

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Hebrews 12:18-29**.
- B. We cannot ignore what we have in Christ Jesus or should ever take it for granted.
- C. The church is the same way. The church is not the building, but the blood purchased body of Christ.
- D. Let us learn to appreciate the kingdom and then out of gratitude, serve God acceptably.

I. WE HAVE RECEIVED A KINGDOM.

- A. That which had been promised of old has arrived. The kingdom is here and will continue to exist until the end of time (Dan. 2:44; Mt. 16:18).
(Dan 2:44) "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever."
(Mt 16:18) "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it."
- B. Jesus promised that the kingdom would come with power (Mk. 9:1) and it did (Ac. 2:1-47).
(Mk 9:1) And He was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."
- C. The beginning of the kingdom was at Pentecost (Ac. 11:15).
"And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as He did upon us at the beginning."
- D. Those who are members of the church are also members of the kingdom (Rev. 5:9-10; Ac. 20:28; Col. 1:13-14).
(Ac 20:28) "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."
(Col 1:13-14) For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
(Rev 5:9-10) And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. **10** "And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."
- E. Xians keep some very good company in the kingdom (Heb. 12:23-24).
...to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, [24] and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

II. LET US BE GRATEFUL FOR THE KINGDOM.

- A. The NT church is not like OT Israel. It is far superior. It has a better covenant (2Cor. 3:6-7).
...who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. **7** But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was,
- B. Unlike the OC the NC has the forgiveness of sins (Heb. 10:4, 17).
For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ...**17** "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."
- C. The NC is the substance of what the OT showed us only in shadow (Col. 2:16-17).
Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day-- **17** things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.
- D. The OC was begun on physical bases while the NC on spiritual (**Heb. 12:18-24**).
- E. With all of these wonderful blessings, how shall we escape if we ignore, so great a salvation (Heb. 2:3)?
...how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,...

III. THEREFORE, LET US SERVE GOD ACCEPTABLY.

- A. Scripture text: Hebrews 12:28.

Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

- B. Because of:

1. All of the heavenly assurances.
2. All our efforts are to be crowned with success.
3. A permanent influence made of future generations.
4. Future rewards are to come in heaven.

LET US BE GRATEFUL WITH REVERENT, ACCEPTABLE SERVICE!

- C. Let us as recipients of all these things show our gratitude.

- D. The formula for showing gratitude in acceptable service is easy. One, do it God's way, and two, do it with all your ability (1Pet. 4:11; Rom. 12:4-8).

(1Pet 4:11) Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

(Rom 12:4-8) For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

- E. How grateful are you?

- F. Jesus healed 10 lepers and only 1 was grateful. Where are you numbered? With the 9?

IV. GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.

- A. Although the covenants have changed, God remains the same (Mal. 3:6).

- B. God did not tolerate sin under the OC neither will He in the New.

God always punishes sin, and all the more to those who willfully become ungrateful (Heb. 10:26-29).

For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

- C. Nothing escapes God, He is a consuming fire.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Sometimes when we look at the imperfections of our brethren around us, and we see only faults, we tend to lose our appreciation and gratefulness of the kingdom that Jesus died for.

- B. Look at again at the attendance roster for those in the kingdom. We are greatly privileged to be there.

- C. Let us show that gratefulness with acceptable service to God with reverence and awe.

- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.