

International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones

Warsaw, Poland October 4-6, 2024

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

(Lord's Day—Second Morning Session)

Message Eight Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and Discipling the Nations

MC Hymns: 1299

Scripture Reading: Matt. 12:28; 24:14; 28:18-20;
Mark 4:26-29; Luke 17:21; Rev. 6:1-2; 14:4

Matt 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Matt 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
Matt 28:20 Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age.
Mark 4:26 And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth,
Mark 4:27 And sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and lengthens-how, he does not know.
Mark 4:28 The earth bears fruit by itself: first a blade, then an ear, then full grain in the ear.
Mark 4:29 But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he sends forth the sickle, because the harvest has come.
Luke 17:21 Nor will they say, Behold, here it is! or, There! For behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.
Rev 6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying like the sound of thunder, Come.
Rev 6:2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he who sits on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer.
Rev 14:4 These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

I. We need to follow the Lamb wherever He may go (Rev. 14:4) to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the whole inhabited earth for the propagation and development of the seed, the gene, of the kingdom to consummate this age — Matt. 24:14; Mark 4:26:

Rev 14:4 These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
Mark 4:26 And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth,
A. The kingdom of God is Christ Himself—Luke 17:21; Matt. 12:28:
Luke 17:21 Nor will they say, Behold, here it is! or, There! For behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.
Matt 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

1. The Triune God inhumanity (Col. 2:9) is the seed, the gene, of the kingdom of God to

be sown into God's chosen people so that He might grow in them, live in them, and be expressed from within them to develop into God's ruling realm (Mark 4:26-29; 1 Cor. 3:6-9).

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
Mark 4:26 And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth,
Mark 4:27 And sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and lengthens-how, he does not know.
Mark 4:28 The earth bears fruit by itself: first a blade, then an ear, then full grain in the ear.
Mark 4:29 But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he sends forth the sickle, because the harvest has come.
1 Cor 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.
1 Cor 3:7 So then neither is he who plants anything nor he who waters, but God who causes the growth.
1 Cor 3:8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.
1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

2. The intrinsic element of the entire teaching of the New Testament is that the Triune God has been incarnated in order to be sown into His chosen people and develop within them into a kingdom.

3. God's goal is the full development of the kingdom of God:

- a. In the Gospels we have the sowing of the seed, the gene, of the kingdom—Mark 4:3, 14; Matt. 9:35.

Mark 4:3 Listen! Behold, the sower went out to sow.
Mark 4:14 The sower sows the word.
Matt 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness.

- b. In the Acts we have the propagation and spreading of this sowing by thousands of sowers who have received the seed, the gene, of the kingdom—6:7; 12:24; 19:20.

Acts 6:7 And the word of God grew, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly; and a large number of the priests obeyed the faith.
Acts 12:24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.
Acts 19:20 Thus, the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

- c. In the Epistles we see the growing of the seed, the gene, of the kingdom—1 Cor. 3:6, 9b; 2 Pet. 1:3-11.

1 Cor 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.
1 Cor 3:9b ... you are God's cultivated land, God's building.
2 Pet 1:3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,
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.
2 Pet 1:5 And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge;
2 Pet 1:6 And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;
2 Pet 1:7 And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.
2 Pet 1:8 For these things, existing in you and abounding, constitute you neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2 Pet 1:9 For he in whom these things are not present is blind, being shortsighted, having forgotten the cleansing of his past sins.
2 Pet 1:10 Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble.

- 2 Pet 1:11 For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly and bountifully supplied to you.
- d. The harvest of this seed is found in the book of Revelation with the reaping of the firstfruits and the harvest—14:4, 15-16; Mark 4:29; Matt. 13:39.
- Rev 14:4 These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
- Rev 14:15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Send forth Your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come because the harvest of the earth is ripe.
- Rev 14:16 And He who sat on the cloud thrust His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped.
- Mark 4:29 But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he sends forth the sickle, because the harvest has come.
- Matt 13:39 And the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is the consummation of the age; and the reapers are angels.
- e. The millennial kingdom will be the full development of the seed, the gene, of the kingdom with the Son as the King and all the overcomers as His co-kings, the “kingdom-gene people”—Rev. 20:4, 6.
- Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.
- Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
- f. The New Jerusalem, God’s eternal kingdom, is the fullest development of the kingdom seed, the gene, sown by Jesus the Nazarene in the four Gospels—Rev. 21:2; 22:1, 3, 5b.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
- Rev 22:3 And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him;
- Rev 22:5b ... and they will reign forever and ever.
- B. In His kingly ministry for the establishing of His heavenly kingdom in the stage of His incarnation, the Lord Jesus considered Himself a Physician, a Shepherd, and the Lord of the harvest—Matt. 9:11-13, 35-38:
- Matt 9:11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?
- Matt 9:12 Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.
- Matt 9:13 But go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.
- Matt 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness.
- Matt 9:36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.
- Matt 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, The harvest is great, but the workers few;
- Matt 9:38 Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest.
1. He came to minister as a Physician, to heal, recover, enliven, and save people that they might be reconstituted to be His new and heavenly citizens, with whom He could

establish His heavenly kingdom on this corrupted earth— vv. 11-13.

Matt 9:11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?

Matt 9:12 Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.

Matt 9:13 But go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

2. He was moved with compassion for the people, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd; He saw that they were afflicted, in anguish, and in a distressed condition in which they were homeless, wandering from place to place, and helpless—vv. 35-36.

Matt 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness.

Matt 9:36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.

3. The King of the heavenly kingdom considered Himself not only the Shepherd of the sheep but also the Lord of the harvest, the One who owns the crop; because the harvest is great but the workers few, we must beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest—vv. 37-38; cf. 1 Cor. 3:6-9.

Matt 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, The harvest is great, but the workers few;

Matt 9:38 Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest.

1 Cor 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.

1 Cor 3:7 So then neither is he who plants anything nor he who waters, but God who causes the growth.

1 Cor 3:8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

- C. In His kingly ministry for the establishing of His heavenly kingdom in the stage of His incarnation, the Son as the center of the Divine Trinity was altogether not by Himself, for Himself, or to Himself; whatever He did was by the Spirit of God and for the kingdom of God the Father—Matt. 12:28:

Matt 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

1. This move of the Divine Trinity with the divine coordination shows us the harmony, beauty, and excellency in the Divine Trinity and is an excellent and beautiful pattern that the Head has set up for our coordination as members of His Body; today in the church life, the Body of Christ has not been built up adequately because of a shortage of the proper coordination.

2. What we do should not be done merely by ourselves but by some others; furthermore, what we do should not be for ourselves but for the interest, the right, of God on this earth.

- D. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations before the end of this age (24:14); this preaching, signified by the whitehorse of the first seal in Revelation 6:1-2, will be a sign of the consummation of this age:

Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Rev 6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying like the sound of thunder, Come.

Rev 6:2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he who sits on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer.

1. God's unique purpose in this age is to have the gospel preached so that the church as the Body of Christ might be built up to consummate the New Jerusalem—Eph. 3:8-

11; Rom. 1:1.

Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,

Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Rom 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

2. The overcomers who preach the gospel of the glory of Christ become the riders of the whitehorse—Rev. 6:2; 19:11, 13-14.

Rev 6:2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he who sits on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer.

Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

II. The heavenly King sent His disciples with His authority to disciple all the nations, making them the kingdom people for the establishing of His kingdom, which is the church today on this earth—Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 14:17:

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Matt 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Matt 28:20 Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age.

Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- A. To disciple the nations is to baptize them into the death of Christ (6:3-4), into Christ Himself (Gal. 3:27), into the Triune God (Matt. 28:19), and into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13):

Rom 6:3 Or are you ignorant that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

Rom 6:4 We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

Gal 3:27 For as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Matt 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

1 Cor 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

1. The water, signifying the death of Christ with His burial, may be considered a tomb in which the baptized ones' old history is ended.
2. Since the death of Christ is included in Christ, and since Christ is the very embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9) and the Triune God is one with the Body of Christ, to baptize new believers is to terminate their old life and to germinate them with new life, the eternal life of the Triune God, for the Body of Christ; this is to baptize people out of their life into the Body life for the kingdom of the heavens.

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

- B. To disciple the nations is to teach them the divine truths in the divine and mystical realm so that they may learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus—Matt. 28:20; Eph. 4:20-21:

Matt 28:20 Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you

- all the days until the consummation of the age.
- Eph 4:20 But you did not so learn Christ,
- Eph 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,
1. We are being disciplined from being a natural man to being a God-man, living the divine life by denying our natural life according to the model of Christ as the first God-man—Matt. 11:28-30.

Matt 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matt 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.
 2. All the divine and mystical teachings of Christ are not only His unveiling and enlightening but also His nourishing to us for our growth and maturity in His divine life so that the eternal economy of God may be consummated through us—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.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE INTRINSIC ELEMENT OF THE GOSPEL

My burden is that we may see what the kingdom of God is. It is crucial for us to see that the gospel is the gospel of the kingdom of God. This gospel is actually the God-man, Jesus Christ, sown into us as a life seed, a seed which is the seed of the kingdom. This seed is now growing and developing in us. Eventually, a kingdom will issue from the growth and development of this seed.

If we say that in the Lord's recovery we are practicing the kingdom life, we need to realize that this kingdom is not something of organization. No, this kingdom is something of the inner life, a life which is actually the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He has been sown into our being as a seed, and now He is growing and developing within us. Praise the Lord that this seed is in each one of us and is now growing and developing in us! The growth and development of this seed will issue in the kingdom. Furthermore, this kingdom will bring us to the destination so that God's goal maybe reached. Do you know what this goal is? This goal is the full development of the kingdom of God.

We have pointed out that the Gospel of Mark records the Lord's activities. In the first three chapters we see the contents of the gospel service (1:14-45), the ways of carrying out the gospel service (2:1—3:6), and the auxiliary acts of the gospel service (3:7-35). Now in chapter 4 we see what the gospel is. According to this chapter, the gospel is the seed of life sown into those who believe in the Lord Jesus so that this seed might grow, develop, and issue in the kingdom. Apparently, the gospel is a matter of proclaiming, teaching, casting out demons, healing the sick, and cleansing the lepers. Actually, the intrinsic element of the gospel is the divine seed, the God-man, the incarnated God, sown into our being. This intrinsic element of the gospel has been neglected by many of today's Christians.

Within the gospel there is an inner seed, and this seed, the intrinsic element of the gospel, is the God-man. Whenever we preach the gospel, we need to minister Christ to those who listen to us and receive our word, for within the gospel there is an intrinsic element. Whenever a person receives the gospel, he receives God incarnate as the intrinsic element, the seed, of the gospel. This means that as long as a person receives the gospel, he receives the seed of the gospel. Through the gospel the incarnated God is sown into his being.

THE KINGDOM GENE

In order to make this matter clear, I would like to borrow a term from biology. This term is the

word *gene*. The Triune God inhumanity sown into our being is the gene of the kingdom. We know that without human genes it is impossible to have human life. Our birth, our being, and our existence all came from a gene. Now we must see that the Triune God inhumanity has been sown into us to be the gene of the kingdom. Praise the Lord that this gene is within us! Eventually, the kingdom will issue from this gene.

First, the kingdom is the issue of the gospel, and then it is the goal of the gospel. Between the issue and the goal we have the church. Do you know what the church is? The church is the continuation of the issue of the gene of the kingdom.

This understanding of the kingdom is certainly different from the superficial understanding of many Christians today. We have seen that one day the Triune God became a man named Jesus Christ, the God-man. In forgiving the paralytic in Mark 2, both the deity and the humanity of the Lord Jesus were manifested. Now this One, through the proclaiming of the gospel, has been sown into us. In order for us to contact Him today, there is no need for anyone to break through the roof as the zealous ones did in Mark 2. The Lord has been sown into our heart! The One who has been sown into us is the gene of the kingdom, the Triune God inhumanity. This wonderful One is our God, Lord, Savior, Redeemer, Master, and life.

Because the God-man as the gene of the kingdom has been sown into us, we spontaneously love one another and enjoy marvelous fellowship. We may say that the church in the Lord's recovery is the real melting pot of the different races, nationalities, and cultures. Actually, we are not only melted together—we are blended and mingled together. Do you know why we love one another? We love one another because of the gene that is within us. This gene contains the element with which we love one another.

Day by day the seed of the kingdom is growing and developing within us. I am burdened that we all be impressed with the fact that this seed, this gene, has been sown into us and that this is the Triune God incarnate, the very God inhumanity. The One who forgave the paralytic is now in us as the seed of the kingdom.

Oh, may we all be burdened to tell others this good news! We may forget many things, but we should all remember the gene that is within us. The Triune God inhumanity has been sown into us as a seed of life to grow, develop, and issue in the kingdom. The kingdom, then, is the issue of the gospel and will be the goal of the gospel. Between the issue and goal we have the church life as the continuation of the issue of the marvelous gene that is within us. (*Life-study of Mark*, pp. 124-128)

THE SEVEN SEALS

The First Four Seals—Four Horses with Their Riders, Running in a Four-horse Race

The first four seals are four horses with their riders, running in a four-horse race (Rev. 6:1-8). All four riders are not real persons but personified things.

The First Seal—a White Horse and Its Rider, Signifying the Spreading of the Gospel

The first seal is a whitehorse and its rider, signifying the spreading of the gospel (vv. 1-2). Revelation 6:2 says, "I saw, and behold, a whitehorse, and he who sits on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer."

A Bow Signifying That Christ's Fighting for the Constitution of the Gospel of Peace Is Finished and the Victory Is Won

A bow with an arrow is for fighting. But here there is a bow without an arrow. This indicates that the arrow has already been shot to destroy the enemy and that Christ's fighting for the constitution of the gospel of peace is finished and the victory is won.

*A Crown Signifying That the Gospel
Has Been Crowned with the Glory of Christ*

A crown signifies that the gospel has been crowned with the glory of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4). The gospel that we preach today has a crown, and this crown is the glory of Christ. We should not feel shameful when we preach the gospel. Rather, we should feel glorious. To preach the gospel is a glorious thing. Those who preach the gospel become the riders of the whitehorse.

*Went Forth Conquering Signifying That the Gospel Has Been Going Forth
with Christ to Conquer All Kinds of Opposition and Attack*

Went forth conquering in Revelation 6:2 signifies that the gospel has been going forth with Christ to conquer all kinds of opposition and attack. When I left mainland China in 1949, there were less than four million Christians there. When the Communists took over, they did their best to oppose, to restrict, and to persecute anyone who wanted to practice being a Christian. Despite such opposition, today there are at least fifty million Christians in mainland China. This shows the victory that the gospel has gained there over the past forty years. Throughout all the generations the gospel has been going on with Christ as the Victor.

According to the Bible, we have to preach the gospel to get sinners saved. We all have to bear fruit. Although we may admit that this is scriptural, we may not be bearing any fruit. This means that we are not on the whitehorse. If we are preaching the gospel, our interest is in God's kingdom. What is our interest today on this earth? We should be those who are laboring to get people saved to build up the Body of Christ for the kingdom of God. Most of us have to work to make a living. But all of us can separate a certain amount of time to the Lord for His interest. The unbelievers can always spare time for their amusement and entertainment. But we believers have God as our amusement and entertainment. We have no excuse for not preaching the gospel. We must be on the whitehorse for the spreading of the gospel. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1990, vol. 3, "The Prophecy of the Four 'Sevens' in the Bible," pp. 22-23)