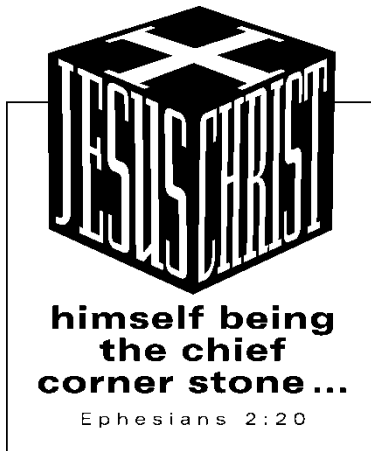


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 3



ESSENTIALS OF A KINGDOM

Scripture Texts: 1 Timothy 6:14-16; John 18:37; Hebrews 1:8; Matthew 28:18; Romans 6:22; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 3:21-22; Hebrews 8:10; Ephesians 6:5-7

To be a kingdom, an organism must possess certain elements. It is essential to a kingdom that it has (1) a king, (2) a throne, (3) territory, (4) subjects, and (5) a law. The kingdom of God possesses all these essential requirements.

MEMORY VERSE: *Jesus answered; My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight. . . . —John 18:36*

A King

1 Timothy 6:14-16 Here Paul describes our Lord Jesus Christ as the only Potentate—the only one with all power—and the King of kings and Lord of lords—above all other kings and lords. Only He has immortality—eternal life, deathlessness, and power to give life eternal (**John 5:26**). He dwells in the light which no man can approach unto—absolute light, no darkness at all, all-knowing and all-seeing power, absolute purity and truth. He is so great that no man . . . can see Him in His full divine appearance. Honour and power everlasting are His, unlimited, never ending. A King beyond our imagination.

John 18:37 Jesus, standing a bound prisoner before Pilate, had something about Him so convincing as He spoke of His kingdom, that Pilate asked, Art thou a king then? Clearly, Jesus claimed to be a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world. He did not wait to become King at some future time. He was born King, rode into Jerusalem as King, and died as King (**Matthew 2:2; John 12:13; John 19:19**).

A Throne

Hebrews 1:8 Here God, the Father, is speaking to Jesus, the Son. He calls Him God. He gives Him an everlasting throne and scepter. Each denotes authority. A king without a throne has no power or authority. Jesus exercises His authority in righteousness. The Father calls it thy kingdom—Christ's kingdom. Christ's throne is in the heart of regenerated man (**Matthew 19:28**).

A Territory

Matthew 28:18 After rising from the dead and before ascending back to Heaven, Jesus claimed to have all power in earth and in Heaven. He is far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name in this world and the next (**Ephesians 1:20-22**). He won this dominion by His victory over death. It was given to Him by His Father when he raised him from the dead. His authority is over everyone everywhere, whoever, and whatever. The devil has no power or territory except for what God, or we, as individuals, allow him.

Unlike earthly rulers, Christ's power is exercised in righteousness and holiness. His rule gives His subjects pure freedom. Whom the Son makes free is free indeed (**John 8:36**).

Subjects

Romans 6:22 All are rightly subject to the rule of Christ, but we are rebels until made free from sin. When one is born again of the Spirit, he becomes a servant, a subject or citizen of the kingdom of God. Through this experience of a new spiritual birth one becomes fit material to be placed into the Church of God. The kingdom

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of God and the Church of God cannot rightfully be interchanged. The kingdom consists of material for the building. The church consists of material fitted and framed together. If this were not true, there would be no need to call saved people out of Babylon's confusion. Picture building material scattered over an area with the blueprint for the building right with the material. There is nothing here to show anyone a building. After every piece is placed and framed together by the builder, then, and only then, is there visual proof of a building. When Christ calls us to come out and be separate, we cannot stay in whatever He is calling us out of and remain in the kingdom (**2 Corinthians 6:17-18**).

Ephesians 2:19-22 These regenerated ones are not foreigners, but fellow citizens . . . of the household of God. God has always called for a separation of His people from other people (**Leviticus 20:24-26**). He desires to have them come together so that He can feed them and care for them in one fold (**John 10:16**).

1 Peter 3:21-22 Jesus rules all the redeemed of the human family, a substantial body of subjects, but angels and authorities and powers of the Heavenly realms are also subject unto him as He sits on the right hand of God. The kingdom of God cannot be observed (**Luke 17:20**). The Church of God is visible. It is a working organism which the world can see, talk to, or call on the telephone to ask for help.

A Law

Hebrews 8:10 To rule a kingdom one must have a law. God's law is His will. Under the Old Testament dispensation God gave Israel His law written on stone. But now, (**Hebrews 8:6**) or in this Gospel dispensation, He has put His laws into their mind and written them in their hearts. They become a part of His redeemed ones. His will is their will.

Ephesians 6:5-7 Since God's law is written in the hearts of the servants of Christ, they do His will from the heart. It is not contrary to them. It is a service of love. They love it and desire to obey it.

It is good that one be aware of his position before God, and the position God holds before him. It is good for one to be aware of the quality of what God offers him, and the quality of what he offers in return to God. Because the majority of people are not conscious of this, we have the tragic sight of the nominal modern church drifting along its human way, starving, blind and lifeless, and unaware of it. How can we avoid that fate? We must.

JUST A THOUGHT

"There is no darkness like that which comes from turning down light."

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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