

# The Kingdom and the Church

## Ye Must Be Born Again - Part Three

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The terms "kingdom" and "church" identify the people of God in this dispensation. Much discussion, disagreement and debate have existed among brethren over the past sixty or more years about the alleged differences between the kingdom and the church. There are other phases of the premillennial issue that could be discussed, but we will confine this study to the kingdom and the church. I shall limit my efforts to a study of the two terms to show the significance in their reference to God's people.

Do the terms "kingdom" and "church" refer to different institutions and people? If so, which was established first? What is the difference? Does membership in one make that individual a member of the other? These questions are pertinent to the objectives of this study.

The word of God is the only competent authority to determine the accuracy of prophecy and fulfillment, and the historical data relating to this broad subject, and to it we shall appeal.

My conviction, deeply rooted in the inspired revelation of God, is that the kingdom of Christ and the church of Christ are but two different expressions for the same body of people in the same relationship to Jesus Christ, and subject to the same law of Christ. I present the following evidence for your serious consideration.

### **Who Will NOT Enter the Kingdom of Heaven?**

1. **Those who have never been born again.** ". . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). ". . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).
2. **Those who are unrighteous.** "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). "All unrighteousness is sin . . ." ALL unrighteousness is sin (1 John 5:17). There is no unrighteousness in God (Psalm 92:15). All unrighteousness is sin (Psalm 119:172).

Unrighteousness is the opposite of righteousness. Righteousness is obedience to the commandments of God. Peter said to Cornelius, "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). The one who works righteousness is righteous. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous" (1 John 3:7).

3. **Those whose righteousness does not exceed the scribes and Pharisees.** "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20).

The verse before this says: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

4. **Those who practice the works of the flesh.** "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).
5. **Those who love money and are selfish and greedy shall not enter the kingdom.** "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:23-24). "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:23-25). A rich young ruler asked Jesus what to do to inherit eternal life. Jesus told him to obey the commands of the law under which he lived: the law of Moses. He said he had keep all these from his youth up. Jesus told him to sell all that he had and give to the poor, and come follow him. When he heard this he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich. "And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Luke 18:24). The love and greed for money will keep one out of heaven.
6. **Those who are on the left side in the day of judgment.** "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whore-mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

### **Who Will Enter the Kingdom of Heaven?**

1. **Those who have been "born again" of water and of the Spirit.** "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).
2. **Those who are converted and are humble as children.** "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called

a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:1-3).

3. **Those who do the will of the Father in heaven.** Jesus said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).
4. **Those who continue in faith and with tribulation enter into kingdom.** "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).
5. **Those on the right hand of the king in the judgment.** "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34).

It is a serious matter to prepare to meet God in the judgment. No preparation can be made after we leave this life. "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12).

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