

Welcome to the Kingdom of God

Mark 1:14-15

The kingdom of God is both the **present** and **future**.

- It is a **now** and a **later**.
- It is both a **position** and a **place**.
- A king's **rule** and **reign** determine his kingdom.

1:16-20

A citizen of the kingdom (disciple) is called to:

- **Follow**
- **Leave behind**
- **A task**

1:21-28

WARNING: This will be **different** than you **think**.

Looking back at 1:1-28

God has **invaded planet earth**.

Life Group Study Questions

For the week of January 27, 2019

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

- As Chris pointed out in the sermon, the disciples had previous interactions with Jesus which prepared them to respond to this life-changing invitation to "follow me." Can you think of one or two significant encounters you had with Jesus or a Christian that influenced your decision to follow Jesus?
- As you think of one of your favorite bosses, coaches or teachers, what was it about them that made it easy to follow their advice or example?

DIGGING DEEPER

1

This weekend Chris explained what the "kingdom of God" is, and how the term "kingdom of God/heaven" is used over 100 times in the Gospels. In Matthew 13, Jesus tells several parables to help us understand what the "kingdom of God/heaven" is like. As you read Matthew 13:24-46, mark up the passage and then answer the questions below it.

1. **Circle** / **highlight** any words or phrases that catch your attention.
2. **Underline** the verse you see as most important to remember.
3. **Put an X** next to anything that confuses you.

The Parable of the Weeds

²⁴ Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷ "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

²⁸ "An enemy did this,' he replied.

"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'

²⁹ "No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast

³¹ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

³³ He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

³⁶ Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

³⁷ He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

⁴⁰ "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

What do you learn about the kingdom of heaven from these parables?

Chris talked about the *here and now* and the *not yet* nature of the kingdom of God. How do you see these parables revealing both aspects of the kingdom?

How could a better understanding of the kingdom of God help us in our journey of following Jesus?

What do you learn about what we need to give up or leave behind in order to follow Jesus?

2

Hearing that we need to follow and obey Jesus can often feel like we're being asked to do something impossible. We can easily wonder, "How can we expect to be able to obey Jesus when we live in a fallen world and we have a sin nature?" What insights and encouragement do you find in John 15:1-8 as to why following Jesus is possible and not something we have to accomplish by sheer determination alone?

John 15:1-8 New International Version (NIV)

The Vine and the Branches

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

What are some challenges for you to consistently remain in Christ?

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back on this week's sermon and study, what's most important for you to remember?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Community Service is dedicated to being the hands and feet of Jesus and showing God's love in tangible ways through service to the community. There are many options for you to serve. For ideas, check out NorthCoastCommunityService.org