

ON DIRECTION: EXPLANATIONS...

The KINGDOM MESSAGE occupies a most prominent place in my teaching and preaching; because I discovered it was the first principle in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Search as I did---And you will find the bulk of His teaching & preaching centered on THE KINGDOM.

That word KINGDOM occurs 117 times in the four Gospels: Matthew uses it 50 times, Mark 19, Luke 44, and John's Gospel 4 times.

It was a terrific shock to find THE CHURCH per se, occupies an almost negligible place in his teaching as recorded in the Gospels. Matthew is the only writer who uses the word CHURCH of the four Gospels... Matthew 16:18 and 18:17 (twice).

Note also: in the Lord's Prayer given for His disciples, the word CHURCH does not occur---but, the KINGDOM is mentioned twice.

With such overwhelming evidence I had to admit that the KINGDOM was the dominant theme in the mind of Jesus.

The spread of sacerdotalism, the Priestly class and "church" officials has very much confused these issues and we are constantly bombarded by ecclesiastical leaders that---The 'church' is the kingdom!

I ask you, If the 'church' is the kingdom, Why do men continually pray for its coming? That 'the church' (whatever it may be) is here no one will deny...

I further discovered in the Book of Acts that "The Church", "The Churches", and "The Kingdom" appeared. There I discovered nothing higher in authority than the local church; For Christ was its Head! And that the teaching of the whole New Testament was----Christ was present when they assembled together.

It is true: Jesus proclaimed THE KINGDOM OF GOD, but it was the Church that came...Scripture shows that which constitutes a 'church', for the 'church' IS the presence of God through the living resurrected Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. The existence of a 'church' arises directly out of the ministry of Jesus Christ---"*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*" Matthew 18:20

And when the Bible speaks about 'church' unity, it speaks of unity not at the expense of truth but on the basis of it.

