

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 1

Introduction to the Kingdom of God

Approach: (Go-around question)

When I say “kingdom”, what images come to mind from what you’ve read, movies you seen, things you’ve heard about living in a good and bad kingdom?

Video Scriptures:

- **The terms “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of heaven” are used interchangeably.**
Matthew 13:11 NIV He replied, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.”
- **God (the King) sent Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden because they broke a law in His kingdom.**
Mark 4:11 NIV He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables.”
Luke 8:10 NIV He said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, ‘though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.’”
Luke 16:16 NIV "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.”
Mark 1:14-15 NIV After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"
- **Jesus began and ended His ministry preaching the message of the kingdom of God. He also commissioned His disciples to preach the message of the kingdom of God.**
Luke 9:2 NIV and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.
Luke 10:9 NIV “Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’”
Matthew 24:14 NIV And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
Acts 1:3 NIV After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.
Acts 8:12 NIV But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.
- **Paul preached the message of the kingdom of God.**
Acts 28:23 NIV They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.
Acts 28:31 NIV Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.
- **After doing a Bible search of the word “gospel” [it means “good news”], you will find the only thing Jesus called or referred to as the “gospel” was what He called the kingdom of God/Heaven.**

Discovery:

1. What does all that information about the kingdom of God strongly imply to you about God? About yourself? About what you should do?
2. Why do you think Jesus called the kingdom of God a “mystery”?
3. In what ways would the Garden of Eden be an illustration of the Kingdom of God?
4. Why do you now think Jesus began His ministry and sent His disciples out to preach the message of the kingdom of God?

Application:

1. In what ways are you becoming more interested in the truth of the kingdom of God? How might you be better off if you also placed more emphasis upon understanding it and living it out in your daily life?
2. In what practical ways could you place more emphasis upon the kingdom of God in your personal life?
3. What could you begin doing this week?

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 2

What is the Kingdom of God?

Approach: (Go-around question)

What do you understand to be the most fundamental issue in effective parenting?

Video Scriptures:

- **The kingdom of God is all about the authority factor.**
- **The kingdom of God is not a place, but a governmental environment or a condition where every person or thing is in submission to His sovereign rule.**

Ezekiel 18:20 NIV The one who sins is the one who will die. The child will not share the guilt of the parent, nor will the parent share the guilt of the child. The righteousness of the righteous will be credited to them, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against them.

Romans 6:23 NIV For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Isaiah 59:2 NIV But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

- **It was because man broke the King's (God's) laws that Jesus had to die as our substitute to pay our consequences for breaking His laws.**

Romans 14:17 NIV For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,

Mark 12:29-30 NIV “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’”

- **Our king is not looking for sheer robotic obedience, but rather, obedience motivated by a loving heart's desire to obey Him.**
- **Love must be the driving force for His servants to both delight in obeying His commands and in enjoying His presence.**

Psalms 119:35 NIV Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.

Psalms 119:143 NIV Trouble and distress have come upon me, but your commands are my delight.

Psalms 16:11 NIV You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

- **The important question is not only, “Have you heard the gospel, believed, received it and been saved?”, but “Has the gospel brought you under the rule of the King?” Has your heart said to God “Thy will be done?”**

John 14:15 NIV “If you love me, you will obey what I command.”

Discovery:

1. Based upon Mark 12:29-30, is authentic Christianity motivated by pure authority, right theology or strong passion for God within a person? (If it is based on strong passion alone, does that mean it is totally subjectively based on the whim of someone's idea of what feels or sounds good to them?)
2. In what ways do these insights about the kingdom of God (authority of God) clarify what Jesus meant when He said ...
 - Matthew 7:21 *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **only** he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."*
 - John 14:15 *"If you love me, you will obey what I command."*
 - Matthew 10:37 NLT *"If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine."*
3. In what ways is the truth of the kingdom of God a stark contrast to modern culture?
4. How do you emotionally and mentally reconcile the authority factor of the kingdom with loving the King with all you are?
5. How serious do you see the King being about our obedience to His laws? How does this contrast with His grace? When reconciling the King's requirements for obedience with His gift of grace, at the end of the day which of the two will represent His bottom line? ... or will there be another value that He might default to?

Application:

1. If you were to assign a number (between 1 and 10) to what has been driving your commitment to God, what number would you assign to literally loving God? Is that the level you want it to be?
2. In what specific ways is your lifestyle a contrast to living the truth of the kingdom of God? What would it take for you to shift to living more of the truth of the kingdom?
3. How do you think your small group could help each other find greater delight in the King by lovingly submitting more completely to His authority?

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 3

Where is the Kingdom of God?

Approach: (Go-around question)

In light of what Jesus said about the kingdom of God, in what way(s) has your definition changed about what a Christian is?

Video Scriptures:

Luke 17:20-21 NIV Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”

- **What exactly was the question the Pharisees asked Jesus to answer?**

Luke 17:20-21 NLT One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, “When will the Kingdom of God come?” Jesus replied, “The Kingdom of God can’t be detected by visible signs. You won’t be able to say, ‘Here it is!’ or ‘It’s over there!’ For the Kingdom of God is already among you.”

- **The kingdom is not a place, but a condition where God reigns as King.**

Matthew 23:26 NIV “Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.”

[The following passages are referenced in the video to point out how the Greek word translated “among” or “within” is used in the Septuagint.]

Isaiah 16:11 NIV My heart laments for Moab like a harp, my inmost being for Kir Hareseth.

Psalms 103:1 NIV Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

Luke 9:23 ESV And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

- **When you actually accept that “the kingdom of God is within you”, your daily life’s attitude and behavior will change.**

Romans 12:2 NLT Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Colossians 3:23 ISV Whatever you do, work at it wholeheartedly as though you were doing it for the Lord and not merely for people.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NLT Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

Discovery:

1. In what practical ways was Jesus' placement of the kingdom in stark contrast to what the Pharisees were thinking and asking? How do those differences relate to one's Christian walk today?
2. What fundamental difference is there between thinking of the kingdom being "within us" and it being "among us"?
3. What are some observable internal indicators that a person understands and accepts the truth that the King lives within them? (EX: humility, etc.)
4. How does "You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price" affect your daily life?
5. How can the truth taught in this lesson affect how you pray each day? Describe how it motivates you to pray?

Application:

1. What might you need to change in your way of thinking or lifestyle this week as you apply what Colossians 3:23 tells you, now that you see the King, with all His authority, lives within you?
2. What specifically have you sensed God's Spirit has enlightened you about or given you a 'twinge' about in this lesson?
3. What friend(s) could you discuss this truth with in order to unpack more of the practical aspects of how this applies to your daily life?

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 4

How to Enter the Kingdom of God

Approach: (Go-around question)

What are some different ways you have heard how a person becomes a Christian?

Video Scriptures:

John 3:3 NLT Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.”

- **Nicodemus, a serious Jewish Bible teacher, didn’t know what that meant.**

John 3:7 NLT So don’t be surprised when I say, “You must be born again.”

Ezekiel 36:25-27 NLT “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. Your filth will be washed away, and you will no longer worship idols. And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.”

- **The most essential step a person must take in order for them to have the kingdom of God within them is to make an authentic surrender of their heart to obey the King’s laws.**

Luke 11:2 KJV “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.”

Romans 8:16 NLT For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children.

Discovery:

1. What might be the evidence in a person’s choices that they are in the kingdom of God? ...of His Spirit living in you?
2. Why would a person need to be “born again” before they can “see” the kingdom of God in their current and/or future life?
3. What significance would an honest surrender of one’s will to the King serve in order for His regeneration process to begin?
4. Will the person who surrenders their life to the King expect to suddenly perfectly obey the King’s laws from that time forward or should they expect they will need to surrender more of their life in their future? Why?

Application:

1. How would knowing for certain that the Spirit of God is living in you and empowering you to do His will, affect the decisions you make each day?
2. What issues about God's kingdom do you sense a desire to 'see' more clearly?
3. What steps are you willing to take within 24 hours in order to position yourself to 'see' more about God's Kingdom?
4. What new issues have you discovered in your life that you need to surrender to the King in order to enjoy continued kingdom living?

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 5

What is “Good News?”

Approach: (Go-around question)

What does it take for you to classify something to be “good news?”

Video Scriptures:

- **What you call “good news” identifies your values, but others may not share those values.**

Mark 1:14-15 NIV After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

- **How can a governmental condition honestly be called “good news?”**

Luke 4:43 NIV But he said, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.”

John 15:11 NLT “I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!”

Psalms 16:11 ESV You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

- **“Good news” in the Bible relates more to a close relationship with the King of the kingdom where we not only find reprieve from our stress, but also “pleasures forevermore.”**

Matthew 13:44 NIV 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.

- **The kingdom of God (Heaven) is such “good news”, that once we understand it, it stirs up such strong motivation within us that we’re willing to sacrifice whatever it takes to grab hold of it.**

Luke 16:16 ESV “The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.”

Luke 8:9-10 ESV And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that ‘seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’”

Mark 7:24-30 ESV And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And he said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” But she answered him, “Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” And he said to her, “For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter.” And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

- **Please do not underestimate the absolute necessity of passion in a person’s heart for God.**

Mark 12:30 NLT “And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.”

Discovery:

1. What does Jesus calling the kingdom of God “good news” suggest to us about His value system? (EX: internal joy over surface laughter, long term over temporary, etc.)
2. How does our definition of joy compare to the definition of joy as it relates to the “good news” of living in God’s kingdom?
3. Once a person chooses to submit to God’s authority, what part of their regeneration (Ez. 36:25-26) brings about “joy” and their newly enhanced desire to love and obey the King?
4. What makes a spiritual passion for God so critical to actually enjoying His kingdom on earth and/or living in His heaven for eternity? Is it even possible to enter heaven without it?

Application:

1. If the core things the Bible says brings the greatest joy is inconsistent to what you currently find brings you your greatest pleasures, will you really be happy in God’s heaven if you must live by what God calls pleasure? What would you need to realign and begin to practice more in order to assure you would be happy in God’s heaven?
2. What inner changes do you desire to see within your life?
3. What steps are you taking to encourage such changes within you?

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 6

Is the Kingdom Present or Future?

Approach: (Go-around questions)

1. What do you remember to be most interesting about the movie, “Back to the Future?”
2. What do you anticipate that is in your future that you would really like to have today?

Video Scriptures:

Isaiah 9:6-7 NIV For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

2 Timothy 4:1 NIV In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:

Luke 11:20 NIV But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

- **Jesus is saying that wherever a demon is driven out, a body healed or a person surrenders to God’s authority; His future kingdom has come into the present here and now.**

Genesis 2:7 NIV The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Matthew 6:10 “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

Luke 17:21 NIV nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.

- **Having His Kingdom within us and having Him continually governing the decisions in our daily lives may be two different things.**

John 5:19 NIV Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

Luke 22:42 NIV “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

- **We grow in spiritual maturity, especially as we spend time examining His Word to find out more about Him, His values and His ways.**

2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect [contemplate] the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

You can bring a bit of God’s future kingdom into the present each time you help another person align themselves with God’s kingdom by genuinely surrendering their lives to God’s authority, or each time you personally reflect on His Word seeking to know His values and ways and aligning yourself to them!

Discovery:

1. What part of the future does Jesus seem to be saying is possible for us to experience today?
2. When does the future kingdom life actually become present in a person's life?
3. How does a person go about experiencing more of the future kingdom life today?
4. Describe the nature of faith that is required to experience an ever increasing expansion of God's kingdom in their daily life.

Application:

1. What needs to get realigned in your own life in order for you to experience more of God's future in your life today?
2. What steps can you take right away to begin to realign whatever need to be realigned?
3. What does God's Word promise you will experience more of when you are realigned with His kingdom authority? (Romans 14:17) In what ways might that be better than what you have been experiencing?
4. Who can you think of that would enjoy being able to live more in God's kingdom in their present day? What steps can you take to help them go about discovering this kind of better life now and delightful eternal life later?

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 7

Growing in the Kingdom

Approach: (Go-around question)

What do you envision a spiritually mature person would be like?

Video Scriptures:

Mark 4:30-32 NIV What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.

1 Corinthians 1:7 NIV Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.

1 Corinthians 3:1 NIV Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ.

1 John 2:12-14 NIV I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

- **What growth in the kingdom looks like is not status, longevity, head knowledge, etc., but rather, an increase in the level of being able to hear and submit to the king.**

John 5:19 NIV Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

Genesis 3:5 NLT God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.

- **This independent attitude became the most catalytic component in disrupting God’s kingdom’s original “righteousness, peace and joy”, and it has the same effect on us today.**
- **This is why it is the most loving thing you can do for your child in helping them learn to deal with their independence as early as possible so they can submit more easily to the King when they get older.**

Proverbs 22:15 NLT A youngster’s heart is filled with foolishness, but physical discipline will drive it far away.

Luke 9:23 NLT Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me.

- **It is all about learning to continually surrender your pride and ego and let the King be the literal ruler of your daily life. The more you do that, the more mature you are in God’s kingdom.**

Discovery:

1. Which spiritual stage described in the Bible (or map) does your past six months reveal you are in? What do you sense it is going to take for you to move to the next stage?
2. In what ways is any growing seed (especially a mustard seed) like the kingdom of God becoming more widespread in a person's life?
3. Describe healthy and unhealthy independence and dependence that keeps a person from experiencing the increasing joy found in kingdom living?
4. How can you diligently and deliberately train a child (your child) to control their healthy independence so it doesn't become unhealthy and inhibit or destroy their relationship with God?

Application:

1. In what ways have you seen an unhealthy independence popping up in your daily life that may be affecting your spiritual growth? How soon did it become evident in your child's life?
2. What do you see you could change in your life to better position yourself to take your next step toward spiritual maturity?
3. Who comes to your mind that you sense you need to pray for and if given the opportunity, share tonight's insights with?

Kingdom of God Video Series – Lesson 8

Spiritual Cancer

Approach: (Go-around question)

To what extent do you think independence and rebellion have affected our school systems in the last 30 years?

Video Scriptures:

- **Independence can take on a whole life of its own and ultimately rob us of our relationship with Christ.**

1 Samuel 15:23 NLT Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols. So because you have rejected the command of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.”

- **Independence is like cancer in remission; rebellion is like cancer that has come out of remission.**

- **The message of the kingdom of God is a direct attack on independence, especially rebellion.**

Luke 9:23 NLT Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me.

- **Most of your stress/frustration is simply evidence of a wrestling within you between your pride, insistence on doing things your way, etc., and God’s laws or ways.**

Hebrews 13:17 NIV Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

- **The one who submits to their spiritual authority will benefit the most because they keep their inner spirit clean so God can continue to talk to them.**

Romans 8:12-13 NIV Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

- **After understanding Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom, we can more easily see what “the sinful nature” has to do with Satan’s temptation (Genesis 3:5) where he entices Adam and Eve to rebel against God’s authority and be “like God.”**

Genesis 3:5 NIV For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

Discovery:

1. Read 1 Samuel 15:1-23. Where did you see symptoms of Saul's rebellion and what do you think prompted them? How should we respond if we see our child or another person do similar things to what Saul did?
2. What are some common issues every human will continue to struggle with regarding their independent nature, and which would be more unique to the individual.
3. Create a joint list of the benefits of living a life of dependence on God. (You can begin with 'reduced stress'.)

Application:

1. To what extent do you intend to further liberate and distance yourself from the common spiritual disease of unhealthy independence and rebellion?
2. In what stages in your life have you observed your greatest struggle with independence and rebellion? What have you sensed God has nudged you to do in your life to help you overcome that struggle?
3. What creative ways do you sense the Holy Spirit might use you to help others experience more of the joy and freedom that comes from greater dependence upon God's authority?