

Message Three

Living the Kingdom Life in the Church Life for God's Building

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:18-19; 18:17-18 Rom. 14:17

- I. To be built up with fellow believers is the Lord's supreme and highest requirement of His faithful seekers according to the oneness of the Divine Trinity—John 17:**
 - A. The constitution of the kingdom of the heavens is not for individuals but for a corporate people—Matt. 5:3-16.
 - B. Being built up with fellow partakers of the divine life is the highest virtue of one who pursues after Christ according to God's eternal economy—Eph. 2:21-22; Phil. 3:7-12.
- II. 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:**
 - A. The life of God is the kingdom of God, and this life produces the church—John 3:3, 5; Matt. 7:14, 21; 19:17, 29; 25:46.
 - 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. The reality of the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 5—7) is the content of the church life; without the reality of the kingdom, the church is empty.
 2. 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.
 3. 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:
 1. The church is brought into being through the authority of the kingdom.
 2. The keys of the kingdom are given to make the building of the church possible—v. 19; 18:18; cf. John 20:23.
 3. When the kingdom of the heavens is able to assert its authority over a company of believers, those believers can be built up into the church—Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16.
- III. 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. 1:4-6:**
 - A. In the church as the kingdom, we are under rule, government, discipline, and exercise—1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5.
 - B. Although the church today is God's kingdom, we are in the kingdom in reality only when we live, walk, and have our being in the spirit, not in our natural man—Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16, 25.