

## THE LIFE OF THE KINGDOM

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

Sunday, April 25, 1954  
 8:30 a.m. KMBC & KFRM  
 Kansas City, Missouri  
 All Rights Reserved

SCRIPTURE: II Corinthians 8-10, and 16-18.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body ..... For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

\*\*\*\*\*

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Any man with the necessary knowledge, skills, techniques, tools, and machinery, can take such raw materials as metals, wires, glass, wood, and rubber, and make a radio or television set. Any man can take a pile of suitable raw materials, and create a new automobile, a new house, a bridge, a new mousetrap, or a new can opener. Millions of factory workers are engaged every day in making new things out of raw materials, and thus providing for the needs and the wants of men.

The farmer, however, is in a completely different category. He is not a manufacturer. No one has yet devised a method for taking the soil as raw material and manufacturing it into food -- and we think we are safe in predicting that no one ever will. Human power alone can never change soil into wheat. The life of the wheat must go down into the soil -- must descend from the higher vegetable kingdom into the lower mineral kingdom of the soil, and there it must lose its life and die to its former self. But in thus losing itself, it comes alive in different form; and in this different form the wheat plant sends forth its roots into the soil and begins to grow. Then it is time for the soil to surrender, to die to self, to give up its original form that it might be transmuted into a higher form. Unless the soil does this, soil can never become wheat. If the wheat stays safely in the granary, both wheat and soil remain unchanged and alone. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Only when the life of a higher kingdom is planted in the soil, and sacrifices itself, and only as the soil yields itself completely, unreservedly, and abjectly to this higher life, can the dead soil of the mineral kingdom become transmuted into the wheat of the higher or vegetable kingdom.

Now let us carry the analogy one step higher. After the wheat plant has produced its wheat and the soil has been transmuted into golden grain which is good for the food of man, we are again confronted with exactly the same difficulty, only on a higher scale. How shall we transmute that wheat into the substance of a human body? No human power can take the wheat and out of it manufacture a human body as an artisan or a mechanic manufactures an automobile. Again the same thing must happen as before. The life of a higher kingdom must reach down into a lower kingdom, and by the power of that life must transmute the material of a lower kingdom into the material of a higher kingdom. The higher life of the animal kingdom which is in the human body, must reach down into the lower vegetable kingdom, and transmute the materials of that lower kingdom into the materials of the human body which dwells in a higher kingdom.

In this process, the wheat must give up its individual identity, must completely and irrevocably surrender itself to the will of the higher life which is to transmute it into human flesh. The individual grains of wheat are mixed together so that one cannot be distinguished from another. Together they are ground into flour; the flour

is mixed into bread; the bread is chewed, and digested, and then assimilated. By that time the material which was once wheat bears not the slightest resemblance to the wheat which it once was. But not until this complete change has come about does the wheat live the higher life of the animal kingdom. Not until then does the wheat become living tissue in the human body.

Before we proceed, let us notice another truth which is obvious, but needs to be mentioned. We have said that no human power can change soil into wheat, or wheat into the elements of a human body. Even more obviously, the soil has no power within itself to become wheat; and the wheat has no power within itself to become muscle, bone, and sinew. A lower kingdom cannot and does not lift itself into a higher kingdom. The life of the higher must always reach down into the lower kingdom, and lift it up. The life of the wheat reaches into the soil and lifts the soil to the vegetable kingdom. The life of the human body reaches down into the vegetable kingdom where wheat dwells, and lifts the wheat to the life of the higher or animal kingdom.

So man has no power to lift himself into the kingdom of God, or to create in himself the life of that kingdom. No human agency can manufacture that life. No man can lift himself to the life of that kingdom, any more than the soil can make itself into wheat. The life of the kingdom of God must reach down into human life, must take the materials of that lower kingdom and transmute them into the life of the heavenly kingdom. If frail mortality desires to live life on the plane of a higher kingdom, it must first make complete and abject surrender, as the soil surrenders to the life of the wheat, and as the wheat surrenders to the life of the body. The soil doesn't direct the wheat plant where to grow; the life of the wheat plant directs the soil where to go and how it should grow. The soil must die and be born again; it must come completely and unreservedly under the control of the life of that higher kingdom. But by such surrender it lives a new life in a higher kingdom -- a life completely unattainable in its own strength.

No man can create within himself the life of the higher or heavenly kingdom. The life of that heavenly kingdom is available to mortal man only as he makes a full, complete, abject surrender of himself, his desires, his wishes, his hopes, his purposes to Jesus Christ, in whom dwells the life of the kingdom. He must yield himself to the life which is in Christ, as the soil yields itself to the life of the plant, or as the wheat yields itself to the life that is in the human body. But if any man will make that surrender, the life which is in Jesus will transmute and transform him so that he becomes a new creature. The old man will die, but a glorious new man, with wider power with newer and finer purpose, will arise from this death. The old man dies, as Jesus died, that new life might be; we bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

The life of the kingdom is the life of Christ. It is the life and power by which he rose from the dead. It is the life and power by which men are raised from death in trespasses and sins, to a new life on earth, and immortality in the new earth that is to come. It is the life by which men are born again, to become new creatures in Christ Jesus, sons of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. It is the life which lifts us from a lower kingdom to a higher, heavenly kingdom. If we have that kingdom life within us, we are indeed new creatures. The things we once loved, we now hate. Sin becomes repugnant to us, instead of glamorous and desirable, and we cannot continue in sin because we are born again. Because the life of Christ and of his kingdom is in us we know that we live; we know that Jesus lives, for he lives in us.

Many a man who thinks he is seeking the kingdom has never made full surrender to the life of the kingdom. You cannot live your own life, and have the life of the kingdom too. If you would have the life of the kingdom -- and without it no man can live eternally -- surrender; let Christ take over your life; let him reach down into your lower kingdom, that his life may exalt and transform you and lift you up into the kingdom of heaven.