

**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
LIVING IN THE CHURCH AS THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

Message One

**The Vision of the Kingdom of God as the Realm of the Divine Life**

Scripture Reading: Rom. 14:17; John 3:3, 5; 18:36; Rev. 1:5-6

- I. The kingdom of God is God Himself—Mark 1:15; Matt. 6:33; John 3:3:**
- A. God's kingdom has God as its content; God Himself is everything as the content of His kingdom.
  - B. God is life, having the nature, ability, and shape of the divine life, which forms the realm of God's ruling—Eph. 4:18; John 3:15.
  - C. In actuality, God's reigning over us is not an outward matter but a matter of the innate ability of the divine life—Rom. 8:2.
- II. The genuine church is the kingdom of God in this age; today the believers live the kingdom life in the church—Matt. 16:18-19; 18:17-18; 13:44-46; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 4:20; Eph. 2:19; Col. 4:11; Rev. 1:5-6:**
- A. The Bible first presents the kingdom and thereafter presents the church; the presence of the kingdom produces the church—Matt. 4:23; 16:18-19:
    - 1. The gospel brings in the divine life, and this life has its realm, which is the kingdom; the divine life with its realm produces the church—2 Tim. 1:10.
    - 2. The gospel of the kingdom brings forth the church because the kingdom is the life itself, and the church is the issue of life—Matt. 4:23; Acts 8:12.
  - B. The kingdom is the reality of the church; therefore, apart from the kingdom life, we cannot live the church life—Matt. 5:3; 16:18-19; Rev. 1:4-6, 9:
    - 1. Since the kingdom life issues in the church life, as we live corporately in the kingdom life, we spontaneously live the church life—Rom. 14:17.
    - 2. A believer who does not live in the reality of the kingdom cannot be built into the structure of the church—Eph. 2:22.
  - C. Without the kingdom as the reality of the church, the church cannot be built up—Matt. 16:18-19.
- III. The kingdom of God is not only the reign of God but also the realm of the divine life—vv. 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 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.
- D. We live in the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine life by the sense of life, not by the knowledge of good and evil—Rom. 8:6.
- E. The kingdom of God in the sense of life is God in Christ being the totality of life with all its activities; therefore, the kingdom life is a vital life, a life that is living and active in spirit for the carrying out of God's economy—John 11:25; 10:10b; Luke 17:20-21; Rev. 1:4-5, 18.

Message Two  
**A Realm of Light**

Scripture Reading: John 1:4-13; 8:12; 9:5; 1 John 1:5-7

**I. The divine light is the nature of God's expression—1 John 1:5-6; John 1:4; 8:12:**

- A. Light is God's shining, God's expression; when God is expressed, the nature of that expression is light—1 John 1:5.
- B. 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.
- C. The shining of the divine light makes old things new—2:7-8.
- D. 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.

**II. The divine light shines in the divine life—John 1:4; 8:12:**

- A. A great principle in the Bible is that light and life go together—Psa. 36:9.
- B. Where light is, there is life, and where life is, there is light—John 1:4.
- C. The light of life shines within man by the inner sense of life to deliver man from sin—8:12; 1:5.
- D. 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.

**III. The divine light is the source of the divine truth—vv. 5, 9; 18:37:**

- A. When the divine light shines upon us, it becomes the truth, which is the divine reality—8:12, 32.
- B. When the divine light shines, the divine things become real to us.
- C. 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.
- D. The divine light that shines in the divine life and issues in the divine truth is embodied in the Lord Jesus, God incarnate—John 1:1, 4, 14; 8:12; 9:5; 14:6.

Message Three  
**A Realm of Grace**

Scripture Reading: John 1:14, 16-17

- I. Grace is the manifestation of the Triune God in His embodiment in three aspects—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—John 1:14; 14:10-11, 16-20.**
- II. 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.**
- III. 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:**
  - A. 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.
  - B. 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.
- IV. The grace in God's economy is the embodiment of God for man to receive as His enjoyment and supply—John 1:1, 14, 16-17:**
  - A. Grace means God is everything, God does everything, and God gives everything—1 Pet. 5:10.
  - B. Christ as the grace of God is the good land for us to enter into, enjoy, experience, partake of, and possess—John 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:10.
  - C. 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.
  - D. Grace is the embodiment of God, who became a God-man with divinity and humanity, passed through human living, died, resurrected, and entered into ascension; now He has become the life-giving Spirit dwelling in us—John 1:14, 29; 20:22.
  - E. Without being processed, the Triune God could not be grace to us—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b:
    1. God the Father is embodied in the Son, the Son is realized as the life-giving Spirit, and the Spirit enters into us as grace for our enjoyment—Heb. 10:29.
    2. The processed and consummated Triune God dispenses Himself into us to be our portion as grace to us that we may enjoy Him as everything in His Divine Trinity—2 Cor. 13:14.
  - F. We are those who have received grace, which is the Triune God—the Father given to us in the Son and the Son realized as the Spirit dwelling in our spirit—John 1:16.

## Message Four

### A Realm of Shepherding

Scripture Reading: John 10:10-11, 15-17; 21:15-17

- I. **Christ is the good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep so that, in the divine life, there will be one flock and one Shepherd—John 10:16:**
  - A. As the good Shepherd the Lord Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly—vv. 10-11.
  - B. The good Shepherd laid down His human life to accomplish redemption for His sheep that they may share His divine life—vv. 11, 15, 17.
  - C. As the good Shepherd, the Lord shepherds us by feeding us with Himself and in Himself as the pasture—v. 9:
    1. The work of shepherding is the work of feeding—Matt. 9:36; 14:14-21.
    2. The pasture signifies Christ as the feeding place of the sheep—John 10:9:
      - a. Today our pasture is the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit—John 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
      - b. In our daily Christian life we should have the sense that we are in the pasture enjoying Christ as the rich supply of life.
  - D. As the good Shepherd, the Lord is leading, guiding, and directing us in the divine life—John 10:14, 27-30:
    1. The Lord shepherds us in life from within:
      - a. Inwardly we have Him as our Shepherd, a Shepherd of life and in life—v. 10.
      - b. As our Shepherd, the living Christ not only gives us life—He is our life—v. 10; 11:25; 14:6; Col. 3:4.
    2. Christ shepherds us by being life to us and by living in us; His living within us is actually His shepherding.
  - E. Under the shepherding of Christ as the good Shepherd, “there shall be one flock, one Shepherd”—John 10:16:
    1. The Lord has formed the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers into one flock—the one church, the Body of Christ—under His shepherding—vv. 10-18; Eph. 2:14-16; 3:6.
    2. The Lord’s sheep have received the divine life, and by the divine life the sheep live together as one flock—John 10:16.
- II. **In the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine life, we live a life of shepherding—John 21:15-17:**
  - A. If we do not know what shepherding is, the entire Gospel of John will be in vain to us; it is only when we shepherd others that we know the Gospel of John—10:11, 14; 21:16; 14:20; 15:1, 4-5.
  - B. 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.
  - C. 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.