

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Entering Jesus' Kingdom: Except!

We continue our study of the King of kings, and His kingdom. Last week, we learned one enters Jesus' kingdom by being born again, of water and of the Spirit (John 3:3-5). Now, let's key in on the word "except." No doubt, you readers understand the meaning of "except." It is a word of limitations. The entering into the kingdom of God will not happen "except" one is born again of water and of the Spirit. It is a word that sets up requirements to be met. The necessary conclusion is, then, if one meets the requirement and **is** born of water and of the Spirit, he **will** enter the kingdom of God.

Further in John 3, Jesus said, "*Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again*" (verse 7); "*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life*" (verses 14,15; see also Numbers 21:4-9). Looking at John 3:15, the majority of the "Christian" religious world says, "See? All that is necessary is to believe." Consider the word "should." Its meaning is not the same as the meaning of "will." Jesus did not say, "**will** not perish." Look at Luke 6:46: "*And, why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*" From Matthew 7:21, Jesus says, "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*" These two Scripture passages prove there are requirements to be done; belief alone will not save!

The kingdom of God is that kingdom about which Daniel prophesied, "*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed*" (Daniel 2:44a). Jesus is the King over the kingdom. Look again at Acts 2:29-36. And the Hebrew writer said, "*Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*" (12:2).

Friends, Jesus the Christ, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, is reigning over His kingdom now. The question for each of us is: Have I fulfilled the requirements He set up for entrance into that everlasting kingdom? God's Word teaches us that belief alone is not enough; baptism is that new birth which puts one into God's kingdom!