

## 4 – Nine Errors of the Seven Mountain Mandate

If the Seven-Mountain Mandate were only a strategy for how Christians can be salt and light in culture, I would wholeheartedly embrace it. But unfortunately, this is not the case. The Seven-Mountain Mandate is a belief system often rooted in Partial Preterism and Postmillennialism. And for this reason, it is a dangerous doctrine deceiving multitudes, leaving them unprepared for the end times and the Lord's return.

Having stated what is good about the Seven-Mountain Mandate, I will now detail nine errors of this teaching. Before we get started, recall what Theologian Dr. Donald A. Carson attributed to his father, saying, "A text without a context is a pretext for a proof text."

In other words, whenever a teacher removes a verse of Scripture from its original context, it can easily become a *pretext* to support a preconceived doctrine rather than reading from the text what the author intended. Theologians often use the words *exegesis* and *eisegesis* to explain this dynamic.

Exegesis is the legitimate interpretation which reads out of the text what the original author intended to convey. Eisegesis, on the other hand, reads into the text what the interpreter wants the text to say. It expresses the reader's own subjective ideas rather than the proper meaning of the text.

Eisegesis and pretext are certainly employed in the doctrine known today as the Seven-Mountain Mandate. Let's look at nine errors of this teaching now.

### 1. The seven mountains on which the harlot sits do not refer to the seven mountains of culture.

Some Seven-Mountain teachers claim Revelation 17:9-10, where we see a voluptuous harlot sitting on seven mountains, refers to a demonic entity sitting on the seven mountains of culture. As we have seen repeatedly, these seven mountains of culture are defined as government, economics, education, family, religion, arts and entertainment, and media.

Read the two verses for yourself: "Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while" (Rev. 17:9-10).

We will take an in-depth look at what these two verses mean in a later session. But for now, we have to realize nowhere in these two verses or in this chapter does the context allow us to infer this interpretation. It is a massive extrapolation to interpret these seven mountains as cultural mountains. The text simply doesn't say that.

To claim that's what these two verses mean is a classic example of taking a verse out of context to form a pretext. It is the perfect example of eisegesis, where an author reads into a verse their subjective interpretation.

Simply put, there's not a verse in the entire Bible stating the seven mountains of culture are government, economics, education, family, religion, arts and entertainment, and media. Obviously, these seven areas are what define a culture. But my point is there's not a verse of Scripture we can use to establish a doctrine that the seven mountains in Revelation 17:9-10 are the seven mountains of culture.

### 2. The Genesis 1:28 Mandate is misinterpreted.

Seven-Mountain teachers love Genesis 1:28, which states, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have *dominion* over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (emphasis mine, KJV). I used the KJV because it has the word *dominion*.

Based on this verse, Seven-Mountain teachers believe the church has a mandate to take dominion over the earth, especially the seven mountains of culture. But if you notice carefully, this idea is nowhere in this verse. The dominion God gave man was over "the fish of the sea," "the fowl of the air," and "over every living thing that [moves] upon the earth [other animals]." Absent from this Scripture is anything about men and women reigning over other people, cities, or nations.

To use Genesis 1:28 as a proof-text that the church is called to exercise dominion over other people and nations is a complete misinterpretation of what is actually said.

### 3. The Great Commission is a call to disciple people—not the systems in nations.

Seven-Mountain advocates quote Matthew 28:18-19 frequently. Known as the Great Commission, Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

Breaking from centuries of traditional interpretation—what the apostles clearly understood and the church fathers as well—they teach we are not only to make disciples of individuals but nations. Since Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth, He gives us His authority to disciple nations and to bring nations under His rule and reign.

Seven-Mountain teachers claim the Great Commission involves the church exercising Christ's authority over the systems that establish culture in the nations. Namely, the seven mountains. Based upon this idea, they sometimes use terminology such as this: He is called as an apostle to the mountain of government; she is called as an apostle to the mountain of education; he is called as an apostle to the mountain of media.

To Seven-Mountain teachers, discipling nations is not only a call to disciple individuals but the leaders at the top of the mountains. To them, the Great Commission is a mandate to influence the mind-molders of culture with Christian principles and values so they can transform cities and nations. They use Daniel and Joseph as examples.

But my question is where do we see Daniel or Joseph shaping the mind-molders of culture in such a way that a nation is transformed. Did Babylon become godly? Did Egypt? The Lord had a number of unpleasant things to say about both nations through the prophets.

Where do we see the apostles transforming cities and nations? Did they transform Israel? Rome? Laodicea?

Was Jesus *really* talking about transforming the systems that shape culture? Notice what He said right after the commission to disciple nations. He commanded us to baptize "them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." Seeing how the apostles water baptized their converts, this was obviously referring to water baptism. So, let me ask a question. Can you water baptize the mountain of government in America? Can you water baptize the mountain of education in England? I think you know the answer.

The Great Commission is not about discipling the systems that shape culture. It's about discipling individuals in all nations.

#### **4. The gospel of the kingdom is not a call to conquer the seven mountains of culture.**

Along the same lines, Seven-Mountain teachers often use Matthew 24:14, where Jesus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (NKJV).

To them, the gospel of the kingdom goes far beyond preaching Jesus is King, He has a kingdom, and His kingdom is present, increasing, and will come. They interpret preaching the gospel of the kingdom to mean invading culture and conquering nations so the end can come. In other words, Jesus can't return until the gospel of the kingdom has subdued nations.

Is this really what Jesus meant? Not at all.

Jesus clearly said the gospel of the kingdom should be preached "as a witness to all the nations." We don't preach the gospel of the kingdom to take dominion over nations but to give a clear witness that Jesus Christ is King, He has a kingdom, and His kingdom is present, increasing, and will come. We preach the gospel of the kingdom to give a witness; not to invade and conquer.

#### **5. The church is not called to occupy until Jesus comes.**

Seven-Mountain teachers love to quote Luke 19:13, when Jesus said, "Occupy till I come" (KJV). Did Jesus really call the church to "occupy" until He comes? Specifically, to occupy the seven mountains of culture until He returned? No.

Ironically, Seven-Mountain teachers, who rarely use the KJV translation, quote Luke 19:13 in the KJV. Why? Because this translation supports their dominion theology. However, here's the issue: Almost every other version of the Bible translates this verse similar to the NASB, which states, "Do business with this I until I come." Probing into the Greek, this word doesn't mean to occupy in the sense of invading, taking dominion, and conquering. It means to be occupied doing business—to be busy doing God's work.

Notice the context of this verse. It is related to Jesus giving talents to His servants and commissioning them to use His gifts, skills, and resources to accomplish His will. It's not a mandate to subdue and transform cities and nations.

Observe carefully that ruling and reigning is a reward for faithfulness *after* Jesus returns. Jesus said, "When he returned, after receiving the kingdom," He evaluated how His slaves used the talents given to

them (Luke 19:15). Then He said to one of them, “Because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities” (Luke 19:17).

Ruling and reigning with Christ comes after Jesus returns *if we are faithful* doing business with the skills, talents, and resources He has given us. This whole life is preparing us to rule and reign with Him in the ages to come.

### 6. The restoration of all things pertains to Israel not the church.

Acts 3:20-21 states, “That He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.” Here’s a paraphrase of how some Seven-Mountain teachers interpret this passage:

Jesus can’t return until everything is restored. This restoration is described by the Old Testament prophets. Here are two examples. The earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea and the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains and all the nations will stream to it (Isa. 11:9; 2:2). For years, the church has embraced bad eschatology. We are waiting for Jesus to return while He is waiting for us to restore all things.

Is this what Peter meant? I don’t think so. Here’s what I believe he meant. Jesus will return when we come to “the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets.” *The holy prophets* are the Old Testament prophets, who spoke repeatedly about the restoration of Israel when the Messiah reigns from Jerusalem.

In short, when it is time for God to restore Israel as the Old Testament prophets pronounced, then Jesus will return. We are most definitely living in this time right now.

When Israel became a nation in 1948 and recaptured the Old City of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in 1967, the full restoration of Israel, spoken by the Old Testament prophets, came closer to realization.

You see, the problem with the Seven-Mountain interpretation of Acts 3:20-21 is it’s rooted in Replacement Theology. We will look at Replacement Theology in more detail in the next session. But for now, I’ll keep it simple.

Throughout church history, many have taken the clear promises in the Old Testament prophets made to Israel and applied them to the church. A quick survey of church history proves Replacement Theology often results in antisemitism. We have centuries of Christian antisemitism, where the church tried to force the Jewish people to renounce Judaism and convert to Christianity. The church has a long history of mistreating, marginalizing, and murdering Jews who did not accept Christ. Hitler even used Martin Luther’s Replacement Theology to persuade the Germans the Final Solution was necessary.

Make no mistake about it. The Old Testament Prophets, such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Isaiah, Zechariah, and Malachi, spoke frequently about the restoration of Israel and the salvation of the Jewish people. God has not forgotten His promises to Israel. He remembers every one of them and will fulfill every one with perfect faithfulness.

In this light, let’s consider the Seven-Mountain claim that “the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). Will this promise be fulfilled through a massive revival that transforms cities and nations as the Seven-Mountain teachers purport? Let’s examine the context of Isaiah 11 to answer this question.

A few verses earlier, Isaiah said the Messiah (Jesus) will “strike the earth with the rod of His mouth and with the breath of His lips He slay the wicked” (Isa. 11:4). Paul used this verse to describe how Jesus will destroy the antichrist at His return (2 Thess. 2:8).

Next, we see that “the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together. . . . the cow and bear will graze, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper’s den” (Isa. 11:6-8).

As much as I hate snakes, I sure hope a great revival comes and transforms the nations, including the animal kingdom. I would be overjoyed if, prior to Jesus’ return, the curse on snakes is reversed, lions and oxen dwell together, and leopards and goats graze together. But I don’t expect this verse to be fulfilled by a great revival preceding the Lord’s return. This is reserved for the age to come *after* Jesus returns.

Bottom line: You can't cherry-pick your favorite verses out of context to make them fit into your theology. Context matters greatly.

Seven-Mountain teachers also claim, before the Lord returns, that God's kingdom will become the chief mountain the nations stream to (Isa. 2:2). But here's the problem. This was not written to the church. Look one verse above and you will see the promise was spoken to "Judah and Jerusalem." Furthermore, when this prophecy is fulfilled, the Messiah (Jesus) "will judge between the nations . . . and they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war" (Isa. 2:4). This is clear. When God's kingdom is established as the chief mountain in the earth, war will cease. Since world wars are mentioned throughout the book of Revelation, you can only adhere to this view by embracing a form of Partial Preterism.

### 7. The church will not make all of Jesus' enemies His footstool.

Seven-Mountain teachers also build their theology on Psalm 110:1, where the Lord says to the Messiah, "Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for Your feet." They stress the *until* factor. That is, Christ can't return *until* the church subdues all of Christ's enemies.

Commenting on this passage, one prominent Seven-Mountain teacher states:

This passage is intended to shape our eschatology. Together with Acts 3 [Acts 3:20-21, which we just looked at], it gives us critical information about God's timing—"the until factor." In essence, the Father says to the Son, "Once You have purchased redemption for mankind, You will sit at My right hand. You will have done Your part on Earth 'till I make Your enemies Your footstool.' You will remain up here as the Head, and Your body on Earth will crush Your enemies. The last generation will be the 'foot' generation and will rule on Earth over Your enemies. Until they do so, You are not going back to rescue, rapture, save, or anything else. Your body, in fact, will not be a beautiful bride until she has accomplished this crushing of Satan (emphasis mine).

Where in Psalm 110:1 does it say the body of Christ will make Jesus' enemies His footstool before He can return? Just to be clear, this teacher sees Psalms 110:1 encompassing more than the church defeating powers and principalities. He believes the church will crush the antichrist and the false prophet before Christ comes back. And he believes the church will capture the seven mountains of culture from the harlot Babylon.

Is this true? Will the church be so victorious we will crush the antichrist, false prophet, and harlot Babylon before Jesus returns? Clearly no. Scripture actually teaches the exact opposite. It is Christ, at His return, who causes the beast and false prophet to be thrown alive into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20). And it is the antichrist and 10 kings who destroy the harlot Babylon (Rev. 17:16).

Now, I do believe, before the Lord returns, the body of Christ "will . . . crush Satan" under our feet (Rom. 16:20; Rev. 12:7-12). But let me be clear: All of God's enemies will not become Christ's footstool before Jesus can return.

Paul made this clear in 1 Corinthians 15, when he talked about the rapture, the second coming of Christ, and His millennial reign. Paul said,

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming [the second coming], then comes the end [after the 1,000-year reign of Christ on the earth], when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power [Christ abolishes His enemies]. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet [quoting Psalm 110:1]. The last enemy that will be abolished is death [second resurrection takes place after the 1,000-year reign of Christ – see Rev. 20:11-15]. For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET [quote of Psalm 110:1]. (1 Cor. 15:22-27, emphasis mine)

To simplify, in Psalm 110:1, the Lord vows, "I will make your enemies a footstool for Your feet." Notice it is the Lord who does this. Paul shed New Testament light on this passage, showing that it is Christ Himself who does the abolishing and subduing.

In summary, the church will overcome *some* of Jesus' enemies, but not *all* of Jesus' enemies prior to His return. In sharp contrast to Seven-Mountain teaching, Jesus is not waiting to return *until* the nations have been conquered by the church. On the contrary, Jesus is waiting to return *until* the bride has made herself ready (Rev. 19:7).

### 8. The kingdoms of the world don't progressively become Christ's kingdom.

Seven-Mountain teachers place a big emphasis on Revelation 11:15, asserting the kingdoms of the world progressively become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Using this verse, they teach the nations are progressively being transformed by revival, the preaching of the gospel, dramatic signs and wonders, and the invasion of the church into culture. Again, to make this claim using Revelation 11:15, you have to embrace a form of Partial Preterism.

Let's go back to the original context of Revelation 11:15 to examine when this takes place. John writes, "Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever'" (Rev. 11:15). This proclamation takes place after the seventh angel sounds the seventh trumpet. In context, this is after the two witnesses prophesy for 3.5 years in the city of Jerusalem and are killed by the antichrist, raised from the dead, and ascend into heaven.

Contrary to some Preterists, who purport the two witnesses symbolize the Law and the Prophets, I see these two witnesses as Elijah and most likely Moses. They will prophesy for a literal 3.5-year period in Jerusalem. They will literally be killed by the antichrist. And they will literally be raised from the dead and ascend into heaven. After all this happens—toward the end of the Great Tribulation (the last 3.5 years of this age)—then the kingdoms of the world became the kingdom of Christ. The kingdom of God conquering the nations doesn't happen progressively through the church. Rather, it happens *suddenly* because of God's end-time judgments, just prior to the second coming of Christ.

In Chapter 12 of my book, *The Eternal Blueprint*, I explained my view of the kingdom of God. I won't rehash it here. But I will quickly summarize it.

The kingdom of God is the realm where the person of Christ and His Spirit reign. This reign begins within the heart and soul of God's people, it flows outward from us wherever we go, it advances as others surrender to the lordship of Christ, and it will be fully established in every sphere of all nations after Jesus returns.

In short, the kingdom of God is *entered* at salvation, *embodied* because we have Christ's indwelling life, *exhibited* as we obey the Sermon on the Mount, *proclaimed* as we preach the gospel of the kingdom, *demonstrated* as we operate in God's resurrection power, and *advanced* through prayer, preaching, missions, ministering in power, spiritual warfare, and functioning as salt and light in culture.<sup>1</sup> As Isaiah said, "There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace" (Isa. 9:7). God's kingdom will never stop expanding. Ever.

The kingdom begins within a people during the Church Age (the present age), expands to every sphere in all nations through His people during the Kingdom Age (the Millennial Kingdom when Jesus reigns on the earth for 1,000 years), and will spread throughout the entire universe, as His government never stops expanding, for the endless ages of eternity.

### 9. The catalyst for Jesus' return is a transformed bride; not transformed nations.

In my book *The Eternal Blueprint*, I wrote, "Before Jesus returns in blazing glory to establish His kingdom in the nations, He will first establish His kingdom within us. Before the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, the kingdom of self will be conquered. Borrowing the words of Francois Fenelon, may Christ establish His throne upon the ruins of our self-love. This is one of God's primary objectives in this age and can only be accomplished by the indwelling Spirit."<sup>2</sup>

In this age, the Lord is far more interested in His kingdom rule being fully established within the hearts and the souls of His people than He is in cities and nations. Don't misunderstand what I am saying. The Lord will conquer the nations and fully establish His kingdom rule in all seven mountains of culture *after* He returns. This is easy for Him. The challenge is Him establishing the kingdom fully within our hearts and souls right now.

What does it look like when the kingdom of God is established within His people? A simple answer is they will "follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (Rev. 14:5). They will be a people of humility, meekness, obedience, selflessness, and sacrificial love. Pride, presumption, and self-rule will be extracted out of their

hearts and souls. Agreement with Satan and his kingdom of self will be broken. The Lamb's nature will be established fully within them.

When I think about the kingdom of God being established within us, I always go back to the Sermon on the Mount, one of the greatest sermons in history (Matt. 5-7).

The Sermon on the Mount reveals the culture of the kingdom of God. It's also the kingdom's constitution, revealing in explicit detail the nature of Christ.

You see, when the kingdom of God is established within us, we will fully embody Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. We will be a people who are humble, meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and steadfast in persecution (Matt. 5:3-12). We will influence the world around us as salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16). Our hearts will be free from anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, and lust (Matt. 5:21-30). We will be a people of our word. Our yes will mean yes and our no will mean no (Matt. 5:34-37). We will be generous, sacrificial, and will go the extra mile for the sake of love (Matt. 5:39-42). We will love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matt. 5:44-47).

When the Sermon on the Mount is fully established within us, we will not serve the Lord with an ulterior motive to be praised and honored by people (Matt. 6:1-5). Rather, we will be content before an audience of One, happy to be alone with the Lord in the secret place (Matt. 6:6).

Our hearts will be free from greed, covetousness, and the love of money (Matt. 6:24). Jesus will be our supreme treasure, and we will live for eternity rather than amassing treasures on earth (Matt. 5:19-21). We will not be overcome by the anxiety and pressures of this age but will fully trust the Lord to provide for our every need (Matt. 6:25-34).

Every form of unrighteous judgment—motivated by pride, hypocrisy, self-righteousness, criticism, envy, jealousy, and covetousness—will be removed from our hearts (Matt. 7:1-5). Having pure hearts, we will have the ability to appraise people and situations with righteous judgment.

Furthermore, we will treat people the way we want to be treated (Matt. 7:12). We will embrace the pressure and discomfort of walking the narrow path that leads to greater measures of Christ's life (Matt. 7:13-14). Our deepest desires, thoughts, emotions, and inclinations will be free from lawlessness (Matt. 7:21-23). And we will be wise, for we will fully obey every word in this sermon (Matt. 7:24-27).

When the kingdom of God is established within us, the Sermon on the Mount will be written on our hearts, rewiring us internally according to the culture of the kingdom. This is what it looks like to be brought under the headship of Jesus Christ in our hearts, souls, and bodies. This is what it looks like to be conformed into the image of Christ. And this is what it looks like for the kingdom to be established within us.

As I argue in *The Eternal Blueprint*, the church is far from having the kingdom of God fully established within our hearts and souls. I'm certainly *far* from this reality being fully established within me, especially when I compare my interior life to the Sermon on the Mount. How about you?

The American church yearns to permeate the nations and pervade the culture with Christianity, but we won't even allow the indwelling Spirit to permeate and pervade our hearts and souls?

When we are still living for ourselves, motivated by lust, selfish ambition, jealousy, coveting, and greed, how could we ever establish the kingdom of God in culture? Do we really expect the nations to be subdued by the church when our self-lives are still reigning (Luke 17:21)?

With this in mind, how well is the Seven-Mountain Mandate working? Well, it has grown in popularity over the past 20 years, permeating Christian conferences, magazines, books, and blogs. During that same time, the culture in America has reached an all-time low. Abortions have never been higher. Gay marriage was legalized in 2015. Transgenderism is becoming normalized. Pedophilia is not far behind. We don't even know what bathroom to use anymore. Not to mention our cities ablaze, riots and anarchy spreading, lawlessness increasing, and America experiencing the greatest division since the Civil War.

During the past 20 years, as the Seven-Mountain Mandate spread throughout America, the culture in America has declined rapidly. When it comes to decadence, perversion, lawlessness, and atheism, America is at a historical low. If the Seven-Mountain Mandate has transformed cities and nations, it's certainly not in America.

### God's Purpose for This Age

Perhaps God's primary purpose for this age is not for the church to invade culture and take dominion of the seven mountains. Maybe the Lord has a purpose many are missing. What if the Lord was more interested in

establishing and forming Christ within His people than He is the church taking over the systems of this world?

Herein lies the major difference between the Seven-Mountain Mandate and God's eternal purpose. The Lord's ultimate intention is to secure a people who are conformed into the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). He wants an inheritance in His people—a people who are fully yielded to the indwelling Spirit and fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. God's primary purpose for this age is for the bride to make herself ready for the Bridegroom (Rev. 19:7). It is not yet time for her to take dominion over the nations. That's coming *after* our wedding.

After 20 years of Seven-Mountain teaching, I would at least expect a measure of cultural transformation by now, wouldn't you? Perhaps things might be a little different if the church focused more time and energy seeking to establish the Sermon on the Mount within our hearts and souls, and then, as the kingdom was established within us, for us to go into the seven mountains as salt and light to influence and preserve the culture.

One of the main reasons I spent so much time discussing Seven-Mountain teaching is because this purpose is diametrically opposite to what we teach in the Forerunner School. The bride of Christ is not called to take dominion over all the nations *so that Jesus can return*. Rather, the bride is to make herself ready for the Bridegroom *so that Jesus can return*. In short, the bride's readiness determines Jesus' return; not the transformation of nations.

Revelation 19:7 is clear. When the bride is ready, then Jesus will come back. He is not waiting for us to take dominion over the earth but over thoughts, emotions, will, and bodies. He is waiting for us to take dominion over our entire self-life by His indwelling Spirit. He is waiting on us to preach the gospel of the kingdom in the nations as a witness so the end can come.

### The Kingdom Test

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, Satan offered Him "all the kingdoms of the world" (Luke 4:5). Jesus resisted this temptation, knowing the cross came before the crown and suffering came before reigning.

Now, the enemy is offering the kingdoms of the world once again, but this time to the church. Sadly, many are falling for this age-old deception hook, line, and sinker. Though we have received a measure of the kingdom now, ruling and reigning over the nations is reserved for the age to come, *after Jesus returns*.

I'm not saying we don't have authority now. God has certainly given us authority over sickness and demons. And He has given us authority to exercise in prayer and spiritual warfare based on the sphere He allotted to us. But the Scriptures are clear. Reigning over nations is reserved for the next age, *after Jesus returns* (Rev. 20:4).

What's dangerous and deceptive about Seven-Mountain teaching is it promotes the crown before the cross; reigning before the self-life in the soul has been experientially crucified.

We can't forget Jesus rebuking Peter, calling him Satan. Why such a sharp correction? Because Peter, wanting an earthly Messiah to defeat Rome and make Israel great, tried to prevent Jesus from going to the cross. What seemed like compassion—trying to prevent Jesus, whom he loved, from dying—was actually Satanic. Underneath this seemingly noble aspiration was a selfish purpose—Peter wanted an authoritative role in an earthly kingdom before his self-life had been crucified.

If we aren't careful, we can make this same mistake, desiring glory before the cross, a crown before crucifixion, and heaven before tribulation. The Lord is using this age to train us for reigning. Be careful that you don't try to take the throne prematurely, for it requires Christ-like maturity, death to self, humility, meekness, love, and sacrifice.

From my observations, Seven-Mountain teaching is devoid of the cross. I don't mean the finished work of the cross. I mean the Spirit working the cross into our hearts and souls, putting to death our self-life, so that Christ's indwelling life can fully possess our hearts and souls.

Seven-Mountain teaching promotes an earthly kingdom without the cross working deeply in the soul to crucify self-love, selfish ambition, and self-interests. It promotes heaven on earth in fullness apart from Christ being on the earth. It causes the bride's focus to shift from the Bridegroom-King to the kingdom.

In closing, God's primary purpose for this age is not for the bride to take dominion over the nations. It is for the bride to make herself ready for the Bridegroom. And when she is made ready, then Jesus will return, and together with Him, we will take dominion over the seven mountains of culture.

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<sup>1</sup> John 3:3-5; Luke 17:21; Matt. 10:7-8.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan Kessler, *The Eternal Blueprint* (Marietta, GA: Lifeschool International, 2019), pg. 108.