

Life of Jesus

Session 19: Thy Kingdom Comes

We've reached the end of our expedition into the Life of Jesus. We learned about the context of the world He entered in the 1st Century, visited some highlights of His earthly life, saw the shape of the Kingdom He came to inaugurate, and learned a bit about how to walk in step with His Spirit. Have we fallen deeper in love with Jesus? I hope so. Perhaps we've just gotten a glimpse of this mysterious figure at the center of the Bible's story, this Man-Who-Is-God who chose not to remain in heaven, but to share life with us. He is still offering us His Life—even today—and if we want to participate, all we have to do is take a deep breath, trust His love, and enter into the union that alone can satisfy us.

PART I: Review

1. The Holy Spirit is Jesus with (and within) us; everything God the Father wants to do *with* and *for* us happens *through* the Spirit. We must stir up and submit to His influence in all things!
2. God is a waterfall of love and always moves toward the “poor.” Being a disciple of Jesus means we must tap into His resources so we can look past obstacles and truly know, value, and love others.
3. We get a limited time to use “our” money to transform ourselves into people of love who will be comfortable in the coming world of love and give others a sneak peek into what it will look like.
4. A life of abiding in Jesus is simply hearing God's music playing at all times—and joining in through trusting His love, asking/thanking Him for everything, and obeying His command to love others.

PART II: Thy Kingdom Comes

1. Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue that represents a succession of earthly empires which is then destroyed by a _____ that becomes a mountain that fills the whole world.
2. Jesus' kingdom is not primarily about going to God after _____, but about _____ reign breaking in to our earth now.
3. Jesus' kingdom has different _____ than any of our earthly kingdoms.
4. Jesus' kingdom overthrew the _____ empire—but not militarily.
5. Soon, Jesus' kingdom will arrive _____ and interrupt/overthrow every earthly power.
6. Big Idea: We can live as _____ of this heavenly kingdom now because Jesus is already king! Our communities can become tiny, working models of His more fully arrived future kingdom.
7. We prepare for the future by:

Part III: Small Group Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think about Jesus' kingdom more in terms of after-death reality or invasion of this world?
2. Which of the beatitudes strikes you as the most attractive of Jesus' values? Which seems like the most foolish/incompatible with life on earth?
3. Jesus' kingdom *does* overturn earthly power, but it does so from the inside, through the radical love and sacrifice of Jesus followers, living out the Way of Jesus in their cultural contexts. Have you thought about your faith in terms of belonging to an "foreign kingdom" here on the earth? Does this analogy strike you as helpful or strange? Explain.
4. Explain, to the best of your ability, how Jesus' kingdom can be both "here now" **and** "not yet arrived."
5. What things need to lose their status in our lives, if Jesus is the true king?
6. What can we do to prepare for the Kingdom yet to come?
7. What questions remain as we finish our class on the Life of Jesus?

Part IV: Gospel Reading: Read John 18-19

The Gospels are four different accounts of Jesus' life, each with their own unique flavor and perspective. Read them—over and over again—with this prayer: "Father God, please reveal Your Son Jesus to me by Your Spirit." He will answer this request!

Prayer: *"Father, we long to know Jesus better. Not simply more facts, but more relational connection, trust, and love. Please help us. We are poor, blind, pitiful sinners who also happen to be beloved children of your kingdom. Teach us to walk in step with Your Spirit (despite the hardship and pain this can bring!) and experience ever more fully the glory and joy of walking with You. We need you; we need each other."*

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name!

Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread and

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory Forever and Ever!

Amen.