

THE ROYAL LIFE

"They which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Romans 5:17.

I want to speak to you about the royal life, a life to which God calls every one of us, a life which He wants all of us to adopt. We shall consider it to see how far we have gone toward the accomplishment of His purpose for us. We shall measure our lives by the revelation of His purpose to see whether or not we come up to the expectation of God.

God sees three great divisions among the people of this world. There is the primary division between those who are believers and those who are not. If you turn to those who are believers, there is another division -- a secondary division between Christians: those who are growing and those who are static. Even among those who are growing, there is another division between those who are living the kingly life and those who are submitting to one thing or another. It is the purpose of God that we should be in the company of those who reign in life. "Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins in his own precious blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." It is His purpose that everyone of us should be as kings, reigning in life. You and I as kings are appointed to reign, not over people or over kingdoms, but over subjects of a different sort.

Do our lives come up to the conception of God for the Christian life? He says, "They shall reign in life." The Christian life is not to be life in a cottage, where everything is circumscribed; where there is little room, and we are confined. Nor is it life in a villa, the sort of life that has settled down comfortably, and that is very well satisfied. Not life in a cottage, nor life in a villa, but life in a palace. That is the intention of God for every one of His children.

Come with me in thought to that palace wherein God expects you to live. Look at some of the rooms that are hinted at in the text, and see whether or not we are actually using these rooms. Recently a friend was showing me through the house into which he and his family had recently moved. The house had fourteen rooms in it. After showing me a number of them and telling me for what they were being used, he opened one door and said, "We don't use this room." We went down a hall and found another room and he said, "We don't use this room." It may be that, placed as you are in a palace, to live a royal life, you do not use some of the rooms in the palace.

I. The Royal Subjects.

The throne room of the life is suggested by the words, "They shall reign in life."

1. Reigning over sin.

"Sin shall not have dominion over you" (Romans 6:14). Are you living on top of sins, or are they on top of you? If you are under the dominion of sin, it is quite contrary to the purpose of God for His children. Sin need not have dominion over us. The one who is reigning in life reigns over besetting sin. It is the glorious possibility and privilege to reign over sin and see that it does not get a chance to spoil your life's experience with Him.

2. Reigning over circumstances.

It is a great thing to be on top of one's circumstances. The weight of things so often presses Christians down; whereas they should be on top of life's circumstances. "They shall reign in life." Are you doing it? You can soon discover whether or not you are living a royal life.

In Romans eight Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, made reference to the dark and difficult experiences of life. In verse thirty-seven he said, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." You may think that it is quite enough to be a conqueror, but it appears that we are to be more than conquerors. In other words, there is something which we can take over from those circumstances of ours which can contribute to the richness and the wealth of our Christian character. Are your circumstances difficult? Are you under the circumstances when you should be above them? You and I may live reigning over our circumstances. Whatever your trouble may be, you can be a conqueror of your circumstances.

3. Reigning over insufficiency.

Have you ever thought that you could not undertake certain Christian service because you have such a sense of inadequacy in your heart; yet you know in your heart that God is calling you to that service? If you are a royal Christian, you will attempt it. Moreover, you will do it because you know that God is calling you, and you know that He is going to see you through. It is a remarkable thing to see the scriptural account of the calling into service of some of God's children, revealing how many of them started with this sense of inadequacy. Moses was sent to Egypt, but at the start he made excuses and asked, "Who am I, that I should go?" Isaiah was bidden to go and speak a message of faithfulness to the wicked people outside the temple, and his immediate reaction was, "Woe is me, for I am undone." Jeremiah was told to go with his message from God and at once he rebelled saying, "Lord, I am a child, I cannot speak." Gideon was called out by God to be the leader of a great movement to deliver the people from the hands of the Midianites but he could only say from his heart, "Wherewith shall I save Israel?" Do we not shrink from some of the things that God calls us to do; but, if we were reigning in life, we would step out and do it, and find in the doing what God can be to obedient people who reign in life because He reigns in their lives.

4. Reigning over fears.

When we are called upon to bear our testimony of allegiance to Christ, some of us have fears about our ability to do it. All such need to remember that the Lord has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:5-6).

5. Reigning over feelings.

Are you on top of your feelings, or do they rule you? God's intention for every Christian is that he shall reign over his feelings. It is not always easy to be bright and breezy, even in the Christian life. There are times when clouds overspread your skies, and feelings come in so often to hide the sun. We have to be careful about handling those feelings, but we can reign over them if only we really want to do so. The Psalmist said, "Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him" (Psalm 43:5). If these and kindred

feelings come, remember that above the feelings there is God. You can reign over your feelings, through the power of God, in spite of everything.

6. Reigning over self.

The Christian's chief problem is not as much sin as it is self. But we may reign over self. You may find that to be a tremendous difficulty. Self comes in so much, robs us, and misleads us in so many ways. We may reign over self if we will. Oh, to know what it is to reign over self, that self shall become smaller and Christ shall increase in the life. There should be a minimum of self and a maximum of the Lord.

II. The Royal Resources.

You do not have these resources in yourself. You cannot sustain this royal position from your own self. But there are infinite stores at your disposal.

1. The abundance of grace.

There is a sufficiency of grace for the reigning life. There is all you can possibly need. You do not have to draw from a pond, or a lake, but from a never-failing ocean. Are you partaking of this fullness? "My grace is sufficient for thee."

2. The gift of righteousness.

This is a gift from God, which places us in right relationship to Him. Until the hand of faith receives this gift from God there cannot be any reigning at all.

3. The Lordship of Christ.

"They shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." You cannot reign until you have been brought into the royal family. When you were born again you came into the royal family. Since you have been brought into the royal family, you are entitled to live a reigning life. Your only chance to reign in life is that Christ shall reign in your life. What a glorious thing it is when a life is really submitted to the Lordship of Christ; when one really does give himself to the dominion of Christ.

"If you do not crown Him Lord of all,
You do not really crown Him Lord at all."

If Christ reigns in us, we shall reign in life.