

WEEK 1

The Development of the Kingdom of God into a Realm over Which God Rules in His Divine Life

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:15; John 3:3, 5; Luke 4:43; 17:20-21; 2 Pet. 1:4-11

OUTLINE

<< DAY 1 >>

- I. The kingdom of God is God Himself (Mark 1:15; Matt. 6:33; John 3:3):
 - A. God's kingdom has God as its content; God Himself is everything as the content of His kingdom (1 Cor. 4:20; 15:28).
 - B. God is life, having the nature, ability, and shape of the divine life, which forms the realm of God's ruling (Eph. 4:18; John 3:15).
 - C. The life of God is the kingdom of God and also our entrance into the kingdom of God; we must see this basic principle (vv. 3, 5, 15).
 - D. In actuality, God's reigning over us is not an outward matter but a matter of the innate ability of the divine life (Rom. 8:2).

<< DAY 2 >>

- II. The kingdom of God is the realm of the divine species, in which are all the divine things (John 3:3, 5):
 - A. 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 (Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; John 1:12-14).
 - B. To enter into the divine realm, the realm of the divine species, we need to be born of God to have the life and nature of God, thereby becoming God-men in the kingdom of God (vv. 12-13).
 - C. We were regenerated of God to be the species of God and enter into the kingdom of God (3:3, 5).

<< DAY 3 >>

- III. The kingdom of God is the realm of the divine life for this life to move, work, rule, and govern so that life may accomplish its purpose (Matt. 6:13b; John 3:3, 5, 15-16):

A.The kingdom of God is an organism constituted with God’s life as the realm of life for His ruling, in which He reigns by His life and expresses Himself as the Divine Trinity in the divine life (v. 5; 15:1-8, 16, 26).

B.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, 15; 1 John 5:11-12).

IV. The kingdom of God is Christ Himself as the seed of life sown into His believers, God’s chosen people, and developing into a realm over which God rules as His kingdom in His divine life (Luke 4:43; 8:5, 10; 17:20-21; Mark 4:3, 26-29):

A.The kingdom of God is a wonderful person—the Lord Jesus Christ, the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9):

1. Wherever He is, the kingdom of God is (Luke 17:20-21).

2. The kingdom of God is with Him, and He brings it to His disciples (4:43; 17:21).

B.The Lord Jesus is the seed of the kingdom of God to be sown into God’s chosen people to develop into God’s ruling realm (8:5, 10; Mark 4:26-29).

« DAY 4 »

V. We need to experience the development of the divine life and the divine nature contained in the divine seed that has been sown into us so that we may have a rich entrance into the eternal kingdom (2 Pet. 1:1, 4-11):

A.We have been allotted the wonderful equally precious faith, and this faith is an all-inclusive seed (v. 1):

1.All the divine riches are in this seed, but we must be diligent to develop them; to grow to maturity is to develop what we already have (vv. 1-8; 3:18).

2.By developing these virtues, we grow in life, and we will eventually reach maturity, be full of Christ, and be qualified and equipped to be kings in the coming kingdom (Eph. 4:13-15; Col. 2:19; 2 Pet. 1:11).

B.We should be diligent to pursue the growth and development of the divine life and divine nature for a rich entrance into the eternal kingdom (vv. 10-11):

1.The bountiful supply that we enjoy in the development of the divine life and divine nature (vv. 3-7) will bountifully supply us a rich entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord.

2.This supply will enable and qualify us to enter into the coming kingdom by all the riches of the divine life and divine nature as our excellent virtues (energy) unto the splendid glory of God (v. 3; 1 Pet. 5:10).

3.The entrance into the eternal kingdom is supplied to us richly through our growth in life and through the development of the divine life within us.

« DAY 5 »

VI. As those who have been born of God to enter into the kingdom of God, we need to be recovered to the direct rule of God by the intuition of our spirit (Matt. 5:3; 1 Cor. 2:11; Mark 2:8):

A. In the dispensation of innocence we see the principle of God's rule; in the dispensation of conscience, the principle of self-rule; and in the dispensation of human government, the principle of man's rule:

1. Before the fall man was ruled directly by God; he lived before God and was responsible to God (Gen. 2:16-17).

2. From the time of Adam's expulsion from the garden of Eden to the time of Noah's departure from the ark, God established the conscience within man to represent Himself in ruling over man (Acts 24:16).

3. After the flood, because man was subject neither to God's rule nor to self-rule, God authorized man to represent Him in ruling over man (Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:1).

B. Because man has been degraded from God's rule to human rule, God, in saving man, must recover him from human rule to divine rule so that once again man may live before God in simplicity and under His direct authority (Matt. 5:3, 8; 6:33).

C. In God's plan of recovery man must retrace his steps from human rule to God's rule, passing through self-rule in between.

« DAY 6 »

D. The final goal of dealing with the conscience is not merely to restore us to self-rule but to bring us back to God's rule and to recover us to God Himself and, thus, to live in the presence of God (5:3).

E. There is a great difference between self-rule and God's rule:

1. Self-rule means that we live by the feelings of our conscience, being responsible to our conscience (Acts 24:16).

2. God's rule means that we live by the intuition of our spirit, being responsible to the intuition, that is, being responsible to God:

a. Within our spirit there is a function to have a direct sense, to realize, discern, and perceive things; this is the intuition in our spirit (1 Cor. 2:11; Mark 2:8).

b. When we live by our intuition and are controlled by our intuition, we are living in the presence of God and are ruled directly by Him.

F. When we are under God's rule, we live by the intuition of our spirit according to the sense of life (Rom. 8:6):

1. The divine life is the highest life, with the richest, strongest, and keenest feeling (Eph. 4:18); this feeling is the sense of life.

2. The sense of life makes us know whether we are living in the natural life or in the divine life, whether we are living in the flesh or in the spirit (Rom. 8:6).
3. The sense of life guides, governs, controls, and directs us (v. 4).
4. The kingdom of God has its reality, and this reality is the living of the divine life under the direct rule of God (Matt. 5:3, 8, 20; 6:33; 7:21).

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.

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.

In the beginning of his ministry John preached the kingdom of God, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near” (Matt. 3:2). What he meant was that everyone had to be prepared because the kingdom of the heavens, the kingdom of God, was drawing near. What is the kingdom of God? We must understand that the kingdom of God is God Himself....If God leaves, the kingdom of God will have nothing left in it. (CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, “The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity,” p. 350)

Today’s Reading

We must have a clear understanding of the kingdom of God. God’s kingdom is God Himself, and God’s kingdom has God as its content. Moreover, this content is Jesus Christ, who is God incarnated to be a man and who is God Himself as the reality of the kingdom of God....God’s kingdom is a divine realm, and man must have the life of God to enter into it [cf. John 3:3]....Life itself is a kingdom, a world, and a regulating element. Similarly, God’s kingdom is God Himself, and God Himself is life, having the nature, ability, and shape of the divine life, which forms the realm of God’s reigning. (CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, “The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity,” p. 355)

The kingdom is a great and difficult subject. We must realize that any kind of life is a kingdom....The life of God is the kingdom of God. If you want to enter into a kingdom, you need that kingdom’s particular life. If you want to enter into the botanic kingdom, you need the botanic life. If you want to enter into the animal kingdom, you need the animal life. We human beings are all in the human kingdom because we were born into it—we have the human life. The human life is our entrance into the human kingdom. In the same principle, John 3:5 tells us that we must be born of the Spirit, which means that we are born with the divine life, God’s life, the uncreated eternal life. Then we can enter into the kingdom of God. The life of God is our entrance into the kingdom of God. We must see this basic principle. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, “Elders’ Training, Book 2: The Vision of the Lord’s Recovery,” p. 121)

In the past...our understanding [was that] God’s kingdom was merely God’s reigning. This kind of understanding was based upon human realization more than upon God’s revelation. If the kingdom of God is merely God’s reigning and the realm of God’s reigning, then this means that it is God controlling man. For example, when you are going to steal, He would not let you; when you are going to lose your temper, He would not allow you; when you are furious and are going to speak some angry words, He would stop you; when you are going to do a bad thing or say a bad word, He would warn you first, and if you refuse to listen, then He would chastise you. This kind of understanding and realization about the kingdom of God is too narrow.

In actuality, God’s reigning is not an outward matter but a matter of life. If a monkey could be regenerated, born again, to become a man and have the human life, this life would automatically regulate the monkey from within to live like a man. In this way the monkey would automatically and naturally enter into the human kingdom. If this happened, then to try to make the monkey to live and walk like a monkey again would be a suffering to the monkey. Therefore, it is altogether a matter of the innate ability of life, not a matter of outward teaching and regulation. (CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, “The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity,” pp. 354-355)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, “The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity,” ch. 3; CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, “Elders’ Training, Book 2: The Vision of the Lord’s Recovery,” ch. 4

« WEEK 1 — DAY 2 »

Morning Nourishment

John 3:3 ...Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

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.

The revelation of the kingdom of God in John is based upon two verses in John 3...Verse 3 speaks of seeing the kingdom, and verse 5 speaks of entering into the kingdom. To see the kingdom we need to be born anew. To enter into the kingdom we need to be born of water and the Spirit. Water signifies the death of Christ, into which we all have been baptized, and the Spirit signifies resurrection.

[John 3] speaks of Nicodemus, a real seeker who came to the Lord in the night (v. 2)...The Lord...unveiled to him that he needed to be born anew. Nicodemus responded by saying, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" (v. 4). The Lord then told him that he needed a second birth, a new birth.

If we are not born anew, we do not have the capacity to see the kingdom of God. To be born anew is to be born of water, signifying the death of Christ, and of the Spirit, signifying Christ's resurrection. We need to die with Christ and be resurrected to be a new person of another, new species, new kind. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John," p. 438)

Today's Reading

The kingdom of God is the reign of God. This divine reign is a realm, not only of the divine dominion but also of the divine species, in which are all the divine things. The vegetable kingdom is a realm of the vegetable species, and the animal kingdom is a realm of the animal species. In the same way, the kingdom of God is a realm of the divine species.

God became flesh to enter into the human species, and man becomes God in His life and nature, but not in His divine Godhead, to enter into His divine species. In John 3 the kingdom of God refers more to the species of God than to the reign of God.

For something to be in the animal species, it must be born of an animal. Also, to enter into the divine realm, the realm of the divine species, we need to be born of God to have the divine nature and life.

That man was created in the image of God and according to His likeness indicates that man was created in God's kind, in God's species. Genesis 1 says that each of the living things was created according to its kind. But God created man, not according to man's kind but in God's image and according to God's likeness to be God's kind.

The believers, who are born of God by regeneration to be His children in His life and nature but not in His Godhead (John 1:12-13), are more in God's kind than Adam was. Adam had only the outward appearance of God without the inward reality, the divine life. We have the reality of the divine life within us, and we are being transformed and conformed to the Lord's image in our entire being. It is logical to say that all the children of God are in the divine realm of the divine species.

Thus, in regeneration God begets gods. Man begets man. Goats beget goats...If the children of God are not in God's kind, in God's species, in what kind are they? If they are not gods, what are they? We all who are born of God are gods. But for utterance, due to the theological misunderstanding, it is better to say that we are God-men in the divine species, that is, in the kingdom of God.

These God-men, who are children born of God, not only constitute the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 4:17; John 14:2) but also are the constituents with which the Body of Christ is built up, and the Body of Christ will consummate the New Jerusalem as the eternal kingdom of God and of Christ (1 Cor. 6:9; Eph. 5:5; 2 Pet. 1:11; Rev. 11:15). (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John," pp. 438-440)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John," ch. 12; Life-study of John, msg. 9

« WEEK 1 — DAY 3 »

Morning Nourishment

Luke 17:20-21 ...The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, Behold, here it is! or, There! For behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.

Mark 4:26-27 And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth, and sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and lengthens—how, he does not know.

Now we must see the difference or the relationship between the kingdom and the church. This is very hard to discern and to understand clearly. We have seen that any kind of life is a kingdom, so the kingdom is the life itself. The kingdom of God is the life of God, but the church is not the life, nor is the life the church. The church is the product of life. The divine life is the kingdom, and this life produces the church...Without the kingdom as the reality of life, the church could never be produced or built up. To produce the church and to build up the church, we need the kingdom.

The gospel brings God as life, and life is a kingdom. The kingdom is the realm of life for life to move, to work, to rule, and to govern so that life may accomplish its purpose, and this realm is the kingdom. Actually, the kingdom as the realm of life is life itself...This divine life with its realm produces the church. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 2: The Vision of the Lord's Recovery," pp. 121-123)

Today's Reading

No matter how much you are taught, you cannot get into the kingdom of God. The only way to enter into the kingdom of God is to receive God as life and to gain God Himself. This is regeneration. Therefore, to repent is to have a change in your concept. You have to change your concepts about Moses, your concepts about the law, and even your worldly, natural concepts about serving God. All these concepts need to be changed. Therefore, you must repent! (CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, "The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity," p. 353)

The kingdom of God is the Lord Jesus as the seed of life sown into His believers, God's chosen people, and developing into a realm [over] which God may rule as His kingdom in His divine life. Its entrance is regeneration (John 3:5), and its development is the believers' growth in the divine life (2 Pet. 1:3-11). It is the church today, in which the faithful believers live (Rom. 14:17), and it will develop into the coming kingdom as an inheritance reward (Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5) to the overcoming saints in the millennium (Rev. 20:4, 6). Eventually, it will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the eternal kingdom of God, an eternal realm of the eternal blessing of God's eternal life for all God's redeemed to enjoy in the new heaven and new earth for eternity (Rev. 21:1-4; 22:1-5).

In eternity the New Jerusalem will be the totality of all the believers shining forth the processed Triune God. The new earth will be a realm in which God will rule over the nations. This ruling realm will be formed by the shining of the New Jerusalem. Hence, the shining of the New Jerusalem will produce a realm for God's ruling. This is the kingdom of God.

The Lord's word [in Luke 17:20] that the kingdom of God "does not come with observation" indicates that the kingdom of God is not material but spiritual. Verses 22 through 24 prove that the kingdom of God is Christ Himself, who was among the Pharisees when He was asked by them regarding the kingdom. Wherever the Savior is, there is the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is with Him, and He brings it to His disciples (v. 22). He is the seed of the kingdom of God sown into God's people and developing in them into God's ruling realm. Since His resurrection, He is within His believers (John 14:20; Rom. 8:10). Hence, the kingdom of God with Christ as its reality in life is within the church today (Rom. 14:17). (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2640, 2553-2554)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 240, 250-251; Life-study of Mark, msgs. 13-16; CWWL, 1972, vol. 1, "The Growth and Spread of Christ within Us for the Kingdom of God," chs. 1-3

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

2 Pet. 1:10-11 Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble. 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.

The eternal kingdom in 2 Peter 1:11 refers to the kingdom of God, which was given to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Dan. 7:13-14) and which will be manifested at His coming back (Luke 19:11-12). It will be a reward to His faithful believers, who pursue the growth in His life unto maturity and the development of the virtues of His nature that in the millennium they may participate in His kingship in God's glory (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:4, 6).

In 2 Peter 1:3-11...the development of the kingdom within us is actually our entrance into the kingdom. In verses 3 and 4 Peter speaks of the divine power granting to us all things which relate to life and godliness and of becoming partakers of the divine nature. Then in verses 5 through 11 we have the development through growth in life unto the rich entrance into the eternal kingdom. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 3943)

Today's Reading

[In 2 Peter 1:5 through 7] we see the development of the divine life in us through a number of steps.

The bountiful supply that we enjoy in the development of the divine life and divine nature (vv. 3-7) will bountifully supply us a rich entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord [v. 11]. It will enable and qualify us to enter into the coming kingdom by all the riches of the divine life and divine nature as our excellent virtues (energy) unto the splendid glory of God. This is not merely to be saved but, after being saved, to pursue the growth and maturity in the divine life and thereby receive the kingdom reward.

The seed of life is already within us; it simply needs to grow and develop. We enter the kingdom day by day by the growth of the inner life.

If we would have the kingdom develop in us, we need to humble ourselves, empty ourselves, and unload ourselves. We should not be occupied with culture, religion, ethics, morality, philosophy, improvement of character, or the effort to be spiritual, scriptural, holy, and victorious. We should care only for Christ and for the growth of Christ within us. All the ground within us should be made available for Him to grow in us.

We also can have a rich entrance by losing our soul-life today (Matt. 16:25-28). When we lose our soul-life and its enjoyment, we are undergoing transformation....The more we lose the enjoyment of the soul, the richer an entrance we will have.

According to 2 Peter 1:1-4, God has given the seed of faith, the growing power, and He has given the promises that He will send the rain, the growth, and the harvest if we cooperate with Him. With God's giving, we must be diligent to develop the seed of faith by taking the promises, by receiving His word. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3944-3945)

According to Peter's word in 2 Peter 1:5-11, to grow to maturity is to develop what we have already received. We have been allotted the wonderful equally precious faith, and this faith is an all-inclusive seed. All the divine riches are in this seed, but we must be diligent to develop them into virtue. Then we need to develop in our virtue knowledge; in knowledge, self-control; in self-control, endurance; in endurance, godliness; in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love. By developing these virtues we grow, and eventually we shall reach maturity. As a result, we shall be full of Christ, and, in Paul's words, we shall arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). Then we shall be qualified and equipped to be kings in the coming kingdom. (Life-study of 2 Peter, pp. 63-64)

Further Reading: Life-study of 2 Peter, msgs. 6-7; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 390; CWWL, 1972, vol. 2, "The Kingdom," chs. 4-6, 50

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 2:11 For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him? In the same way, the things of God also no one has known except the Spirit of God.

Mark 2:8 And immediately Jesus, knowing fully in His spirit that they were reasoning this way within themselves, said to them, Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?

Some students of Scripture have divided the Bible into seven dispensations: the dispensations of innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace, and the kingdom. The first three dispensations are categorized according to the principle of government. In the dispensation of innocence we see the principle of God's rule; in the dispensation of conscience, the principle of self-rule; and in the dispensation of human government, the principle of man's rule....Before the fall no sin barrier existed between God and man. This was the so-called dispensation of innocence, when man was ruled directly by God. He lived before God and was responsible to God. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," p. 283)

Today's Reading

Man failed under God's rule and became sinful within and without, so the holy and righteous God had to leave man.

Consequently, from the time of Adam's expulsion from the garden of Eden to the time of Noah's departure from the ark, God established the conscience within man to represent Him in ruling over man....In this period man was ruled by his own conscience and was responsible to his own conscience. Unfortunately, under this self-rule, man again failed. He ignored the rebuke and control of the conscience, the issue of which was murder and fornication, which proceeded unto utter corruption and fullness of wickedness. God judged this dispensation by the flood.

After the flood God told Noah, "Whoever sheds man's blood, / By man shall his blood be shed" (Gen. 9:6...). Because man was neither subject to God's rule nor obedient to self-rule, God authorized man to represent Him in ruling over man. Therefore, not long afterward, there was the beginning of nations; there came into being among the human races the rule of political authorities, the power of the society, and the control in the family....These are the authorities set up by God to represent Him in ruling man. This is why Romans 13:1 says, "Let every person be subject to the authorities over him." This is the dispensation of human government, in which man is ruled by man and is responsible to man.

From the point of view of government, man's fall was a fall from God's rule to self-rule and then from self-rule to man's rule. The more one is ruled by God, the nobler he becomes, but the more one is ruled by man, the more base he becomes. Today man's condition is a complete rejection of God's rule. There may be a few people who are under self-rule, being controlled by their conscience; however, the impact of their conscience is very weak. The majority are living under human rule and never conform unless they are being ruled by someone. Yet many still fail in this dispensation of human government. They not only disobey but also endeavor to escape and even overthrow man's rule. Today what is set before our eyes is a rebellious and disorderly condition. Thus, man is a total failure whether under the ruling of God, self, or man.

Since man has been degraded from God's rule to human rule, God, in saving man, must recover him from human rule to divine rule, that man may once more live before God in simplicity and under His direct authority. However, this kind of recovery cannot be realized in a moment. As man became degraded by falling from divine rule to human rule, passing through the stage of self-rule in between, so in God's plan of recovery he must retrace his steps from human rule to God's rule, passing through self-rule in between. Since self-rule is the step between human rule and God's rule, when a man is saved, he must first be delivered from human rule and return to self-rule. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," pp. 283-284)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," ch. 6

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

Acts 24:16 Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

All those who live under human rule are living before man...Whenever they are not under man's jurisdiction and observation, they do as they please. However, those who are under self-rule are not so...Being controlled by their conscience, they do not need to be ruled by others. They are restrained in all their utterances and behavior, not because of their fear of man but because of the ruling of their conscience. They are free to act only when their conscience approves. Outwardly, they appear to be still subject to the rule of man, yet practically, this rule is unnecessary, because their conscience is sufficient to rule and control them. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," pp. 284-285)

Today's Reading

Only severe dealings with our conscience will deliver us from the fallen condition of human rule to that rule by the conscience. Then in all things we can live and act according to the feelings of our conscience.

However, the final goal of dealing with the conscience is not simply to restore us to self-rule. If we remain only in the feelings of the conscience, we are still in a half-fallen situation and fall short of God's will. Therefore, dealing with the conscience is not just to cause man to return from human rule to self-rule, from the eye of man unto the conscience, but even more to cause man to pass through self-rule and attain to God's rule, to pass through the conscience and live in the presence of God...The positive objective is that we be recovered to God Himself. Therefore, the final goal of dealing with the conscience is to bring us back to God's rule.

Self-rule and God's rule differ greatly. Self-rule means that man lives by the feelings of his conscience, being responsible to his conscience; whereas God's rule means that man lives by the intuition of the spirit, being responsible to the intuition, that is, being responsible to God. We know that God through the Holy Spirit lives in our spirit. Therefore, we can say that the intuition in our spirit is the feeling of God. Hence, when we live by the intuition and are controlled by the intuition, we are living in the presence of God and ruled by Him. The conscience has only the feeling of right and wrong. It condemns all that is wrong and evil and justifies all that is right and good. But the intuition is above right and wrong, good and evil. It is above wrong and also above right; it is above evil and also above good. It condemns all that is wrong and all that is evil, but it does not necessarily approve all that is right and all that is good. It accepts only that which is of God, of the Spirit, and of life.

[For example], what God desires is that we speak His words, words that are of Him, of the Spirit, and of life. Therefore, when a brother ministers, whether he is speaking the truth or not will be attended to by the conscience. But as to what he should minister, what subject he should choose, what God has in mind for him to speak—these are not within the limit of right and wrong, good and evil. The feeling of the conscience is unable to do anything in this respect. Only through the intuition can one touch the mind of God and be led by God to speak His words. These differences between the conscience and the intuition are also the differences between self-rule and God's rule.

Many brothers and sisters are living in a condition that is a combination of the three kinds of government. The greater part of their being is under human rule; they still need to be ruled by man. Another part of their being is under self-rule, the rule of the conscience. But only a small part of their being is under God's rule so that they are controlled by God directly...There is the need to deal with the conscience more thoroughly so that we can, on the negative side, be delivered from human rule and, on the positive side, enter into God's rule to be directly under His control. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," pp. 285-286)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," ch. 6

<< **WEEK 1 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #1301

1

Jesus, the kingdom, has come into us;
Reigning and shining, He's all glorious.
Christ as the seed is the King who has come;
Into our spirit His kingdom He's sown.
Oh, let Him grow, oh, let Him grow;
His kingdom life be all we know.
Jesus, the kingdom, is sown into us;
Jesus, the kingdom, oh, how glorious!

2

We must repent for the kingdom's at hand;
All that we do, think, or feel, or have planned
Must be abandoned and changed in our mind;
Leave all the world and self-seeking behind.

3

All of religion has missed it again,
Teaching for doctrines the concepts of men;
They vainly wait for the kingdom to be.
A dispensation they're hoping to see.

4

But now the kingdom to us has been shown—
It is no less than our Jesus alone.
It is the person of Christ in us all,
And it begins as a seed when we call.