



Groups

Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides!

If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions towards the end of the document.

- These study guides will be written by thoughtful and experienced Life Group Leaders.
- Use these guides as a head-start in your own preparation as the needs and culture is different from each group.

NEW THIS YEAR:

As we enter this new season at Grace Chapel in search for the next Senior Pastor, we invite you to consider the significance of this moment and to incorporate a time of prayer for the search.

Outline

- I. Introduction and Main Scripture Readings
- II. Group Discussion Questions
- III. Prayer for Senior Pastor Search
- IV. The Journey Resources
- V. Support for the Leader

How to Use These Study Guides:

1. **Before the meeting:** Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
2. **Check In:** Begin each meeting with a short time checking in with one another.
3. **Read Scripture:** You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
4. **Ask Questions:** Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with and see how the conversation flows.
5. **End with Prayer:** Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

If your group meets over Zoom:

- Expect to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
- Be sensitive to attention spans over zoom. Keep meetings shorter than they would be in person.

Group Leader Support:

- Please reach out to your Campus Pastor if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic.
- If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor [Tim Ghali](#) or [Grace Lee](#) from the Group Life team.

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

February 25, 2024

by Pastor Bryan Wilkerson

Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done – Mark 11:27-28**I. Introduction**

We are continuing our Lent series - the 40 days leading up to Easter where Christians reflect more intentionally around the life and death of Jesus. Our series for Lent is part 2 of our Kingdom Come series, entitled *Kingdom Come: Thy Will be Done*. Each week we will be focusing on something different that Jesus calls us to surrender. And we hope that this prayer of surrender that Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, *thy will be done*, would be our prayer as well. To be clear, this series is not about trying to figure out the will of God for your life, but focuses on the will of God for Jesus to surrender and give his life, and also the will of God for us to live a life of surrender.

Questions: How should followers of Jesus treat those who they have profound differences with on convictions and opinions?

Bottom Line: “Thy will be done” means surrendering our certainty, our categories, and our need for control, and exchanging them for curiosity, connection, and confidence in God.”

Let’s begin in prayer before we begin reading and discussing our texts.

Main Scripture Readings:**Mark 11:27-28**

²⁷ They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. ²⁸ “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you authority to do this?”

Mark 12:13-17

¹³ Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. ¹⁴ They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not? ¹⁵ Should we pay or shouldn’t we?”

But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” ¹⁶ They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

¹⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.

II. Group Discussion Questions:

1. We begin by spending time on a challenging and complicated set of topics today where followers of Jesus can grow and perhaps even model love, care, listening, and being conversant in disagreement.

Pastor Bryan began with an opening illustration of a esteemed pastor and respected scholar named Alister Begg who on his podcast was asked by a woman for his advice on attending her grandson's wedding who was marrying a member of the transgender community.

The woman did not **believe** the marriage is in keeping with God's design, but she does love her grandson and **Begg was clear** that while he, too, holds the historic Christian view of marriage, given the circumstances, she should feel free to attend the wedding as an expression of love for her grandson. He **acknowledged** that everyone might not agree with him, and that that might not be the right answer for every person in every situation.

Pastor Bryan stated that Begg was **widely criticized** for his counsel; accused of "abandoning Scripture," caving" to culture, and encouraging this woman to sin. Part of the fallout was his **long-running radio** show of forty years was promptly dropped by the American Family Radio network. "In other words, he was cancelled."

Maybe you have seen or experienced a similar story. Whatever your opinion is and without condemning Begg, the woman asking or the American family Network, what feelings come to the front of when you hear such a story?

2. Bryan continued to set up one of the Scriptural passages of the message by saying:

"I begin with that story to illustrate a **disturbing trend** in the church today to **shut down** anyone who might **challenge or stretch** traditional ways of understanding and living out our faith. **Many Christians** are so CERTAIN that their **point of view** is the RIGHT one, and the ONLY right one, that they not only REFUSE to even CONSIDER another point of view, they PUNISH and DISMISS the person **who dares** to ask a question. **Whether you agree** with Begg's advice or not – full disclosure, **I do** – surely the **question is worthy** of conversation and consideration, and surely a **fellow believer and faithful servant** like Begg is worthy of respect and a fair hearing.

But it turns out **this tendency** to SHUT DOWN dissenting voices and difficult conversations – with malice, and even violence – has **been a problem** for people of faith for a long time. And today, in Mark's gospel, Jesus is going to **confront it**."

What are some of the reasons we are seeing this unfortunate way of dealing with disagreement today? As we move in to our discussion time, what are some of our initial hopes you hold for us a society and for us as Christian community?

Mark 12:13-17

3. Let's read Mark 12:13-17 –

- a. What strikes you as interesting or confusing in this text?
- b. Why are the religious leaders the Pharisees and Herodians trying to trap Jesus?
- c. Some context to appreciate the text: The Pharisees were arguably the most faithful and least corrupted of the Jewish sects of the day. The Herodians were a small but extremely wealthy and politically connected to Rome (i.e. Herod). These two groups did not care for each other. To the Herodians, the Pharisees were irrelevant and “too old-school” while the Pharisees saw the Herodians as compromised and worldly. They would have cancelled each other if they could but they had a shared enemy in Jesus whose popularity had grown so immense they decided to unite against him. What comparisons does this bring to mind?

(Group Leader note not to read out loud now.

But ideas could include, this would be like Republicans and Democrats uniting against a political adversary or two cultural personalities who have criticized the other temporarily putting aside their grievances to attack a third party. The point we want to make at this point is that these Jewish sects were against each other until they decided to attack Jesus together.)

4. With brilliance and wisdom, Jesus answers their question with the simple words: Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's. What does Jesus' profound answer bring to mind for you?
5. We all have certainties, categories and be in control of matters that perhaps we need to exercise more humility and graciousness in. Let's think for a few minutes silently. What good can surrendering our certainty, categories and our need for control bring to those in our lives and throughout our world?

Take Home Message:

“Thy will be done” means surrendering our certainty, our categories, and our need for control, and exchanging them for curiosity, connection, and confidence in God.

Let's Pray

III. **Prayer for Senior Pastor Search**

During this next ministry year as we navigate transitions, we invite you to secure time during your life group to pray over the search process. Click [here](#) to access the full resource of the prayer guide.

Prayers for Preparation of the heart

- Pray for God to reveal to you the condition of your soul or the work of God's Spirit within you, as you consider your feelings about the Senior Pastor search process.
- Prayer is not just an opportunity to make requests from God, but to listen to what God might want for us during this season of transition. Pause and listen for any invitation from God that he is asking you to enter into.

Prayers for the Purposes of God

- Pray that God will use the people of Grace Chapel in the fulfilling of his mission to further the Gospel message and for us to be people of peace and healing in a broken world.

Prayers for the People of Grace

- Pray that Grace Chapel will to seek the Lord as we continue our vision to be a vibrant, growing, multicultural community of seekers and believers, discovering life with God for the good of the world. Pray that we will continue with our mission to make and mobilize more disciples for Jesus Christ in Greater Boston and beyond.

Prayers for the Person God's calling

- Pray that they will have a passion to continue the work the Lord is doing at Grace Chapel and that they will be excited about the opportunities here.
- Pray that the new pastor will have a clear vision for how to minister to the people of Grace Chapel and the surrounding community.

Prayers for Discernment

- Pray for God's clear direction in how resumes are examined and interviews conducted.
- Ask God to bring the right person to the attention of the committee.
- Pray for the Search Committee to have God's wisdom in all the questions and information they share with the prospective pastor.

IV. **The Journey**



We're all on a journey. Where is yours taking you?

The beauty of the way of Jesus is that it's not just good for us, it is good for the world around us. But that kind of beautiful life doesn't come from just hearing the words of Jesus. It comes from putting them into practice.

Three kinds of practice, actually:

- The **with-God life** of our personal habits and routines;
- The **with-others life** of our genuine and life-changing relationships; and
- The **for-the-world life** that makes an impact beyond our immediate homes and families, into our communities and beyond.

Growing as disciples of Jesus will make a Kingdom difference in our world and a transformative difference in our lives as believers and as a group. And these resources are helpful in identifying the next steps for our journeys.

Launching by the end of September: The newly, revised Discipleship Planning Tool

We invite your group to [take the assessment](#) and to spend a session to share about the practice and perspective you chose to focus on for the next three months.

V. Support for the Leader

These Teaching Points are provided to help the group leader make connections from the message to their group with both insights from the Biblical text and opportunities in the life of our church.

Teaching Points:

- Mark is not concerned with trying to convince people to be a disciple of Jesus. He is trying to convince people that it is not through power Jesus is going to be the Messiah, the savior of the world, it is through serving, suffering, and surrendering
- Although surrendering our desires for God's desires isn't easy, surrender is the currency of the kingdom of God. Because in God's Kingdom, it isn't power, wealth or status that gives you access; it's surrender

- Jesus wasn't someone who just prayed when he was going through a hard time, he prayed all of the time so that when he encountered a hard time, that he would be more ready
- Being around Jesus is not the same thing as becoming like Jesus
- Jesus came not to be served, but he came to serve and to give his life for us
- Jesus surrendered his desire for self-preservation
- Share your life with Jesus, talk to him, let him know exactly how you feel.