds with Reformed theology]. The contradictions and hypocrisy were not noted. So NF was, superficially, amillennial.

Most of the other streams were originally more influenced by Pentecostalism or Brethren ideas and both of these were premillennial or even Dispensational. Thus Harvestime (Bryn Jones) groups were more Pentecostal (and probably more influenced by Wesleyanism) while Gerald Coates groups (now called Pioneer People) were originally more Brethren. Individuals roaming between these streams, or involved in the foundations, had mixed views. David Lillie was Dispensational; I suspect that his close friends Campbell McAlpine and Cecil Cousen were too. His other friend, Arthur Wallis, came from a Brethren background but soon adopted more Reformed ideas. Early Anglican Charismatic pioneers tended to have mixed views, some amillennial, some historic premillennial while many were Dispensational.

Now over the last few decades all these groups have become postmillennial, some without even knowing it. Dispensationalism is now chiefly the foundation of Jewish Root denominations and sects that are opposed to Charismatic Restorationists.

Eschatology was not taught effectively in any of these groups, though a few sermons may have been devoted to the subject, and most members have a very poor grasp of the facts. Eschatology is downplayed as a theological subject but is fixed on as an exhortation to a Charismatic materialistic hope. Thus most Charismatics could not explain the difference between Dispensational premillennialism and postmillennialism but all expect a sort of utopian future.

### **Jewish Root Dispensationalists**

Though there are now wide varieties of Dispensational theology, most Jewish Root folk belong to the traditional pre-tribulational variety found in the Scofield Bible, popularised by John Darby, which was in turn stolen from the heretical teachings and publications of Edward Irving's Catholic Apostolic Church. Thus they expect a future secret rapture to steal away faithful believers before a seven-year tribulation, after which Christ returns openly to bring in a millennial kingdom which is both earthly and Jewish in nature.

Now this means that, like amillennialists, the immediate prospects are bleak, featuring increasing apostasy and tribulation under a world government headed by antichrist. However, after this they hope for an earthly kingdom just as much as postmillennialists. Thus for both there is a Christian utopia before the end of this world.

### **Global revivalists**

However, the larger proportion of UK Charismatics fall under the banner of postmillennialism. Most of the various streams have now unofficially united in a triumphalism that fosters the expectation of a global revival to fix the church's problems. Many, especially those influenced by Terry Virgo, have been stimulated by reading books by Martyn Lloyd-Jones on revival as this was his great hope for the church; a hope that failed and which led to his despondency late in life.

This hope for revival gets stimulated every time there is a new Charismatic feature or experience. Thus the introduction of signs and wonders teaching by John Wimber reignited the desire for revival. For Wimber himself the contact with Paul Cain led to his own urge for revival and his folly in thinking it would occur in London in 1990.<sup>9</sup> Afterwards Gerald Coates proclaimed revival was to hit Westminster a few years later and moved his people there. It never happened.

For many Charismatics the Toronto Experience and all its demonic excesses was the preview of revival and this led to great expectations of world change. This dwindled until it got another shot in the arm in the Brownsville meetings in Pensacola, but again it all faded away.

The hope for revival continues in the many variants of extreme Charismaticism, particularly in the Church Growth ministries and the New Apostolic Reformation of C Peter Wagner. In general most Charismatics hope for a global revival that puts all historic revivals in the shade, and this is evidence of postmillennial thinking. This revival will be so powerful that nations will be changed, the majority of the earth converted and the church will dominate world politics. This is Dominionism.

### **Modern triumphalism and Latter Rain theology**

Most Charismatics don't know it but the source of their thinking about a global revival, triumphalism and the ministry of apostles and prophets is founded in a heretical, rogue Pentecostal movement that flourished in the late 1940s. Indeed, many of the modern features of extreme Charismaticism come from what was called the Latter Rain Revival at North Battleford in Canada, where Latter Rain teachings were applied by George and Ern Hawtin, Percy Hunt and Herrick Holt. Like most Pentecostal revivals it produced a lot of fleshly excitement but then degenerated into authoritarian spiritual abuse, heresy and bitter fragmentation.

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<sup>9</sup> Paul Cain prophesied that revival would come to Britain in October 1990. In the usual fashion, the Kansas City prophets supported it with further prophecies by Bob Jones and John Paul Jackson. Cain explicitly stated that this revival would begin in London. Wimber arranged the large conference in Docklands as a result and even brought his whole family over to witness this historic event, or should I say, damp squib.

Now we have written extensively on this subject many times and need not develop it here, but we must simply mention some basic facts.

The issues that drive the thinking of modern Charismatics regarding a super church ruling the world comes from Latter Rain, and Latter Rain theology is not only downright heresy but is the meeting point of occult ideas with Christian thinking. It is a syncretism that produces shamanism and idolatry. As such it was even outlawed as heresy by the Assemblies of God, despite their own unorthodoxy in many matters. Understand this – Latter Rain was such a serious heresy that a flawed denomination outlawed it as heresy. Not only that but its leading proponent (William Branham) said that the Trinity was a heresy.

This heretical teaching went underground for many years, surfacing here and there (such as in the Healing Movement of the 50s), but did not come back to popularity until the Charismatic Movement gradually adopted one after another of its ideas. Pentecostalist Jack Hayford, in his 2006 book on Charismatic history, *The Charismatic Century*, applauds Oral Roberts for keeping the renewal flame of Latter Rain theology alive from the end of the 50s healing revival to the Charismatic Movement of the 70s. Indeed, Oral Roberts is the link between William Branham, Charismatics and Paul Cain. Perhaps some others like Morris Cerullo could also be added in the chain. Thus the chain of links is: Latter Rain, the Healing Revival, Pentecostal healers like Oral Roberts, then the Charismatic Movement, the signs and wonders Third Wave, then modern Charismatic Dominionism and now The New Apostolic Reformation and Wagner's International Coalition of Apostles.

In the 60s some forms of Latter Rain ideas began to surface but after 1974 the introduction of the Shepherding Movement (Fort Lauderdale Five<sup>10</sup>) to the UK opened up the doors for many Latter Rain ideas. Ern Baxter (a big influence in the early UK Charismatic Shepherding Movement) was formerly the secretary for William Branham, the arch heretic and most notable leader of Latter Rain ideas.<sup>11</sup> Various ideas began to be central forms of teaching in Charismatic Restoration churches (i.e. New Church), such as:

- The use of the word of knowledge as practised by Branham (which was not the Biblical form but the use of prescience to detect ministry needs, supplied by an angel in Branham's case). Fraud has often been used to pretend to this ministry, both then and now.
- Fasting to gain power, gifts or revival.
- Healing is normal.
- Men can become immortal through mystical degrees of ascent.
- Spiritual substances rest upon those with faith; e.g. oil or gold dust.
- Elimination of tiredness and body odour; no need to wash clothes.
- The gradual recovery of lost truths since the Reformation.
- Astrology.
- Benefits of UFOs.
- Demonisation of believers requiring deliverance.
- The appointment of apostles and prophets as authoritative over churches.
- The principles of spiritual authority to support a hierarchy.

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<sup>10</sup> Christian Growth Ministries; i.e. Bob Mumford, Charles Simpson, Don Basham, Derek Prince, Ern Baxter.

<sup>11</sup> Branham was formally denounced as a heretic even by Pentecostal groups. He did not believe in the Trinity which he said was of the Devil. For him the word of God consisted of the Egyptian pyramids and the zodiac as well as the Bible. Eve had had sexual relations with the Devil producing the 'serpent's seed' (sinners from the line of Cain). His ministry was clearly occultic, being based on revelations given to him by an 'angel' (demon) present when he ministered. Eventually, Branham believed he was the angel of Rev 3:14 and 10:7 and baptised people into his own name!

- Extended, mystical emotional worship times; singing in the Spirit; unrestrained praise, the 'Tabernacle of David'.
- The ministry of powerful prophets.
- Signs and wonders.
- The laying on of hands for power etc.

All these originate in Latter Rain (though some early forms had been seen in Pentecostalism). Many of these items did not appear until later in the UK in the Third Wave.<sup>12</sup>

The Shepherding Movement of the Fort Lauderdale Five was always controversial and disbanded in 1986, but only after it had succeeded in joining up evangelical Charismatics with baptised in the Spirit Roman Catholics. In Britain it succeeded in forming the Restoration Movement which became the current New Churches. This was followed by 'Kingdom Now' ideas from various ministries and other attempts to unite sporadic Charismatic groups in a Dominionist agenda.

### *Joel's army*

However, most noteworthy is the Latter Rain expectation for the last times. Branham and others further developed this into the 'Manifest Sons of God' theology, claiming that there are mystical steps of growth to becoming a perfect son of God, where the final goal is to be God. This is pure mysticism, Hinduism and occultism. It is the source of the modern Charismatic ideas about immortalised apostles and prophets ruling the world with super powers and Paul Cain's teaching on Joel's Army. The texts used to support these ideas are Joel 2 (a super army), Rm 8:19-23 (manifestation of the sons of God) and Rev 12 (the Manchild). The exegesis of these passages is shocking and utterly foolish.

This extreme form of Latter Rain theology teaches that super apostles and prophets would emerge that had supernatural powers enabling them to pass through walls, fly, and be invulnerable to bullets. These apostles and prophets would lead a super church that would dominate the world and rule it for Christ. So great would be the revival that produced this that heaven would be on earth, the church glorified and some teachers even went so far to say that Christ will not need to return.

This revival in the church will be accompanied by a special baptism in the Spirit, which will turn the church into a spiritual, invincible, immortal army. This army is variously called: 'Joel's army' (grossly misinterpreting Joel 2), 'dreaded army', 'dread champions', 'super breed' or the 'dreaded breed' of warriors God is preparing for the end. The greatest miracles and signs and wonders in all history will occur under the hand of this army. This army does not only have spiritual power, but political power, '*We are entering the Kingdom Age in a sense now, for the Kingdom is being formed in us and when it is completed... all judicial as well as religious authority will be vested in the church of Christ*'.<sup>13</sup>

John Wimber was fully deceived into supporting this nonsense, along with the expectations for a global revival, culminating in his conference with Paul Cain (another ex-Latter Rain preacher dormant for decades), saying, '*God has given us a vision to see the body of Christ move from being an ineffective audience to a Spirit-filled army*'.<sup>14</sup> Most of the contemporary UK apostles and Charismatic leaders supported this and have not repented of their error, nor of their written support for the heretical and scandalous Kansas City Prophets. The revival never happened, Wimber got depressed and later

<sup>12</sup> Key Latter Rain works are, Franklin Hall's book, *Atomic Power with God through Fasting and Prayer* (1946) and George Warnock's, *Feast of the Tabernacles* (1951). A modern version would be, C Peter Wagner, *Dominion: How Kingdom Action can Change the World*, (2008).

<sup>13</sup> George Hawtin, (1948); quoted in Harvey Cox, Harvard Divinity School, *Fire from Heaven* (1995), p293.

<sup>14</sup> John Wimber, Leaflet advertising the Oct 1990 conference in London.

shunned his association with Cain and the Kansas City Prophets – all filled with Latter Rain doctrines.<sup>15</sup> Wimber later said that he switched off his brain for three years, admitting that he was deceived by Latter Rain theology.

The current expectations for a super church led by apostles that will dominate and rule the world is straight out of Latter Rain, with all its occult notions and heresy. This is an extreme form of dominionism that exceeds all others. It is a triumphal dominionism that is based upon occult ideas and blasphemous heresies. Its current form is in Wagner's New Apostolic Reformation. Other modern Latter Rain teachers include Rick Joyner who says of the coming revival, '*the visible glory of the Lord will appear upon some for extended periods of time as power flows through them. There will be no plague, disease, or physical condition, including lost limbs, AIDS, poison gas, or radiation, which will resist the healing and miracle gifts working in the saints during this time*'.<sup>16</sup>

### *New Apostolic Reformation*

This originated in 2001 as an apostolic and prophetic movement and is described by C Peter Wagner as a second reformation of the church. It followed Wagner's 1988 book '*New Apostolic Churches*' showing the need for apostolic led churches away from the historic denominational model. His apostolic network includes 500 apostles from the US and 42 other countries, each having their own considerable organisations of churches and leaders which share media, conferences, schools, and training facilities.

What is notable is that the affinity of churches is relational rather than based on doctrinal statements. This enables a multiplicity of doctrines within a formal organisation. This movement includes Jack Hayford, Ed Silvoso ('Transformation Network'), Alice Patterson, CL Jackson, Ted Haggard (until his scandalous downfall), Lou Engle (founder of 'The Call'), Mike Bickle and many others. All these claim a close affinity with Latter Rain. Bickle and Engle also claim that current revival could bring about a spiritual restoration of Israel that would lead to a Millennial Kingdom.

They also believe that there must be a civil war in the Protestant church in order for them to purify that institution before Jesus can return. Various prophetic writers have described, this such as Rick Joyner, while Benny Hinn wanted to kill Christian opposers of his ministry with a '*Holy Ghost machine gun*'.<sup>17</sup>

Part of the modern apostolic blasphemy is teaching that, '*Jesus is bound in heaven by prophecy and cannot return for his earthly kingdom until the church gains greater authority on earth, a responsibility which they have assigned to the young people who are attending their events*'.<sup>18</sup> Instead of the Biblical teaching that Christ destroys Satan with the breath of his mouth and wipes out the world of sinners in a moment, these heretics claim that the church must defeat the enemy and change the world before Christ comes. Men do God's supernatural work for him!!! This leads these Dominionists to claim that they can take control of countries or localities through prayer, fasting, spiritual warfare techniques (e.g.

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15 John Wimber became taken with Paul Cain in 1988 (who had worked with the Pentecostal heretic William Branham in the 1940's calling him, '*The greatest prophet who ever lived*'). Cain's triumphal Latter Rain teaching revitalised Wimber's gloom, and through him Wimber developed a relationship with Mike Bickle, leader of the Kansas City Fellowship. In August 1989 Wimber invited the KCP to minister to the Vineyard pastors and lay hands on them. This church then became formally affiliated into the Vineyard system, after a series of scandals and opposition from other Christian pastors, and was renamed the Metro Vineyard Fellowship. Since then Mike Bickle has adopted Jewish Root false teaching and now leads the 'International House of Prayer' (IHOP) which trains people in Dominionist ideas.

<sup>16</sup> Rick Joyner, *The Harvest*, MorningStar Publications, 1989.

<sup>17</sup> Trinity Broadcasting Network's, *Praise The Lord Show*, 9.11.90.

<sup>18</sup> Rachel Tabachnick; *The Rise of Charismatic Dominionism* (Updated, Aug 15, 2011); <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2011/8/15/9328/35473>

praise marches, spiritual mapping, defeating territorial spirits etc.). Thus, ‘*God is preparing a people to displace the ones whose sin is rising so that then they tip over and the church goes in - one is removed and the church moves in and takes the territory*’.<sup>19</sup>

### *Christian Zionism*

Now while most Jewish Root groups are Dispensational, indeed Dispensationalism directly leads to Jewish Root teachings, there are some Zionist groups that are postmillennial Dominionists.

These folk believe that the return of Christ depends upon a critical mass of Messianic Jews in Israel praying for him to return.<sup>20</sup> The majority of Christian Zionist activity in the US is now Dominionist; this is not the case in the UK. This involves support for Messianic Jews in Israel and also in Jewish populations in the world at large. A typical case is John Hagee's Christians United for Israel (CUFI). While Hagee vocalises Dispensational keypoints, such as a secret rapture, his leaders, almost to a man, are Dominionists; indeed many of CUFI's directors, supporters and churches are in the New Apostolic Movement.

### **Prospective**

The 2001 edition of World Christian Trends shows that the combination of Pentecostals and Charismatics was estimated as 72 million in 1970. In 2000 it was 500 million. The breakdown of Pentecostal, Charismatic and Third Wave adherents in the US is, respectively, 7%, 28% and 65%. In the world only 12% were traditional Pentecostals.

In Britain these proportions would be different; the majority would be Pentecostal, particularly black Pentecostals fed by immigration; but many of these new Pentecostal churches are Dominionist.

We are talking of hundreds of millions of people that are now Dominionist, when there were virtually none in 1960; and most of these are interconnected through various coalitions, networks and affiliations. This is yet another evil spawned by the Charismatic Movement. Can any sober Bible student deny that Charismaticism is a major plank in the deception perpetrated by the enemy in the war against Christ?

## **The current impact on politics**

Because proponents of Dominionism are serious in their crusade to change the world, and because their preferred methods never work, various groups have now become actively involved in trying to force their reformation through by supporting presidential candidates in America.

Currently the US has two presidential candidates who are Dominionists; one a Reconstructionist (Michele Bachmann) the other a Charismatic Dominionist (Rick Perry). This shows the extent to which these rogue ideas have permeated American society. Sarah Palin (a possible presidential candidate) is also closely associated with Dominionist leaders and churches.

Note one journalist's assessment,

The current reality in America - the growing popularity of spiritual warfare networks, spiritual mapping, the belief in generational curses, demon deliverance centres, health centres based on faith healing, and faith-based initiatives which have poured public funds into the hands of these spiritual warriors. A prominent religious leader can be

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<sup>19</sup> Apostle Mary Glazier, 2008 New Apostolic conference.

<sup>20</sup> E.g. ‘The Call Jerusalem’, 2008.

labelled as moderate or mainstream despite advocating beliefs that only a few years ago would have been considered marginal. Open demonisation of groups in our society is increasing in intensity and militant language is common.<sup>21</sup>

Some Christian leaders in the US are even calling for martyrs. Rick Perry's prayer rally was patterned after, and organised by, leaders of an event which called for martyrs. Mike Bickle's 'International House of Prayer' was also involved.

Tabachnick, like myself, has noted the massive change amongst Charismatics from Dispensationalism to a Dominionism which is aggressive, *'The shift from Dispensationalism to Dominionism has produced a marked change in activism'. ... The leadership of this multi-cultural movement with its women Apostles and Prophets and focus on societal "transformation" has not embraced the social gospel, but a full blown Dominionist or "Kingdom Now" theology that is sweeping the globe and impacting churches across the spectrum of Christianity.*<sup>22</sup>

Other forms of activism include:

Millions in the Pentecostal/Charismatic sector of Christianity are now actively involved in spiritual warfare networks, prayer marches, long term fasting, around the clock prayer vigils, and organised campaigns like "Reclaiming the Seven Mountains of Culture" to take control over society and government. These seven mountains are government, education, arts and entertainment, media, family, religion, and business.<sup>23</sup>

Tom Schlueter, a New Apostolic leader associated with Perry stated *'We're going to infiltrate [the government], not run from it. I know why God's doing what he's doing ... He's just simply saying, 'Tom I've given you authority in a governmental authority, and I need you to infiltrate the governmental mountain.'*<sup>24</sup>

Journalists are only now beginning to investigate the breadth of Dominionist activity in the run up to the election, and they are fearful of an anti-democratic tsunami.

If successful, this sort of militant, crusading Christianity could easily pave the way for the coming totalitarian world government that will be fully antichristian (that is, falsely claim to be Christian but which actually opposes Christ).

## The problems with all forms of Dominionism

### The Adamic mandate – the basis of Dominionism

Many dominionist systems base their initial argument on the mandate given to Adam to subdue the world and dominate it as God's steward.

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' Gen 1:28

They believe that their quest to gradually dominate the earth now is but obeying this mandate. This is a fallacy, and a very obvious one.

The mandate given to Adam was before the fall when he stood before the Lord in holiness. Adam was not the only person affected by the introduction of sin into the world, the whole

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<sup>21</sup> Rachel Tabachnick; op.cit.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Michelle Goldberg; A Christian Plot for Domination? Aug 14, 2011 10:51 PM EDT; *The Daily Beast* <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/08/14/dominionism-michele-bachmann-and-rick-perry-s-dangerous-religious-bond.html>

creation was subject to futility and suffering (Rm 8:20). It is impossible that sinful man can be involved in a re-structuring of the world order to produce a utopia. The mandate to Adam was terminated when he lost the divine image.

It is no good saying that Christians stand in the place of Adam in Eden; they do not. Christians still have an old nature to contend with which causes a propensity to sin. This is not removed until the believer is changed and glorified by Christ upon his return. God has decreed that the earth will not be ruled as a theocracy until the Second Coming when the earth is restored, believers changed and Christ is the light of the city.

The mandate to Adam was removed due to his inability to fulfil God's commands in righteousness. The correction required by Adam's fall is not to gradually restore the fallen existing creation but to wipe it out at the Second Coming, burn it with fire (2 Pt 3:10) and then restore it to divine glory, more glorious than in Eden. Creation itself understands this and longs for that day of release (Rm 8:19).

Man may indeed dominate the earth with technology today, but he does so through sinful means and to wicked ends in the service of Satan; indeed, he is raping the earth and denuding its resources. This is not the fulfilment of the Adamic mandate but a demonstration of the fulness of sin in mankind.

### **Adam in the spiritual offices**

Adam stood before God in the offices of prophet, priest and king and was the only man to do this until the revelation of Jesus Christ; Jesus is the second man, the head of a new creation; the firstborn of a new order (1 Cor 15:47; Col 1:18; Jn 11:25; 2 Cor 5:17). God's stewardship of the earth involves man standing in all these three offices as the crown of creation. As prophet Adam spoke God's word and named the animals, revealing God's wisdom; the expression of God's word to the world. As king Adam ruled over the natural creation and tended the garden. As priest Adam consecrated himself to God's service and every act was an act of worship; the representation of human service to God.

After the fall all these offices fell into disuse or false use in service to the devil. No one with sin in their life is able to fulfil these offices and act as steward over the earth. Christ came as the fulness of God in a man with all three offices and demonstrated them in his earthly life. For instance he commanded the wind and waves as king of the earth. As a result of his obedience as a Son, God has given Jesus the authority over all creation in a formal coronation in heaven as the God / man. Christ was king as the Son (all creation was through and for him) but Christ is now king as the God / man.

Now believers are also prophets, priests and kings, but only in the new man, in their spiritual life, because it is only in the Spirit that they are presently in Christ. In Christ believers are seated in the heavens but in our old nature we are still sinners until the end. Only Christ can be the steward of the earth and rule it as God's kingdom and he is currently in heaven waiting for the time of restoration. Christians cannot rule the earth as Adam briefly did because in their current life the kingdom is spiritual only. They rule with Christ in spiritual terms but not in earthly terms. When the end comes and believers are given new bodies and their old nature removed, then they will reign with Christ on a spiritual / material earth. Then the dividing line between spirit / flesh, heaven / earth, immortal / material is removed.

For this reason it is impossible for believers to restore the position of un-fallen Adam and dominate the world as he did. [It is also why many of the hopes of Charismatics utterly fail.

They are trying to implement things of the kingdom, which cannot happen in this dispensation.]<sup>25</sup>

### **The revelation of antichrist**

Revelation tells us that the kingdoms of this earth will become the kingdom of Christ (Rev 11:15) and lays out the things which must happen first, this includes the global persecution of the church and the domination of the world by an antichristian government. Postmillennialism ignores these things. Looking at Rev 11, the rise of God's kingdom in the world follows the resurrection of the saints (Rev 11:11-12) and the great earthquake which is the Return of Christ, the end of the world and the Day of Judgment (Rev 11:13, 18). The postmillennial argument cannot stand up to the message of Revelation.

Furthermore, the desire to build a kingdom now based upon nations still in sin and following the prince of this world is to identify the current world system with God's kingdom. This is confusing divine strategy with Satanic ideas, which is heresy.

The spiritual danger of post-millennial theology is that the people of God identify the kingdom of Antichrist with the kingdom of Christ, for Antichrist brings peace to the nations, solves the world's ills, and claims himself to be the Christ.<sup>26</sup>

### **The glory of the Lord covering the earth**

There are few texts which are more twisted, corrupted and taken out of context than these.

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. Ps 22:27

All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your name. Ps 86:9

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. Isa 11:9

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. Hab 2:14

And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. Zech 14:9

For all nations shall come and worship before you. Rev 15:4

To understand the timescale of these promises we must first develop an understanding of the general doctrine of eschatology. We must first know what God says about the end times and learn from clear Scriptures. What is fatal is to develop a rogue doctrine first and then uses Scripture out of context to support it.

Restoration magazine did this in every issue when it used this verse in support of its ideals,  
**Whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:21**

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<sup>25</sup> Charismatics fail to understand the impact of the various dispensations and confuse them. In many areas they currently seek to implement powerful gifts like the prophets of the OT - such as miracles, healings, resurrections etc. - but these were all signs (as was everything in the OT) pointing towards the fulfilment in Christ. When Christ came, and when the New Covenant was introduced at Pentecost, then all these manifestations in an office ceased forever. They were now fulfilled in Christ. Thus prophets do not act like Elijah anymore. The Charismatic prophetic office is nonsense. The brief period of signs and wonders in the early church was merely to demonstrate the Gospel's authenticity from God. The last OT style prophet was John the Baptist. Prophecy in the church now is in the form of powerful encouragement and preaching.

<sup>26</sup> Herman Hanko, op. cit.

Restorationists like Bryn Jones, Arthur Wallis, Terry Virgo and many others claimed that this verse taught that a restored church would arise and repeat the historic events of the early church; that the latter rain would be like the former rain (picking up Latter Rain notions). In other words, apostles would be restored to the church along with prophets, spiritual gifts, large churches, miracles and power healing; in other words all the evidences of the kingdom of God manifested in great power. This verse drove them to create supposed apostles, appoint prophets, endorse the signs and wonders ministry of Wimber and build a new denomination (later several denominations).

But this verse teaches no such thing.

The restoration of all things (i.e. the new earth where heaven and earth exist together in harmony) only arises when the Lord Jesus returns. Currently he is waiting in heaven for God's timing to come and heaven receives him until that time for restoration is ready. As the Jamieson, Fausset & Brown commentary states, this restoration is, '*the rectification of all the disorders of the fall.*' 'Restoration' is a technical medical term meaning complete restoration to health; i.e. the restoration of the earth after the fall.

Note also Jesus' statement in Matt 19:28

**So Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'**

Using a Greek word with similar overtones, this verse explains that the regeneration (i.e. restoration) is when Christ is in glory and the church is judging the world; in other words, after the Second Coming.

Restorationists make two mistakes. Firstly, that put the restoration before the return of Christ instead of after it. Secondly, they diminish the restoration from the bringing in of a new world, after the destruction of the old one, to merely restoring the church.

However, the general explanation of eschatology in Scripture has no place for a glorious, restored (whatever that means), globally powerful church. In fact it teaches the opposite; at the end the church is persecuted to near destruction – and then the Lord returns. Indeed, the persecution is so severe and the apostasy of the superficial church is so great that the Lord himself questions,

**And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth? Lk 18:7-8**

The Lord clearly expects a negative answer as the Greek grammar confirms.

The ideals of the Restorationists, and other Charismatic dominionists, have no Biblical foundation. Far from the church being supremely powerful and with global political influence, it is hounded to near destruction, saved only by the Lord's appearance.

**They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. Isa 11:9**

**For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. Hab 2:14**

The prophetic verses above used by Dominionists claim far more than Dominionists can ever hope to attain in this life. They teach that the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord. That will never happen, even after some idealised global revival. There would always

be large portions of the earth inhabited by sinners who were ruled by the church. The earth would never be filled with divine knowledge; all the sinners would have no understanding of God.

Then again, they teach that all the earth would turn to the Lord, this includes all families,  
**All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. Ps 22:27**

**All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your name. Ps 86:9**

**For all nations shall come and worship before you. Rev 15:4**

In these verses everyone on earth is in repentance and worships God. The best Dominionists can hope for is a majority of converted people; no one claims that everyone will be saved, just that the church rules everyone. These verses go much further than that.

**For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. Hab 2:14**

Finally, the earth is filled with the glory of the Lord as well as knowledge of him. ‘As the waters covers the sea’ emphasises that there is not one inch where the glory of the Lord and the knowledge of the Lord is not found. God’s glory is everywhere. This will never be the case in a Dominionist utopia. God’s glory is not upon sinners.

### **The new world**

The prophetic promises can only be fulfilled where there is a new world; where the old earth has been burned up and a new creation takes place to remake the Garden of Eden. God is not glorified in a devastated earth, even if there is a great revival and millions are saved; the earth itself is still in a parlous state with many animals extinct and pollution ruining millions of hectares of habitats. This is hardly glorious.

God is only properly glorified where the natural creation is also renewed and restored, just as man is resurrected.

Furthermore, God’s glory can only be seen in men who are themselves glorified; and this glorification can only take place after the Second Coming when saints are given a new resurrection body like Christ’s.

Dominionists dumb-down and restrict the divine prophecies for the future.

### **The kingdom**

Dominionism is also known as ‘Kingdom Now’ theology. The belief is that although the full appearance of the kingdom of God is at the end, there is a present expression of the kingdom now. There is a sense in which this is true; the kingdom of God is manifested in Christians, in their families and in their churches; it is where God’s sovereignty is accepted. But the kingdom is not evidenced in the world by any means. This is the error. Kingdom Now preachers place a full expression of God’s kingdom in the earth under the current sinful, fallen circumstances. This is an error.

God’s kingdom cannot be seen where there is no acceptance of God’s reign, God’s sovereignty. Even after a global revival, Dominionists cannot claim that there is universal submission to God’s authority, therefore there cannot be a full expression of the kingdom in the world.

Furthermore, Christ plainly stated that his kingdom was heavenly, not of the earth (Jn 18:36). The kingdom of God can only come to earth when all sin has been removed, all effects of sin burned up and the earth restored. At this time, after the Day of Judgment, everything is both spiritual and material; heaven is on earth; men are in fellowship with God. Only then can God's spiritual kingdom be seen on earth in fulness.

## **Scriptures which contradict Dominionism**

### **Christians are dead to the world**

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Gal 6:14

Why would anyone who is dead to the world desire to rule it for a prolonged period? If Christians are dead to the world then they should be opposed to any idea of dominating it and prospering under it.

### **Christians are not focused on the world**

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. Col 3:1-2

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1 Jn 2:15-17

Postmillennialists and Dominionists berate Christians who set their hope on the appearance of Christ and the restoration of the earth at the end, decrying it as 'pie in the sky when you die'. But apostolic teaching does exactly that; the hope is of a future world that has been changed and renewed at the Second Coming, not the domination of the world as it currently is (Titus 2:13; 1 Pt 1:13; 1 Jn 3:2-3).

Dominionist teaching requires a love of the world in its current geo-political framework, which is controlled for good ends; this is forbidden by Biblical teaching. 'Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth', could not be a clearer command.

### **Christians overcome the world by faith**

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 1 Jn 5:4-5

We do not overcome the world by civil action, political manoeuvring, force of arms, or even a gradual take-over; we overcome the world through faith. The life of the Christian in this world is lived by faith; counting the blessings of God, edifying the church, progressing in sanctification, manifesting Christ and preaching the Gospel. We overcome the world by believing that we are dead to it and that it is dead to us.

### **Christians suffer at the hands of this world**

We ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, *which is* manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer. 2 Thess 1:4-5

We told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation. 1 Thess 3:4

We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God. Acts 14:22

And if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together. Rm 8:17

Share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God. 2 Tim 1:8

All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 2 Tim 3:12

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 1 Pt 4:12-13

We could continue adding texts on this subject since there are so many. Christians do not escape the persecution of the world before the end by conquering the nations and ruling the earth. The persecution continues until Christ returns.

### **The kingdom cannot include sinners**

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor 6:9-10

The Dominionist sees the control of the world, that includes sinners, as being a big manifestation of God's kingdom. This text shows us that such an empire cannot be Christian at all since it includes sinners.

### **The divine consequence of the world's sin is when Jesus returns, not before**

We ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, *which is* manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thess 1:4-8

Again we could add many more texts in support of this. The world that troubles us is centred in the world of sinners in various countries, fulfilling the directions of their government, or when the law turns a blind eye to injustice. At the end this is centred in a totalitarian evil government that seeks to utterly destroy the church. There is no respite from the persecution that comes from sinners under the sanction of governments until Christ returns who then repays all who hurt the church. The church only knows rest when the end comes, not before. The rest of the Christ is when Jesus is revealed from heaven, not in a world ruled by false 'apostles' or Mosaic Law.

### **The end is preceded by a fascist antichristian global government.**

Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ... The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 2 Thess 2:3-4, 9-10

For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 1 Thess 5:2-3

The initial coming of the lawless one is with false signs and wonders. He brings peace to a troubled world which world leaders thought could not be fixed. There is great deception in

the way that this ruler begins to operate. He is a Charismatic Dominionist professed Christian, but it is the working of Satan to deceive those who will perish.

**But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. 2 Tim 3:1**

**As you have heard that the Antichrist is coming. 1 Jn 2:18**

**Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. ... The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ... And all the world marvelled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ... Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth ... And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast ... and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. Rev 13:1-15**

**The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. ... The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the Lamb ... Then he said to me, The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ... For God has put it into their hearts to fulfil His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. Rev 17:8-18**

To understand the symbolism: the dragon is Satan. The first beast is called 'the antichrist' by John but 'the man of sin' or 'the son of perdition' by Paul. The other beast is the false prophet who leads the government's religious programme to support antichrist. The woman is Babylon ruling the world, the world as a city of idolatry, hedonism and sin; i.e. the world is engulfed in idolatry, blasphemy and sin. At the end God's enemy rules the world; man's sin is complete.

In simple terms what do we see here? The devil fulfils his long held ambition to build a world empire. He gives power to a person called antichrist who leads a global, totalitarian empire. This was, at first supposedly Christian, but later revealed its true colours and started a global persecution of believers. This empire has two arms; the secular political regime is dominated by antichrist as a ruler. But there is also a religious cult, headed by the second beast, which makes the world worship antichrist. Those who refuse are slain; thus the antichrist makes war with the saints and overcomes them.

**Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow them." Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. ... So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Rev 14:12-16, 19**

The situation is so bad for the church that only those who die are called blessed. God calls for saints to be patient and endure. However, after a relatively short time the Lord Jesus appears in glory in the clouds and the end comes with the reaping of the wicked, that is, collecting them for judgment and punishment. The winepress is hell, later described as a lake of fire.

The upshot of all this is that there cannot be a global world revival ushering in a utopian Christian kingdom at the end before Christ returns.

## Conclusion

Make no mistake; Dominionism is a false teaching, whatever the theological foundations are. At the very least, engaging in Dominionist activities will be a great distraction from doing God's will and following Christ. The believer is commanded to make his salvation certain by diligently obeying God's commands (2 Pt 1:10); this involves progressing in sanctification and spiritual growth plus working in the church to edify others and doing good to everyone. There are no Biblical instructions on Christians improving the world at all, let alone seeking to control it politically.

The world and the old nature are inextricably associated; the temptations in our old nature are frequently designed to get us more involved in the world. Just as we cannot experience the fulness of God's kingdom with an old nature present, neither can we do so in this current world. It is only when our old nature is removed at the end, and the world restored to purity, that God's kingdom can have a materialistic expression. All current efforts to control the world for Christ are a waste of time and a foolish enterprise. No good will come of it.

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