

Message Three
The Gospel of the Kingdom

Scripture Reading: Matt. 12:28; 24:14; 28:18-19; Mark 1:14-15; John 3:3, 5; Col. 1:13

- Matt. 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Mark 1:14 And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,
Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

I. 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—Mark 1:15; John 3:3, 5; Matt. 12:28; Rev. 11:15:

- Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
Matt. 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; 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.

A. The kingdom of God is the ruling, the reigning, of God with all its blessing and enjoyment—Mark 1:15; Col. 1:13.

- Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
Col. 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

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. 8:2, 6, 10-11, 14.

- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
John 3:15 That every one who believes into Him may have eternal life.
Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.
Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
Rom. 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

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; Mark 4:3, 26-29; Matt. 12:28.

- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here.

Mark 4:3 Listen! Behold, the sower went out to sow.

Mark 4:26 And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth,

Mark 4:27 And sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and lengthens -- how, he does not know.

Mark 4:28 The earth bears fruit by itself: first a blade, then an ear, then full grain in the ear.

Mark 4:29 But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he sends forth the sickle, because the harvest has come.

Matt. 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

D. From God's point of view, the kingdom is the development of God Himself as the seed of life; from the point of view of God's enemy, the kingdom is the subduing of rebellion—Mark 4:26-27; Matt. 12:28.

Mark 4:26 And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth,

Mark 4:27 And sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and lengthens -- how, he does not know.

Matt. 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

II. The fundamental problem in the universe is rebellion against the authority of God—Isa. 14:12-14:

Isa. 14:12 How you have fallen from heaven, O Daystar, son of the dawn! How you have been hewn down to earth, You who made nations fall prostrate!

Isa. 14:13 But you, you said in your heart: I will ascend to heaven; Above the stars of God I will exalt my throne. And I will sit upon the mount of assembly In the uttermost parts of the north.

Isa. 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.

A. Satan intends to violate God's sovereignty, usurp God's authority, overthrow God's throne, and establish his own kingdom—Matt. 12:26; Eph. 2:2.

Matt. 12:26 And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?

Eph. 2:2 In which you once walked according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, of the spirit which is now operating in the sons of disobedience;

B. When man fell, he rebelled against God, put God's authority aside, denied God's authority, and rejected God's rule—Gen. 3:6, 11; Rom. 5:12; 1 John 3:4.

Gen. 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make oneself wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband with her, and he ate.

Gen. 3:11 And He said, Who told you that you are naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?

Rom. 5:12 Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and thus death passed on to all men because all have sinned.

1 John 3:4 Everyone who practices sin practices lawlessness also, and sin is lawlessness.

III. Through the gospel of the kingdom, God brings people under the ruling of the heavenly authority so that they may become His kingdom, those who are ruled by His authority—Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:5-6:

Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Rev. 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood.

Rev. 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

A. The New Testament preaches the gospel in the way of the kingdom; because the kingdom of God is the real gospel, to know the gospel requires that we know the kingdom—Mark 1:14-15; Acts 8:12.

Mark 1:14 And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,

Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip, who announced the gospel of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

B. 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 of God—Mark 1:14-15; Matt. 4:17; Acts 8:12:

Matt. 4:17 From that time Jesus began to proclaim and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.

1. The gospel of life, the gospel of grace, and the gospel of salvation are all for the kingdom; the kingdom is the center, the hub—John 3:16; Acts 20:24; 4:12.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

Acts 20:24 But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 4:12 4:12 And there is salvation in no other, for neither is there another name under heaven given among men in which we must be saved.

2. The gospel of the kingdom brings people not only into God's salvation but also into the kingdom; the emphasis of the gospel of the kingdom is on the heavenly ruling of God and the authority of the Lord—Matt. 24:14.

Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

3. The gospel of the kingdom brings the believers into the realm of the divine ruling so that they may participate in the blessings of the divine life in the divine kingdom—1 Thes. 2:12.

1 Thes. 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

C. In Matthew the goal of the gospel of the kingdom is to set up the kingdom of the heavens by putting people into the Triune God, making them citizens of the kingdom of the heavens—Matt. 28:19; Rom. 14:17.

Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Rom. 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

IV. God commands everyone to repent for the kingdom—Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Acts 17:30:

Matt. 3:2 And saying, Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.

Matt. 4:17 From that time Jesus began to proclaim and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.

Acts 17:30 Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God now charges all men everywhere to repent.

A. To repent means that originally we were rebellious and against God, but now we turn back to the Lord in submission—Matt. 3:2; 4:17.

B. To repent is to have a change of mind issuing in regret, to have a turn in purpose—Luke 3:3, 8; 5:32; 17:3; Acts 17:30-31.

Luke 3:3 And he came into all the region surrounding the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins,

Luke 3:8 Produce then fruits worthy of your repentance, and do not begin to say within yourselves, We have Abraham as our father; for I tell you that God is able out of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

Luke 5:32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 17:3 Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

Acts 17:30 Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God now charges all men everywhere to repent,

Acts 17:31 Because He has set a day in which He is to judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He has designated, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead.

- C. 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.
 Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.
 Matt. 3:2 Now And saying, Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.
 Matt. 4:17 From that time Jesus began to proclaim and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.

V. As believers in Christ, we have been regenerated to enter into the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine species to live under the rule of God in life, light, and love—John 3:3, 5, 15-16; Col. 1:12-13:

- John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
 John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 John 3:15 That every one who believes into Him may have eternal life.
 John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
 Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
 Col. 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

- A. The kingdom of God is a divine realm to be entered into, a realm that requires the divine life; hence, the unique way to enter into the kingdom of God is to receive God as life and to gain God Himself; this is regeneration—John 3:3, 5, 15; 1 John 5:11-12.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
 1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

- B. We have been born into the kingdom of God, and now the divine life in our spirit knows the kingdom of God—John 3:5-6.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

- C. The kingdom of God into which we have entered through regeneration is a realm of the divine species; we have entered into this divine realm by being born of God to become children of God, God-men, who have the life and nature of God—1:12-13; 3:3, 5.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
 John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

- D. 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; the kingdom in which we find ourselves today is a realm full of life, light, and love—Col. 1:12-13; 1 Pet. 2:9.

Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
 Col. 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
 1Pet. 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

VI. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations before the end of this age—Matt. 24:14:

Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

- A. This preaching, signified by the white horse of the first seal in Revelation 6:1-2, will be a sign of the consummation of this age.
 - Rev. 6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying like the sound of thunder, Come.
 - Rev. 6:2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he who sits on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer.
- B. The gospel of the kingdom must be brought to the whole inhabited earth through the churches in the Lord's recovery—Matt. 24:14; 1 Thes. 1:8.
 - Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
 - 1 Thes. 1:8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded out; not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but in every place, your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need of saying anything.

VII. Because all authority has been given to the resurrected Christ, He sent His disciples to disciple all the nations; they go with His authority—Matt. 28:18-19:

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
 Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

- A. To disciple the nations is to make the heathen the kingdom people for the establishing of His kingdom, which is the church, even today, on this earth—1 Thes. 1:9; 2:12; Rev. 1:5-6, 9; 5:9-10.
 - 1 Thes. 1:9 For they themselves report concerning us what kind of entrance we had toward you and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God.
 - 1 Thes. 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.
 - Rev. 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood
 - Rev. 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.
 - Rev. 1:9 I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
 - Rev. 5:9 And they sing a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain and have purchased for God by Your blood men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
 - Rev. 5:10 And have made them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth.
- B. The intrinsic purpose of our preaching the gospel is to bring people of the nations into the Triune God in order to make them the citizens of the kingdom of the heavens—Matt. 24:14; 28:18-19.
 - Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
 - Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
 - Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C. According to Matthew, being baptized into the reality of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is for the constituting of the kingdom of the heavens—v. 19:
 - 1. Unlike an earthly society, the heavenly kingdom cannot be formed with human beings of flesh and blood—1 Cor. 15:50.
 - 1 Cor. 15:50 Now this I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither does corruption inherit incorruption.
 - 2. God's heavenly kingdom can be constituted only with people who have been immersed into the union with the Triune God and who have been established and built up with the Triune God, who has been wrought into them—Rom. 6:3-4; 14:17; Gal. 3:26-27; 4:19; 5:21; Eph. 3:14-19; 5:5.
 - Rom 6:3 Or are you ignorant that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

Rom 6:4 We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Gal. 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.

Gal. 5:21 Envyings, bouts of drunkenness, carousings, and things like these, of which I tell you beforehand, even as I have said before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Eph. 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

Eph. 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph. 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

Eph. 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Eph. 5:5 For this you realize, knowing that every fornicator or unclean person or greedy person (who is an idolater) has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.