

**International Training
for Elders and Responsible Ones**

Warsaw, Poland October 4-6, 2024

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
LIVING IN THE REALITY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

(Friday—First Morning Session)

Message One
**The Kingdom of God—
the Realm of the Divine Life and of the Divine Species**

RK Hymns: 947

Scripture Reading: John 3:5-6; 18:36; 1:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:4

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

I. The kingdom of God is the realm of the divine life—John 3:3, 5, 15-16; 18:36; 1:12-13:

- John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
- John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here.
- John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
- John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 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.
Eph 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;
- B. The Lord Jesus came that we might have life, and for this He laid down His soullife 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.
Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny

- himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
- Matt 16:25 For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.
- Matt 16:26 For what shall a man be profited if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul-life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul-life?
- Luke 9:24 For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake, this one shall save it.
- Luke 9:25 For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world but loses or forfeits himself?
- 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.
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- John 15:1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.
- John 15:2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit.
- John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.
- John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.
- John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- John 15:6 If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
- John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.
- John 15:8 In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples.
- John 15:26 But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;
- D. The kingdom of God is God in Christ as the totality of life with all its activities— 11:25; 10:10b; 14:6.
- 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 10:10b ... I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.
- John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
- E. The unique way to enter into the kingdom of God is to receive God as life and gain God Himself; this is regeneration—3:5, 16; 1 John 5:11-12:
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
- 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
- 1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
1. 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.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 2. Because through regeneration we receive the divine life, the life of God, regeneration is the unique entrance into the kingdom of God—vv. 3, 5, 15.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.
3. We have been born into the kingdom of God, and now the divine life in our spirit knows the kingdom of God—vv. 5-6.
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- F. The sense of life is the feeling, the consciousness, of the divine life within us— Rom. 8:6; Eph. 4:18-19:
- Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
- Eph 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;
- Eph 4:19 Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness.
1. 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.
- 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 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
- Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
- Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.
2. The sense of life involves both the feeling of death and the feeling of life and peace—Rom. 8:6; Isa. 26:3.
- Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
- Isa 26:3 You will keep the steadfast of mind / In perfect peace / Because he trusts in You.
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.
- Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
4. 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.
- Gen 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- Gen 2:16 And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may eat freely,
- Gen 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of it you shall not eat; for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.
- 2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- 2 Cor 11:3 But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.
5. 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.
- John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.
- John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have affliction, but take courage; I have overcome the world.

- 1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Thes 3:16 Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace continually in every way. The Lord be with you all.
- Isa 30:15 For thus says the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, / In returning and rest you will be saved; / In quietness and in trust will be your strength; / But you were not willing,
- Isa 32:17 And the work of righteousness will be peace, / And the result of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.
6. The sense of life guides us, governs us, controls us, and directs us—Luke 1:79; Rom. 3:17; Prov. 21:1.
- Luke 1:79 To shine upon those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.
- Rom 3:17 And the way of peace they have not known.
- Prov 21:1 The king's heart is like streams of water in the hand of Jehovah; / He turns it wherever He wishes.
- 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.
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- 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—15:4-5; Rom. 8:2.
- John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.
- John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- J. For eternity the believers will experience and enjoy the life of God—Rev. 22:2.
- Rev 22:2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.
- 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.
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- 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.
- 1 Pet 2:2 As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation,
- 2 Pet 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and unto the day of eternity. Amen.
- Col 2:19 And not 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—John 3:3, 5; 18:36:

- John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here.

A. In John 3 the kingdom of God refers more to the species of God than to the reign of God.
John 3 be omitted.

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—1:1, 12-14; 2 Pet. 1:4.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

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:

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

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John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

1. 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.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

2. 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:

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

a. Adam had only the outward appearance of God without the inward reality—vv. 12-14.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become

- children of God, to those who believe into His name,
 John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- b. 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.
 2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
 Rom 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.
 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;
- c. Our second birth, regeneration, caused us to enter into the kingdom of God to become the species of God—John 3:3, 5-6.
 John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
 John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- d. All the children of God are in the divine realm of the divine species— 1:12-13; 3:3, 5.
 John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
 John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
 John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- e. 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.
 1 John 3:1a Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. ...
 John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
 John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
 John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- 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:
1. "Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace"—1:16.
 2. "The water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life"—4:14b.
 3. "He who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me"—6:57b.
 4. "As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love"—15:9.
 5. "These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may

- be made full”—v. 11.
6. “He who does the truth comes to the light, that his works may be manifested that they are wrought in God”—3:21.
 7. “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”—4:23-24.
 8. “If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you”—15:7.
 9. “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you”—14:20.
 10. “Love one another even as I have loved you”—15:12b.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

LIFE AND THE KINGDOM

Scripture Reading: Matt. 5:20, 48; 7:21; 19:23-26; John 3:3; Rev. 22:1-2

The Scriptures, from beginning to end, associate life with authority. When man is first mentioned, these two matters are both introduced. In the first chapter of Genesis the question of authority is brought up. When God created man, He said, “Have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (v. 28). As soon as God created Adam, He bestowed on him the right to govern the entire earth. But Genesis 1 does not tell us all that transpired between God and man when man was created, so Genesis 2 supplements the record. Genesis 1 tells us that God wanted man to exercise dominion over the earth on His behalf, and it tells us also what sort of man this man must be who is to wield authority for God. He must be “in the image of God” (v. 27). The man who is to rule the earth for God must be a man according to God’s “likeness” (v. 26)—that is, like God—so that when you have seen this man who is in dominion, you have, as it were, seen God Himself. The man who is to govern the earth for God is not merely one who wields authority; he is one who wields authority as God’s representative. That is a tremendous thing. That is a transcendent thing, and it demands a transcendent life for its accomplishment. A supernatural task requires a supernatural life. It is necessary for us to grasp this point—that if man is to represent God and to exercise dominion for God on the earth, then man must possess a supernatural life. He cannot possibly bear so lofty a responsibility in the strength of his own natural life. If he is to wield divine authority and be a divine representative, he must possess the divine life.

Therefore, as soon as Genesis 1 has presented a man in the divine likeness and in the exercise of divine authority, Genesis 2 presents the tree of life. God was indicating that He would have man partake of the tree of life so that he might possess the divine life and thereby be enabled to fulfill the responsibilities of his ministry. If only the uncreated life of God could enter a human creature, then that human creature would be able to represent the Lord of creation, and that human creature would be able to rule the earth on behalf of the Lord of creation.

Do you see that at the very outset the Bible has linked authority and life? And at the end of the Bible these two are still linked. In the final two chapters of Revelation you see life issuing from the throne—and the throne represents authority (22:1-2). This matter of authority is entirely a matter of life. If you have the life, you have the authority. “Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” and “unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:3, 5). If we are to have part in the kingdom, we must be born anew. We must become possessors of a life other than the life we have by nature. To use the Old Testament illustration, the Adam of Genesis 1 with his earthly life must receive the heavenly life of Genesis 2. Do not think that we must be born again because we have sinned. We must be born again because we need to possess a

life that we do not possess by natural birth. Of course, sinners need to be born again, but even if man had not fallen, the new birth would still be necessary. Our Lord told Nicodemus he needed to receive the life of God so that he might become a partaker in the kingdom of God. Do you see that here again life and the kingdom are linked together?

You may say, “Oh, it’s all very good, but it’s all beyond me. I truly want to submit to the authority of God, but I simply can’t. I’m too weak.” Yes, we are all too weak, for we are all children of Adam; we are all children of dust; we are all very earthy. And earthen things are so fragile. With just a little knock they go to pieces. That is what we are like. And we are not just feeble creatures; we are fallen creatures. We are rebels by nature. We have no strength when it comes to submitting to God, but we have lots of strength when it comes to rebelling against Him. We have to confess that our natural life is a rebellious life, and it cannot possibly submit to God. The life we have by our natural birth is totally incapable of yielding to His authority. Our natural life is incapable, totally incapable, of coming under the government of God. When the disciples heard the Lord speaking about the kingdom, they heaved a sigh and said, “Who can?” And the Lord answered, “With men this is impossible.”

Let me use an illustration here. A dog cannot fly. To a dog, flight is a sheer impossibility. But what a dog cannot do, a bird can do with ease. It is the simplest thing for a bird to soar up into the sky. The life of a dog is a life that cannot fly; the life of a bird is a life that flies with ease. The bird has the kind of nature that flies, and it would suffer intensely if you did not let it fly. As for the dog, if you want it to crawl into a hole, it can do that, or if you want it to climb up a hill, it can do that too. But if you ask it to fly, it simply cannot. It is a matter of life. Our corrupt natural life cannot be subject to God. We need another life for that. We need the life of God. The new birth is the coming of God into man so that what before was impossible to man now becomes possible. “With God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26). Our problem with authority is no problem to God. When we have His life, it is the most natural thing to come under His authority. It is as spontaneous as for a bird to fly. If we suppress the divine life within us and do not let it submit to the divine authority, then we will suffer as a caged bird suffers. But when we submit to the divine control, we are wonderfully released. The more we submit, the more released we are until, as Isaiah puts it, we can “mount up with wings like eagles” (Isa. 40:31). Brothers and sisters, do you see that the whole question of the kingdom is a question of life?

The demands of the kingdom are terrific, but the provision of the divine life is equal to all its demands. A full gospel presents the kingdom with its requirements. It also presents the precious blood to cleanse from defilement and the life to supply the power that makes us partakers in 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 on the throne who issues His demands is the One who meets His own 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. Otherwise, how could the demands of the kingdom ever be met? Listen to these lofty demands: “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist him who is evil; rather whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And to him who wishes to sue you and take your tunic, yield to him your cloak also” (Matt. 5:38-40). In my youth, when I read those words, I thought, “Oh, I could not possibly do that. And never in all my life will I be able, so I’ll have to give up being a Christian. I can’t be a false Christian, and I can’t be a true one, so I can’t be one at all. There’s no way out.” But a voice within me said, “You can’t help being a Christian.” I wanted to draw back, but I could not draw back; I wanted to go forward, but I could not go forward. Oh, the misery of it! For a long time I was in great perplexity, but one day God

showed me that what I was trying to do was an utter impossibility, and He had never meant me to try. Imagine trying to attain to this: “You therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” (v. 48). That day light dawned, and I was able to praise God that He was my Father, and that the Father’s life in me could enable even me to be perfect. The question is not one of our ability to do but of giving our consent to His doing. He is impotent if we refuse consent. And that is where the trouble often lies—He is willing, but we are unwilling.

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. In the Old Testament the law made its demands on man, but in the New Testament it is the kingdom that makes its demands. The demands of the kingdom are far more exacting than the demands of the law. The demands of the law proved how utterly impotent man was; now the demands of the kingdom prove, not how unable man is, but how able God is. There is no need for the demands of the kingdom to prove man’s inability, for that has been conclusively proved by the demands of the law. Today the requirements of the kingdom serve to demonstrate the infinite ability of God. He has become our life that in us He may meet all the demands His kingdom makes upon us.

It is important to realize that God’s life has been given for the sake of His kingdom. If we do not let Him set up His throne in our lives and assert His authority over us, His life cannot operate in us. God has put His life in us for the specific purpose of meeting the demands of His kingdom, and unless we allow Him to establish His kingdom in us, His life within us cannot function.

Let me use one or two illustrations. A sister came to me with her troubles, and after talking for a while, she said something like this: “I have really no problem except the problem of my own bad temper. I keep losing my temper with my husband and with my children. I have prayed and prayed about it, but the more I pray for victory, the more my temper gets the better of me. Why is it? I know that the Lord is my Savior; why doesn’t He save me from my bad temper? I know the Lord hears prayer; why doesn’t He hear my prayers about my bad temper? I know His life is mighty; why can’t His mighty life overcome this little temper of mine?” All that she said was very reasonable. The Lord’s life within us is a mighty life, and the Lord is a hearer and answerer of prayer. Why then is that little temper not overcome? Please do not misunderstand me when I say that the life of the Lord has been put within you and me to meet the needs of God’s great kingdom, not to meet the need of our little temper. So I said to that sister, “Who is Lord of your life, you or the Lord? Is the authority in your hands or in His?” And when she reasoned again about her temper, I asked again, “Who is on the throne of your life, you or God?” When I pressed the point and refused her a loophole to escape, at long last the answer came: “I am in charge of my own life.” Then I said, “Sister, what need is there to say anything more? You are on the throne, and you want the Lord to help you. If He is not in the place of authority in your life, how can He do anything for you?”

That is our whole trouble today. Why cannot God’s mighty life deal with our little temper? The question is not one of little problems or big problems; the question is this: Who is on the throne? You are always hoping that 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.

You must let Him have the throne. Let Him take control. Let Him establish His kingdom in your life. Then every foe will be overcome. There will be no need then to pray about your weaknesses, for if He has His place on the throne of your life, every foe will be vanquished. In the Old Testament days, when Jehovah had His place as King over His people, all their enemies were subject to them, but when they refused to let Him have dominion, the enemies gained the ascendancy. Then all their cries were unavailing. Their enemies took the holy city, destroyed the temple, carried off the Ark, and took God’s

own people captive.

A brother once came to me and said something like this: “Why is it that my platform ministry is so weak? I pray a great deal about it. I sometimes fast and pray, and at times I spend a night in prayer before accepting a speaking invitation. Why am I still powerless?” My answer was the same as before: “Who is in control of your life?” That is the whole question. If you try to restrict God to the throne in heaven and refuse Him the throne in your life, all your cries for help will avail nothing. The question is not one of weakness or power; the question is one of the throne.

We read of the river of living water that “on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month” (Rev. 22:2). Wherever this river flowed, every need was met. But where did the river come from? “And he showed me a river of water of life, ...proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb” (v. 1). Life is always associated with the throne. When we yield to God’s authority and let Him establish His kingdom in our lives, then we are maintained in victory and in fullness of life, for then we too are in authority. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1957, vol. 3, “The Kingdom and the Church,” pp. 255-260)