

Lesson Aim	To understand the biblical basis for the Kingdom of God being future.
Steps to Learning	Read the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 48 and discuss Revelation 21 , the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
Discuss	<p>How shall we define the Kingdom of God?</p> <p>The Kingdom of God is the future new heavens and earth in which God rules his people in a perfect state forever. It is, in a word, heaven. We derive this definition from the Lord's Prayer in which we pray, "thy Kingdom <i>come</i>."</p> <p>Question and answer 123 of the Heidelberg Catechism discusses the fullness of God's Kingdom <i>to come</i>, wherein God shall be all in all. And the Nicene Creed discusses the Kingdom that shall have no end.</p> <p>How do we understand the Kingdom of God as being future from the Old Testament?</p> <p>According to Genesis 1, the initial creation is divided into the invisible sphere, in which God and his angels dwell, and the visible realm of earth and the visible heavens. Isaiah 66 confirms that God dwells in the "heaven of heavens," which refer to the invisible heavens. According to the first three chapters of Genesis, Eden is the visible Temple, which connects the invisible heavens and the visible earth. From God's mandate for Adam and Eve and their descendants to fill the earth, we can understand that the ultimate, final existence of mankind was the unification of the invisible realm and the visible realm, which is the new heavens and new earth that Revelation 21 describes; mankind was to dwell with God in perfection.</p> <p>Because mankind fell into sin, God had to enact the project of redemption. How does this change the plan for there to be a final Kingdom of God in heaven?</p> <p>The Son of God became man in Jesus Christ. People were to put their faith in Jesus and his work on the cross, his death, and resurrection, to be saved from the effects of their sin, which brought God's wrath upon them. As people came to faith in Christ through the ministry of the Word and Spirit and populated the earth, they entered the Kingdom of God by faith. Therefore, even though the Kingdom is properly future, its effects are experienced now through faith and the power of the Holy Spirit.</p>
Bible Reading	1 Corinthians 7-13 (Reading through the New Testament)