



SPRING 2024 // WEEK 1

Life Group Questions

Kingdom Stories: Living in the One True Kingdom // April 6-7, 2024

The Value of the Kingdom // Matthew 13:31-35; 44-50

Introduction

Welcome to our Spring session! Together we'll explore the Kingdom Stories of Jesus and what it looks like to live in the one true kingdom today and every day. This week we start with some basic explanation on the nature of the kingdom of God and the concept of Jesus teaching in parables. There is also a video from the Bible Project on the parables of Jesus in question #3 that you don't want to miss. Finally, as we consider the kingdom it's critical that we start with our own lives. **What does it mean to submit to God's rule, God's ways, to God's kingdom in my life, right where I am?**

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Due to preferences over a wide range of groups, we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

For Life Groups that are meeting for the first time:

1. Go around the circle and ask everyone to answer these "H" questions.

Hello - Tell us a little bit about yourself.

History - What brought you to LBC/Life Group?

Hobby - What do you enjoy doing?

Happy - What is a place, activity or person that is your happy place?

2. What is your favorite children's story?
3. If a stranger knew only one story about your life, what would you hope it would be?

For Life Groups that are reconnecting:

If you have a couple of new members in your group, you might want to have everyone answer the questions above before continuing with the questions below.

What is your favorite children's story?

If a stranger knew only one story about your life, what would you hope it would be?

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:

- a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
- b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
- c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you

This week read the passages as is indicated in the questions.

Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1)** Pastor Ryan stated that during the days of his earthly ministry, Jesus' main topic was the kingdom of God. **What has been your experience with teaching on the kingdom of God? Prior to this past weekend's message, how did you understand the kingdom of God?**

- 2)** Read *Matthew 13:31-33*. **Based on these parables, what do we learn about the nature of the kingdom? Where do you see evidence of the kingdom growing in your life in small ways?**

- 3)** Read *Matthew 13:34*. **What has been your experience with the parables of Jesus? Do you find them easy or hard to understand?**

Take a few minutes as a group to watch the following video from the Bible Project on the parables of Jesus. (<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/how-to-read-the-bible-the-parables-of-jesus/>)

How is this video helpful to you in understanding parables?

- 4) Read *Matthew 13:44-45*. **Do you believe that the kingdom is worth selling everything for?** Pastor Ryan mentioned that we all know the correct answer to this question is yes. But reflect on it a bit longer. **What about living underneath the rule and reign of God seems unappealing to you?**

What are the areas of your life where you are not so sure God's reign, God having absolute say in your life, is the best way?

- 5) Read *Matthew 13:47-50*. **Based on all the passages from this week's message/discussion, what does it look like to live in the kingdom of God?**

Since we know that God chooses to build his kingdom in and through our lives, how does that change the way you see your everyday life?

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

Prayer Focus: At least 3-5 times this next week, take time to utter the following prayer as a reminder to yourself that the one true Kingdom is continuing to grow in our world.

Oh God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near:

grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you;

bring the nations into your fold;

pour out your spirit upon all flesh;

and **hasten** the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Focus: Several times this week take about 10 minutes to read and meditate on *Hebrews 12:22-29*. **What do you notice about the kingdom and our response?**

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?