**Christ’s Kingdom Is His Church**

If we consider New Testament teaching, we will find that the time and circumstances that led to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom are the same as those that created the church. While one is a figure of a King with His subjects, the other represents a body of people called out of sin with Christ as their Head; the disciples of Jesus Christ are under consideration in both cases.

When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He made two parallel promises: The kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 4:17) and He was going to build His church, or “called out assembly” (Matthew 16:18). The following passages of Scripture clearly teach that He accomplished both on the day of Pentecost following His resurrection and ascension into heaven.

**The Messianic kingdom was truly at hand.** Jesus told His listeners, “Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power” (Mark 9:1). That was definitely a limited time-frame.

**The Messianic kingdom was spiritual, not physical.** Jesus told Pilate this in no uncertain terms in John 18:36.

**Jesus told His apostles they would be clothed with power.** Before He ascended to heaven, Jesus told them “that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:47-49).

The apostles obeyed Jesus and they did, in fact, receive the Holy Spirit and began to preach the good news in languages they had never studied. Those who believed asked, “Brethren, what shall we do?” Peter’s instructions to them were to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38). As they were obedient to the Lord’s commands, God was adding them to the number of the saved (v.47). Jesus built His church just as He had promised.

But notice that Peter referenced God’s promise to seat one of David’s descendants on his throne and made it clear that Jesus fulfilled that promise when He ascended to the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:30-33). The kingdom did indeed come with power on that Pentecost.

It is no wonder, then, that Paul told members of the body of Christ, the church, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Colossians 1:13). Thus the kingdom and the church refer to the same group of people. If you believe you are a Christian but you don’t believe you are yet in His kingdom, we need to talk.

**John McKee**

**West Murray church of Christ**