

- I. **The kingdom of God is the realm of the divine life**—John 3:3, 5, 15-16; 18:36; 1:12-13:
- A. The New Testament regards the life of God as the life, that is, as the only life that is truly life and that can rightly be considered as life—Eph. 4:18.
 - B. The Lord Jesus came that we might have life, and for this He laid down His soul life to release the divine life from within Him, and in His resurrection He imparted the divine life into God’s chosen and redeemed people—Matt. 16:24-26; Luke 9:24-25.
 - C. The kingdom of God is an organism constituted with God’s life as the realm for His ruling, in which He reigns by His life and expresses Himself as the Divine Trinity in the divine life—John 3:5; 15:1-8, 26.
 - D. The kingdom of God is God in Christ as the totality of life with all its activities—John 11:25; 10:10b; 14:6.
 - E. The unique way to enter into the kingdom of God is to receive God as life and gain God Himself; this is regeneration—John 3:5, 16; 1 John 5:11-12:
 - The kingdom of God is a divine realm to be entered into, a realm that requires the divine life; hence, for us to see or enter into the kingdom of God, God requires regeneration—John 3:3, 5.
 - Because through regeneration we receive the divine life, the life of God, regeneration is the unique entrance into the kingdom of God—John 3:3, 5, 15.
 - 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.
 - F. The sense of life is the feeling, the consciousness, of the divine life within us—Rom. 8:6; Eph. 4:18-19:
 - The source of the sense of life is the divine life, the law of life, the Holy Spirit, Christ abiding in us, and God operating in us—Rom. 8:2, 10-11; Phil. 2:13.
 - The sense of life involves both the feeling of death and the feeling of life and peace—Rom. 8:6; Isa. 26:3.
 - The sense of life makes us know whether we are living in the natural life or in the divine life and whether we are living in the flesh or in the spirit—Rom. 8:6.
 - In living a grafted life, we should live according to the principle of life, not according to the principle of right and wrong—Gen. 2:9, 16-17; 2 Cor. 11:2-3.
 - If we would follow the sense of life, we need to live in a calm, steady, and unhurried way, living an ordinary life in the divine dispensing—John 14:27; 16:33; 1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Thes. 3:16; Isa. 30:15; 32:17.
 - The sense of life guides us, governs us, controls us, and directs us—Luke 1:79; Rom. 3:17; Prov. 21:1.
 - G. The believers receive the divine life by believing into the Son, in whom the divine life is and who Himself is life, and by being born of God, they are born of the Spirit—John 3:6.
 - H. The believers have life not in themselves apart from God but in the organic union with the Lord; that is, they have life only in Christ—John 15:4-5; Rom. 8:2.
 - I. The divine life in the believers is the life of the Body of Christ, and thus it is not an individual life but a corporate life, Christ as the life of the Body experienced and enjoyed in the Body—1 Cor. 12:26-27; Col. 3:4.
 - J. For eternity the believers will experience and enjoy the life of God—Rev. 22:2.
 - K. To grow in the divine life is the increase of the element of God, the increase of the stature of Christ, and the expanding of the Holy Spirit—Eph. 4:15-16.
 - L. The growth in the divine life is the decrease of the human element, the breaking of the natural life, and the subduing of every part of the soul—1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; Col. 2:19.

II. The kingdom of God is not only the realm of the divine life and of the divine dominion but also the realm of the divine species, in which are all the divine things—John 3:3, 5; 18:36:

- A. In John 3 the kingdom of God refers more to the species of God than to the reign of God.
- B. God became man to enter into the human species, and man becomes God in life and nature but not in the Godhead to enter into the divine species—John 1:1, 12-14; 2 Pet. 1:4.
- C. In order to enter into the divine realm, the realm of the divine species, we need to be born of God to have the divine life and the divine nature—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6; 2 Pet. 1:4:
 - God created man not according to man's kind but in His image and according to His likeness to be God's kind, God's species—Gen. 1:26.
 - The believers, who are born of God by regeneration to be His children in His life and nature but not in His Godhead, are more in God's kind than Adam was—John 1:12-13:
 - Adam had only the outward appearance of God without the inward reality—John 1:12-14.
 - We, the believers in Christ and the children of God, have the reality of the divine life, and we are being transformed and conformed to the Lord's image in our entire being—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2; 8:29.
 - Our second birth, regeneration, caused us to enter into the kingdom of God to become the species of God—John 3:3, 5-6.
 - All the children of God are in the divine realm of the divine species—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5.
 - The believers are God-men in the divine species, that is, in the kingdom of God—1 John 3:1a; John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5.
- D. In the Gospel of John we see many aspects of the believers' living in the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine species:
 - "Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace"—John 1:16.
 - "The water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life"—John 4:14b.
 - "He who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me"—John 6:57b.
 - "As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love"—John 15:9.
 - "These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full"—John 15:11.
 - "He who does the truth comes to the light, that his works may be manifested that they are wrought in God"—John 3:21.
 - "An hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness"—John 4:23-24.
 - "If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you"—John 15:7.
 - "In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you"—John 14:20.
 - "Love one another even as I have loved you"—John 15:12b.

I. The kingdom of God is the realm of the divine life

- God's life is the only life that can rightly be considered as life and is truly life. The Lord Jesus came that we might have life. For this He laid down His soul-life to release the divine life from within Him, and in His resurrection He imparted the divine life into God's chosen and redeemed people. The kingdom of God is God in Christ as the totality of life with all its activities. It is an organism constituted with God's life as the realm for His ruling, in which He reigns by His life and expresses Himself as the Divine Trinity in the divine life.
- We need to be regenerated, receive God as life and gain God Himself, as the unique entrance into the kingdom of God. The divine life in our spirit knows the kingdom of God. The sense of life is the feeling, the consciousness, of the divine life within us. The source of this sense is the divine life, the law of life, the Holy Spirit, Christ abiding in us, and God operating in us. It involves both the feeling of death when live in the natural life and in the flesh; and the feeling of life and peace when live in the divine life and in the spirit. We need to live in a calm, steady, and unhurried way, living an ordinary life in the divine dispensing in order to follow the sense of life which guides, governs, controls, and directs us that we live according to the principle of life and not the principle of right and wrong.
- By believing into the Son, in whom the divine life is and who Himself is life, and by being born of God, we are born of the Spirit. We are in the organic union with the Lord and have life not in ourselves apart from God but have life only in Christ. The divine life is not an individual life but a corporate life, the life of the Body of Christ, Christ as the life of the Body experienced and enjoyed in the Body for eternity. The growth in the divine life is the breaking of the natural life, and the subduing of every part of the soul for the increase of God's element, the increase of the stature of Christ, and the expanding of the Holy Spirit. [John :3] ...Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. [John 11:25] Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live. [John 3:5-6] ... Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. [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. [1 Cor. 12:26] And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it. [Col. 3:4] When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory. [Col. 2:19] ...holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

II. The kingdom of God is not only the realm of the divine life and of the divine dominion but also the realm of the divine species, in which are all the divine things

- The kingdom of God also refers to the species of God as in John 3. God became man to enter into the human species that man becomes God in life and nature but not in the Godhead to enter into the divine species. We need to be born of God by regeneration to enter into this divine realm of the divine species and be His children in His life and nature. God created man according to His image and His likeness to be God's kind, God's species. Adam had only the outward appearance of God while we children of God, have the reality of the divine life, and are being transformed and conformed to the Lord's image in our entire being to be God-men in the kingdom of God. The Gospel of John shows many aspects of the believers' living in the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine species, they: ①receive God's fullness and grace; ②drink Him as a fountain of water springing up into eternal life; ③eat and live because of Him; ④abide in His love; ⑤receive His joy that our joy may be made full; ⑥do the truth and be wrought in God; ⑦worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness; ⑧abide in Christ that His words abide in us; ⑨abide mutually with the Father and the Son; ⑩love one another as God has loved us. [John 1:12-13] But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. [Rom. 8:29] Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers.

Why cannot God's mighty life deal with our little tempers? The question is not one of little problems or big problems; the question is this: Who is on the throne? You are always hoping God will confine Himself to the throne in heaven while you occupy the throne in your life. Then you are bothered by your weaknesses and sins, so you call upon Him to help you. You cry out to Him: "Are You not the Mighty One? Have You not promised to answer prayer? Can You bear to see Your child living a life of defeat?" Yes, He can bear to see you defeated, and He will let you go on being defeated until you realize that He has put His life within you in order to establish His kingdom within you.

<Excerpts from "The Kingdom and the Church", Chapter 2, "Life and the Kingdom">

The gospel presents these three things—the kingdom, the blood, and the life. The kingdom makes its demands, but by virtue of the cleansing that comes through the precious blood and the power that comes through the divine life, even we who by nature are fallen creatures can live the kingdom life. Praise God, the very source of life is within us—even God Himself! The God who from the throne issues His demands, Himself meets His demands. From the throne He requires that we be subject to Him, and from within He supplies the life that can be subject to Him. This takes no toll of our strength, but it does require our cooperation. There is no need for us to do, but there is the need for us to let Him do.

Do you see? The requirements of the kingdom can never be met by man, and God never expected man to meet them. The demands He makes, He Himself meets—and that is the grace revealed in the New Testament!

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