

## BUILDING UP THE KINGDOM

Evan A. Fry, Radio Minister  
 Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ  
 of Latter Day Saints  
 Independence, Missouri

Sunday, April 11, 1954  
 KMBC & KFRM 8:30 a.m.  
 Kansas City, Missouri  
 All Rights Reserved

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 2:1-5.

The word that Isaiah the Son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

\*\*\*\*\*

Seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

In previous sermons of this series we have discussed several modes or facets of the kingdom of God -- the kingdom within, the heavenly kingdom, the kingdom of God on earth, the present kingdom, and the future kingdom -- and have said that these are all a part of one kingdom, God's kingdom. God rules everywhere in time and in space. Men may defy his rule, but God is not mocked. He still holds, and always will hold dominion over the men and the works he has created.

We have talked so much and so loosely about building the kingdom that perhaps the phrase "building up the kingdom" may seem to you to be strange and out of place. But consider for a moment. When men set about to build a nation or a kingdom on earth, they must do several things. 1. They must select a geographical location or territory, and lay claim to it in the name of the new kingdom. 2. They must write a constitution upon which the government of the new kingdom can be based. 3. They must enact laws for the government of that kingdom. 4. They must choose the officers who are to administer those laws and protect and defend the constitution and the territorial integrity of the kingdom. 5. They must recruit colonists or citizens for that kingdom.

Now let us go a step farther. How many of these things can we do for the kingdom of God? We cannot build his kingdom by extending his domain over any more geographical territory. He is ruler of every square inch of the universe already. We cannot write a constitution for his kingdom; that was done milleniums ago by God himself. We cannot enact a single law to govern God's kingdom. To do so would be futile, irreverent and presumptive. We cannot choose the officers who are to supervise and govern his kingdom. That is the prerogative of the King, not of his subjects. The kingdom in these four modes or aspects has already been built, and we cannot change it one iota. It is a kingdom "prepared from the foundation of the world." The territory ~~is~~ there; the constitution is there; the laws are there; the officers are there. It is already built. The only thing which remains for us to do is to build it up, to recruit new citizens who will recognize and obey the King, the Constitution, the laws, and the officers, so that the kingdom of God will be more widely recognized and accepted, so that its laws may prevail more and more in the affairs of men and of nations, and that thereby the kingdom of God may be built up, or increased -- not simply built.

What can we do to build up the kingdom? First, we can pledge an increased, a whole-hearted, an absolutely full and complete allegiance to the King -- instead of a part-time, half-hearted allegiance which many of us now give. We can resolve to obey all the laws of the kingdom -- not just those which suit our fancy -- so that the

kingdom way of life shall prevail in all our dealings with our fellow men -- political, social, economic, as well as spiritual. We can become more familiar with the Constitution of the kingdom of God -- his word, so that we shall not be ignorant of our rights and privileges, our duties and responsibilities in his kingdom. We can respect and support the officers of God's kingdom -- the officers of his church, so long as they obey his laws, and respect his constitution, and abide by their pledge of allegiance to the King. As we build up ourselves in the qualities that become a good citizen of the kingdom, and as we discover and begin to obey more and more of the laws of the kingdom which we have been breaking or ignoring, we shall be extending the rule of the kingdom in our own lives. We shall be therefore, building up the kingdom.

The principal way in which we can build up the kingdom, however, is by persuading and teaching others to enter fully into it, to forsake their rebellion and indifference to begin to obey its laws. Comparatively few men have been born again, have foresworn allegiance to the kingdom of the devil, and pledged allegiance to God and Christ. Although no man and no nation can live outside the geographical boundaries of God's kingdom or his authority and rule, the kingdom of God can be shut out of the human heart by rebellion, disobedience, ignorance, or indifference. When men or nations do not live by the laws of the kingdom of God -- whether because of ignorance or because of rebellion -- the result is poverty, disease, misery, strife, war, confusion, and death. We can help save the world from these calamities, and we can help to build up the kingdom, by bringing ignorant, rebellious, unconcerned people into proper relationship with the King, and with his kingdom.

We can lead others to the new life of the kingdom of God in several ways. We can set a good example, and demonstrate in our own lives the advantages of full citizenship in the kingdom, and full obedience to kingdom laws in family life, in business, in politics, and in social contacts. We can teach our children the ways of the kingdom -- for they are our first and primary responsibility. We can bear a personal testimony to friends and neighbors and associates, telling them what joy we find in our citizenship in God's kingdom.

There are many people in the world outside your family circle, outside your circle of friends and acquaintances, who also need to know what are the obligations and responsibilities and blessings of citizenship in the kingdom of God. By joining your efforts with those of other citizens of the kingdom, by combining your tithes and offerings with theirs, men can be sent to proclaim the King to those nations and peoples which are still living in darkness, in ignorance, in rebellion against the King who is the King of all kings, the Lord of all Lords.

We cannot build the kingdom of God on earth. It is already established and built. All we have to do is to recognize that we are already under the jurisdiction of the King and his laws, and obey; then we shall have the kingdom. For example, we all live in the United States of America. We can recognize our obligations to this government, and to its citizens, and enjoy every blessing which that government has to give. Or on the other hand, we can refuse to recognize any such obligation; we can rebel against it, and disobey its laws. In that case, we soon cease to enjoy the citizen's rights and privileges, and we become outlaws, living in perpetual terror of the police and F.B.I., or languishing in prison where all rights of citizenship are removed. So it is with the kingdom of God. It is here now for those who will recognize it and obey its laws, but not for the rebellious, and disobedient, the indifferent, the ignorant, the unconcerned. Our task in building up the kingdom is winning these for Christ.

Wherever men put the laws of the kingdom into practical, everyday operation; wherever men live together in love, in peace, in prosperity of mutual helpfulness according to the laws of the kingdom; wherever the King's name is loved and his will respected; wherever men are striving to win other men for Christ; wherever men forsake war and proclaim peace; wherever men set a good example of kingdom living, there the kingdom of God is being built up on earth. When a sufficient group of men can be induced to live fully by the laws of the kingdom, the nations and peoples of earth will say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."