

Age of decay...

- Oh my enough with this “age of decay”
- What good is this information if it doesn't help me
 - Live longer
 - enjoy life more
 - fix my problems
 - Etc.

Biblical "Ages"

The Age of Decay

- Loss of life
- Loss of relationships
- Loss of stability
- Loss of identity

The Life of the Age to Come

- "your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"
- Luke: Kingdom of God
- Matt: Kingdom of heaven
- John: Eternal life (lit: "life of the age")
- Paul: "In Christ"

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Church:
Community of
Christ

Assumptions about the Kingdom

- I can appropriate it and use it for my own personal ambition
 - Assist me competition with others for influence, money, fame
- My group can appropriate it and use it for our own group ambition
 - Our power, fame, influence, prominence
- I can use it to suppress my enemies!

Jesus vigorous addresses our implicit assumptions

Luke 9:57-62 (NRSV)

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

We begin with the first

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There is code here

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If it were just animals

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As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but [I, my followers, etc.] has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Code words in a police state

- “Fox” = Herod
 - Roman puppet authority
- “birds of the air”
 - Gentile nations
 - Roman occupation

Son of Man

Daniel 7:13-14 (NIV)

“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Read it understanding the code

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Implicit Religious Insurance

- If I am on the right team then God...
- If I am more moral than... then God...
- If I am a leader in the kingdom then God...

When you DO try to make claims on others on the basis of the age to come/relationship with God

- You actually participate in the age of decay
 - You see your position over others to be exploited to your own advantage in this age
 - You value this age over the age to come
 - This age is more REAL to you than the next

How many ways can he say this to us...

- The Son of Man (King of kings forever!) has no place to lay his head (in this Age of Decay)
- The greatest among you will be the least...
- Take the lowest seat...

If you follow me...

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How can we not

- Make claims of entitlement in this age?
 - From God (Implicit Religious Insurance)
 - From the world

He knows your misery

- He who was entitled to all
 - Who knew no sin
- He who didn't need to suffer ANY of this age of decay
 - Willingly stepped into it
 - Willingly subjected himself to it

Leverage the age to come

- Not in attempting to preserve life in this age
 - “Don’t store up treasure on earth...”
 - “To live is Christ, to die is gain...”
- Relinquishing your claims on this age **BECAUSE** of his gift of the age to come
 - Lean into your new life, the renewal of all things

Find the age to come already

- The “age to come” does not come to you from this world
- The “age to come” flows out from you in generosity TO each other and those dying in the age of decay

- Relinquish the demand
 - “I have my rights”
 - The disappointment itself will weigh you down
- Receive the promise
 - All your bad things will work out for good
 - Your truly good things can't be lost
 - The best is yet to come