

## **Chapter 7**

### ***KINGDOM OF GOD 3*** ***THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD***

- I. As we begin to look at the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom of God in this lesson, we need to remind ourselves of what it is that makes up the Kingdom of God.
  - A. The Kingdom of God is both an authority (reign) and a place (realm). It is the kingly rule of God over all persons, places, and things. ("Basileia" means to rule, reign) (1 Chronicles 29:11, Psalm 145:11-13)
  - B. It is the extension of God's eternal, immortal, and invisible rule in the heart and life of every true believer in Christ. It is spiritual and it is within us. In reality it is whatever we allow God to rule over in our individual hearts and lives. (1 Timothy 1:17; Luke 17:20-21)
  - C. The Kingdom of God is everlasting and has always been and always will be in existence. (Daniel 4:3)
  - D. The Kingdom of God is sovereign, ruling over all nations and kingdoms. (Psalm 103:19)
  - E. The Kingdom of God is not of the world system, nor is it nationalistic or materialistic. (John 18:36)
  - F. God's purpose has always been:
    - 1. To establish His rule in the earth and in the individual hearts of man. (Ephesians 3:10-11)
    - 2. To bring glory and honor to Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. (Psalm 86:9; Ephesians 3:20-21)
    - 3. There are other results of the purpose of God being established through the Kingdom of God. Some of them are the triumph of good, the defeat of evil, the redemption of man, the choosing of a people, and God's blessings on His people.
- II. What is the Church? Is it the building on the corner or the place that we go to for meetings, or is it meant to be more than that?
  - A. The word Church is derived from the Greek word "*ecclesia*," which means the "called out ones," and it consists of those who assemble together for divine worship through Jesus Christ. The Church is the instrument of God on earth for extending and growing His Kingdom. (Matthew 16:18-19, Matthew 18:18-19)
  - B. The Church is the community of the Kingdom of God or the instrument of the Kingdom of God, but not the totality of the Kingdom of God itself. The Church is a body of believers, whereas the Kingdom of God is the spiritual reign of God in the believers' hearts. (Revelation 1:6, Revelation 5:10)

- C. There are several points of relationship between the Kingdom of God and the Church that we need to look at in the lesson.
1. First of all the Kingdom of God in the hearts and lives of individuals creates the Church. In Matthew 16, when Peter stated his revelation that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus was then able to say for the first time; *I will build my church.* He had his first stone in Peter and Peter's revelation with which to begin the building process. When we come to this understanding or revelation of the rule of Jesus in our hearts, we begin to create the Church. (Matthew 16:15-20; 1 Peter 2:4-10)
  2. The Church witnesses or shows the Kingdom of God by taking on a visible form that the world can see. It is to be the light of the world, the salt of the earth. (Matthew 5:13-14; Matthew 10; Luke 10:9-10, 23-24)
  3. The Church is the instrument or vehicle of the Kingdom of God. The Church has the missionary task of sharing or preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the world in each succeeding generation. (Matthew 28:19-20)
  4. The Church can also be seen as the caretaker or representative of the Kingdom of God in our generation. Caretakers are always given the keys that allow them to function in their position. Jesus tells us that He has given to us, His Church the keys of the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 16:19)

III. God has always used a vehicle in the human realm for the advancement and establishment of His purpose on earth.

- A. From the beginning we see through scripture that God carried the Kingdom of God with Adam, Noah, Abraham to Israel, and then on to Jesus, and finally in this age to the Church. The Kingdom of God is a progressive revelation from God to man. With Adam, the beachhead fell and the purpose was apparently immobilized. The other vehicles that God used to carry the Kingdom of God succeeded or failed in one point or another. But right on schedule, *"In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son...."* Jesus is now in the process of building His Church, against which the gates of hell itself shall not stand.
- B. In this present age the Church is meant to be the expression and instrument of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is not confined to the boundaries of the Church. The Kingdom of God is spiritual and so works inwardly in the lives of individuals as well as outwardly through the life and function of the Church. The inward working (like leaven) cannot be seen by the world, but the outward working through the Church (like the mustard seed) can be seen. (Matthew 21:43; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

IV. God has always had a Master Plan for the Kingdom of God to be established and functioning in this world as well as the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God in the new heaven and the new earth.

- A. **WHAT** is being established? It is the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 4:17)
- B. **WHO** is establishing the Kingdom of God? The Church is the vehicle that is to be establishing the Kingdom of God in the earth for this present age. (Matthew 16:18)

- C. **WHERE** is the Kingdom of God being established in this present age? It is to be established on the earth. (Matthew 6:10)
  - D. **WHEN** is the Kingdom of God to be established? The Kingdom of God on the earth in this present age is to be established now. (2 Corinthians 6:2)
  - E. **HOW** is the Kingdom of God being established in the church in this present age? There are five keys that will allow us to understand this better. As we worship God, He builds His throne (increases His kingship in our hearts and lives). The more knowledge and understanding of God's Kingdom principles we have in our lives the more the Kingdom of God can be established. As there is Pastoral Care given in the church, the people see the truths of the Kingdom and are more able to begin functioning in their place in the church. Christ's authority (the use of the kingdom keys) is to be manifested to and through the church. The Gospel outreach or missionary task will extend the Kingdom of God to all those who will repent, believe, and receive.
  - F. **WHY** is the Kingdom of God to be established? The Kingdom of God is to be established so that God's glory will be fully manifest in His people forever. (Ephesians 3:20-21)
- V. In all of this we need to see and understand the balance that there is to be between the Kingdom of God and the Church in this present age. If we only see the church, the vision becomes unrelated to the overall plan of. We will begin to see the church as a fragmented, stop gap measure and it will lose its continuity. But if we only see the ultimate Kingdom of God, the Kingdom will become unrealistic, futuristic, and unrelated to present human events. (Hebrew 12:28)
- VI. What is the gospel of the Kingdom of God? The word gospel is used 104 times in the New Testament. Over 40 of the times it is used it is directly related to or associated with preaching or with telling. What is the Good News or the gospel? The Good News or gospel tells of God's grace or salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. We must be careful to share the gospel of the Kingdom. The Kingdom gospel is not just a gospel of the Savior but of the Lord. This gospel tells about the Lordship, the government, the necessary submission to the rule of, and the transferring of our ruling in our lives to the ruling of God in our lives. (Matthew 24:14 Mark 1:1, Mark 1:14, Acts 8:12, Acts 20:24)

This Kingdom of God gospel must be preached or proclaimed to the world. Good news is meant to be proclaimed. The whole idea is to get it to the people; to the world. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. There is power to produce change in the proclaiming of the gospel. If we preach, proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom (the whole gospel), it will produce Kingdom living now in the lives of individuals. (Isaiah 61:1-2, Matthew 24:14)

### **QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION**

#### *Chapter 7     Kingdom of God 3: The Church and the Kingdom of God*

1. As you look at the story in Matthew 16 of Jesus and Peter, can you see how the revelation Peter had of the Lordship of Jesus became the beginning place (the stone) Jesus needed to create or build the church? How does this/should this work in the church today?
2. What are some of the dangers of not seeing or understanding the balance between the church in

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this present age and the Kingdom of God?