

WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST #10

I Am A Member Of The Church Of Christ Because...

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY.

The “kingdom” was prophesied throughout the Old Testament (cf. Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-4; Joel 2:28-32). In the book of Matthew, the Lord’s kingdom is referred to as the “kingdom of God” five times and the “kingdom of heaven” thirty two times. They are one and the same.

Both John the Baptist and Jesus preached concerning the establishment of the kingdom. *“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, ²And saying, Repent ye: for the **kingdom of heaven is at hand**”* (Matt. 3:1-2). *“Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the **kingdom of God**, ¹⁵And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the **kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel**”* (Mark 1:14-15).

Notice that both John and Jesus preached the kingdom of God/heaven was “at hand” (Mark 1:15; Matt. 3:2). “At hand” means it was nigh, approaching, near, on the horizon, about to be established. Jesus even said the kingdom would come during the lifetime of those who heard him. Mark 9:1, *“Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”* The Lord plainly said the kingdom would be established before they all died. And, that is exactly what happened.

Jesus said the kingdom would come with “power.” He told the apostles they would receive “power” when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Therefore, the kingdom was established. Peter announced that the events of that day were the fulfillment of prophecy (Acts 2:16; cf. Joel 2:28-32).

The words “church” and “kingdom” are used interchangeably throughout the New Testament. Jesus said, *“I will build my **church**”* and referred to it as *“the **kingdom of heaven**”* (Matt. 16:18-19). Paul preached *“the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ...”* (Acts 28:31). There is no distinction between the church of Christ (God) and the kingdom of Christ (God).

When the kingdom was preached, the church of Christ was established (Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25). When men obeyed the Gospel they were added by the Lord to his church (the church of Christ, Acts 2:41,47). Consequently, they were “translated” (removed from a life of ungodliness in the world into a new life in His kingdom (Col. 1:13).

Those who are members of the church are members of the kingdom (Heb. 12:28; 1 Thess. 2:12; Rev. 1:9). The “kingdom of Christ” is “the church of Christ.”

Those who are faithful members of the church/kingdom will be ushered into heaven at the Lord’s second coming (1 Cor. 15:24). Don’t you want to be in that number?

— Garland M. Robinson