

GENERAL SUBJECT: LIVING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Message One

Called into the Kingdom of God through the Gospel of the Kingdom

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:14-15; 1 Thes. 2:12

- I. Through the gospel of the kingdom, God has called us into His kingdom—
Mark 1:14-15; 1 Thes. 2:12.**
- II. The New Testament is a book of the kingdom of God; the entire New
Testament is on the kingdom—Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Rev. 11:15; 12:10:**
 - A. The kingdom of God is a divine sphere for God to work out His plan; it is a realm where God can exercise His authority to accomplish what He intends—Matt. 6:10.
 - B. The kingdom of God is not only God's reign over the universe in a general way by His authority and power but also God's reign in a particular way in the sense of life—John 3:5, 15; Rom. 14:17; 8:2, 6, 10-11.
 - C. As God incarnate, the Lord Jesus came to establish the kingdom of God, to establish a realm in which God can carry out His purpose through the exercise of His authority—John 1:1, 14; 3:3, 5; 18:36.
 - D. The New Testament preaches the gospel in the way of the kingdom; the gospel is for the kingdom, and the gospel is proclaimed so that rebellious sinners might be saved, qualified, and equipped to enter into the kingdom—Mark 1:14-15; Matt. 4:17; Acts 8:12.
 - E. In the New Testament, the kingdom of God goes with His salvation, and God's salvation goes with the kingdom—Eph. 2:9, 19; Rev. 12:10.
 - F. Repentance is mainly for us to enter into the kingdom of God; unless we repent—that is, have a change of concept—we cannot enter into the kingdom—Mark 1:15; Matt. 3:2; 4:17.
 - G. The kingdom of God is God Himself, and God is life, having the nature, ability, and shape of the divine life, which forms the realm of God's ruling—Mark 1:15.
 - H. Through regeneration we have been transferred into the delightful kingdom of the Son of God's love—a realm where we are ruled in love with life—Col. 1:13.
 - I. The kingdom of God is a realm of the divine species; in order to enter into this divine realm, we need to be born of God to have the life and nature of God, thereby becoming God-men in the kingdom of God—1:12-13; 3:3, 5.
 - J. The kingdom of God is the Lord Jesus as the seed of life sown into His believers and developing into a realm over which God can rule as His kingdom in His divine life—Luke 17:20-21; Mark 4:3, 26.
 - K. The eternal kingdom of God is the increase of Christ in administration—Dan. 2:34-35, 44; Mark 4:26-29.
 - L. Today the believers live the kingdom life in the church, for the church is the kingdom of God in this age—Matt. 16:18-19; 1 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 5:5:
 1. The church life is the kingdom in a developmental stage, a preliminary stage—Rev. 1:9.

2. When the authority of God's kingdom is allowed to operate in us, righteousness, peace, and joy will characterize our daily life—Rom. 14:17.
3. The work of the church is to bring in the kingdom of God—Matt. 13:43; 6:10; 12:22-28; Rev. 11:15; 12:10.
4. God's goal is that we live a church life that will usher us into the kingdom; this means that we should live in the preliminary stage of the kingdom that will lead us into the full manifestation of the kingdom—Matt. 13:43.

Message Two

A Realm of Life and Light

Scripture Reading: John 3:3, 5; 8:12; 18:36; 1 John 1:5, 7

I. The kingdom of God is a realm of life—John 3:3, 5, 15-16; 18:36:

- A. The kingdom of God is the realm of the divine life for this life to move, to work, to rule, and to govern that life may accomplish its purpose—v. 3.
- B. The kingdom of God is an organism constituted with God's life as the realm of life for His ruling, in which He reigns by His life and expresses Himself as the Divine Trinity in the divine life—v. 5; 15:1-8, 16, 26.
- C. The kingdom of God is God in Christ being the totality of life with all its activities—11:25; 10:10b; 14:6.
- D. The unique way to enter into the kingdom of God is to receive God as life and gain God Himself; this is regeneration—John 3:5, 15; 1 John 5:11-12:
 - 1. The kingdom of God is a divine realm to be entered into, a realm which requires the divine life; hence, for us to see or enter into the kingdom of God requires regeneration—John 3:3, 5.
 - 2. Because through regeneration we receive the divine life, the life of God, regeneration is the unique entrance into the kingdom—vv. 3:3, 5, 15.
 - 3. We have been born into the kingdom of God, and now the divine life in our spirit knows the kingdom of God—vv. 5-6.
- E. We live in the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine life by the sense of life—Rom. 8:6.

II. The kingdom of God is a realm of light—John 3:3, 5; 8:12:

- A. The divine light is the nature of God's expression—1 John 1:5-6; John 1:4; 8:12:
 - 1. Light is God's shining, God's expression; when God is expressed, the nature of that expression is light—1 John 1:5.
 - 2. To walk in the divine light is to live, move, act, and have our being in the divine light, which is God Himself—v. 7.
 - 3. The shining of the divine light makes old things new—2:7-8.
 - 4. If we are under God's dispensing, we participate in God's nature as light and are constituted with this element of His nature—John 1:5; 2 Cor. 4:6.
- B. The divine light shines in the divine life—John 1:4; 8:12:
 - 1. A great principle in the Bible is that light and life go together—Psa. 36:9.
 - 2. Where light is, there is life, and where life is, there is light—John 1:4.
 - 3. The light of life shines within man by the inner sense of life to deliver man from sin—8:12; 1:5.
 - 4. When we receive the divine light and believe in Christ as the light of the world, we are born of God to become sons of light—1:6-12; 12:35-36.
- C. The divine light is the source of the divine truth—vv. 5, 9; 18:37:
 - 1. When the divine light shines upon us, it becomes the truth, which is the divine reality—8:12, 32.
 - 2. When the divine light shines, the divine things become real to us.

3. Because light is the source of truth and truth is the issue of light, when we walk in the light, we practice the truth—1 John 1:6-7.

Message Three

A Realm of Truth and Grace

Scripture Reading: John 1:14, 16-17; 8:32; 14:6; 17:17; 18:37

I. The kingdom of God is a realm of truth—John 8:32; 14:6; 18:37:

- A. Truth is the shining of light—John 8:12, 32; 1 John 1:5-6.
- B. The divine truth liberates us and sanctifies us—John 8:32; 17:17.
- C. In John's writings the Greek word for truth (*aletheia*) is rich in meaning—v. 17; 18:37:
 - 1. Truth is God, who is light and love, incarnated to be the reality of the divine things for our possession—1:1, 4, 14-17.
 - 2. Truth is Christ, who is God incarnated and in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily to be the reality of God and man, of all the types and figures in the Old Testament, and of all the divine and spiritual things—Col. 2:9, 16-17; John 4:23-24.
 - 3. Truth is the Spirit, who is Christ transfigured, the reality of Christ and of the divine revelation—14:16-17; 15:26; 16:13-15.
 - 4. Truth is the Word of God as the divine revelation, which reveals and conveys the reality of God and Christ and of all divine and spiritual things—17:17.
 - 5. Truth is the contents of the faith (belief), which is the substantial elements of what we believe as the reality of the full gospel—Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5.
 - 6. Truth is the reality concerning God, the universe, man, and man's relationship with God and his fellow man and man's obligation to God, as revealed through creation and the Scriptures—Rom. 1:18-20; 2:2, 8, 20.
 - 7. Truth is the genuineness, truthfulness, sincerity, honesty, trustworthiness, and faithfulness of God as a divine virtue and of man as a human virtue, and as an issue of the divine reality—Rom. 3:7; 15:8; 2 Cor. 11:10; 1 John 3:18.
 - 8. Truth denotes things that are true or real, the true or real state of affairs (facts), reality, veracity, as the opposite of falsehood, deception, dissimulation, hypocrisy, and error—Mark 12:32; John 16:7; Acts 26:25; Rom. 1:25.
- D. Truthfulness is the revealed divine reality—the Triune God dispensed into man in the Son, Jesus Christ—becoming man's genuineness and sincerity, that man may live a life that corresponds with the divine light and worship God, as God seeks, according to what He is—2 John 1; 3 John 1; John 3:19-21; 4:23-24.

II. The kingdom of God is a realm of grace—1:14, 16-17:

- A. Grace is God becoming our enjoyment—John 1:14; 14:10-11, 16-20.
- B. The New Testament is a history of the grace of God as the incarnation of the Triune God in His Divine Trinity processed and consummated and moving and living in and among the believers—1:14, 16-17; Rev. 22:21.

- C. Grace is the Triune God in His incarnation to be dispensed into the believers by the Father as the source, by the Son as the element, and by the Spirit as the application—2 Cor. 13:14:
 - 1. The source of grace, the element of grace, and the application of grace are the three persons of the Divine Trinity to be our everything—Matt. 28:19.
 - 2. In the divine dispensing, grace is called the grace of God, the grace of Christ, and the grace of which the Spirit is—1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:12; 8:1, 9; 9:14; 12:9; 13:14; Heb. 10:29.
- D. Grace means God is everything, God does everything, and God gives everything—1 Pet. 5:10.
- E. The grace of God in His economy is rich, multiplying, and abounding—Eph. 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:2b; 2 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 1:7b-8.
- F. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with our spirit—Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23.

Message Four
A Realm of Glory

Scripture Reading: John 1:14, 18; 17:22-24; Rev. 21:10-11, 23

- I. Glory is the expression of God, God expressed in splendor—John 12:41.**
- II. God's glory goes with His kingdom; the kingdom is the realm in which God exercises His power to that He can express His glory—Matt. 6:13; 1 Thes. 2:12.**
- III. There is glory in the declaration of God by Christ as the Word of God; when we see God, we see glory—1:14, 18.**
- IV. The oneness in the divine glory for the corporate expression of God is a oneness in which the believers, their self having been fully denied, enjoy the glory of the Father as the factor of their perfected oneness to express God in a corporate, built-up way—17:22-23.**
- V. The Son is in the divine glory of the Father's expression; thus, for the believers to be with Him where He is means that they are with Him in the divine glory to express the Father—v. 23.**
- VI. An outstanding feature of the New Jerusalem is that it has the glory of God, His expression—Rev. 21:11, 23:**
 - A. The entire city of New Jerusalem bears the glory of God, which is God Himself shining out through the city—v. 11a:
 1. The glory of God is the content of the New Jerusalem, for the city is completely filled with His glory; this indicates that the New Jerusalem is a vessel to contain God and express Him.
 2. The glory of God is actually God Himself being manifested; thus, for the holy city to be full of God's glory means that God is manifested in this city.
 - B. The New Jerusalem, as the corporate expression of God in eternity, bears the appearance of God, expressing God's image in His glory—vv. 10-11; 4:3.
 - C. It is only when we express God in the New Jerusalem that He is truly glorified in the universe—Rom. 16:27; 1 Cor. 10:31.
- VII. Glorification is the final step of God's organic salvation—Rom. 5:10; 8:30:**
 - A. The believers will be glorified from within through the life-long saturation with the glory of God and from without through their being brought into God's glory—Eph. 4:30; Heb. 2:10.
 - B. Glorification is the ultimate step of God's organic salvation, wherein God obtains a full expression, which will be manifested eternally in the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:10-11:
 1. For God to glorify us means that the element of glory permeates and saturates our whole being and is expressed through us.
 2. God's glory will be expressed from our spirit to our soul and through our body; the three parts of our being will be the same as Christ is and will be fully saturated with God's glory—2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:1.

Message Five

A Realm of Shepherding and Building

Scripture Reading: John 2:19-22; 10:10-11, 15-17; 14:2-3, 23; 21:15-17

I. The kingdom of God is a realm of shepherding—John 10:10-11, 15-17; 21:15-17:

- A. The Lord laid down His human life to accomplish redemption for His sheep that they may share His divine life—vv. 11, 15, 17.
- B. The Lord shepherds us by feeding us with Himself and in Himself as the pasture—v. 9:
 - 1. The pasture signifies Christ as the feeding place of the sheep; our pasture is the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit—11:25; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
 - 2. In our daily Christian life we should have the sense that we are in the pasture enjoying Christ as the rich supply of life—John 1:4; 6:35; 11:25.
- C. As the good Shepherd, the Lord is leading, guiding, and directing us in the divine life—10:14, 27-30:
 - 1. The Lord shepherds us in life from within; inwardly we have Him as our Shepherd, a Shepherd of life and in life—v. 10.
 - 2. Christ shepherds us by being life to us and by living in us; His living within us is actually His shepherding—11:25; 14:6; Col. 3:4.
- D. Under the shepherding of Christ as the good Shepherd, “there shall be one flock, one Shepherd”; the Lord’s sheep have received the divine life, and by the divine life the sheep live together as one flock—John 10:10-18.
- E. In the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine life, we live a life of shepherding—John 21:15-17:
 - 1. Shepherding is to take all-inclusive tender care of the flock; shepherding refers to taking care of all the needs of the sheep—John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28.
 - 2. Shepherding is to take care of the children of God by feeding them; the work of shepherding is the work of feeding—Matt. 24:45; 1 Cor. 3:2; John 21:15-17.

II. The kingdom of God is a realm of building—2:19-22; 14:2-3, 23:

- A. Life and building are the basic and central revelation of the Bible; life is for building, and the building is of life—John 11:25; 14:2; 1 Cor. 3:6, 9.
- B. The Gospel of John reveals that the Triune God is dispensing Himself as life into His believers and that the believers, as the result of this dispensing, become the building of God, His expansion, enlargement, and corporate expression—1:4; 10:10b; 11:25; 14:2-3, 6.
- C. In His resurrection the Lord Jesus rebuilt God’s temple in a larger way, making it a corporate one, the mystical Body of Christ—John 2:19-22:
 - 1. The body of Jesus, the temple, that was destroyed on the cross was small and weak, but the Body of Christ in resurrection is vast and powerful—1 Cor. 3:16-17; Eph. 1:22-23.

2. Since the day of His resurrection, the Lord Jesus has been enlarging His Body in resurrection life; He is still working for the building of His Body under the process of resurrection—vv. 19-22.
 3. Christ, who is resurrection and life (11:25), changes death into life for the building of the house of God; our living as in the kingdom of God is a life of changing death into life for the building up of the mystical Body of Christ—2:1-21.
- D. The Father's house is a matter of the Triune God, through incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, working Himself into the believers in order to be fully mingled with them so that He may build them up as an organism for His dwelling and expression—14:2-3, 23:
1. The Lord's coming brought God into man, and His going brought man into God; by this coming and going, He builds up the house of God by building God into man and man into God—1:14; 10:10b; 14:2-3, 23.
 2. By the Spirit and through His death and resurrection, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is building an organism, the church, which is His Body and the Father's house, produced by the mingling of the Triune God with His chosen and redeemed people—vv. 7-24.