

Study Guide, Term 1/2016



Leaders' Guide

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

(Matthew 24:14 ESV)

**GROW
TOGETHER
IN JESUS**
FOR GOD'S GLORY



Grace Community Groups

Each week, across the Sunshine Coast, small groups from Grace Christian Church meet to

- study the Bible,
- pray together,
- worship God,
- encourage each other,
- care for one-another,
- grow together as followers of Jesus,
- laugh, cry, discuss life's big questions,
- and build lasting friendships!



Area/Group Focus	Meeting time	Contact	Phone
Bli Bli	Wednesday, 7.00pm	John Baird	(07) 5448 4040
Buderim	Monday, 7.00pm	Colin Weston	(07) 5476 9648
Buderim/Sippy Downs	Thursday, 7.00pm	Clint Lombard	0478 578 152
Kawana/Wurtulla	Monday (fortnightly), 7.00pm	Tim Richards	(07) 5438 2201
Woombye	1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.00pm	Des Morris	0432 089 069
Ladies	Thursday, 10.00am	Alison Sheldon	(07) 5477 1895
Young Mums	Tuesday, 10:00am	Jean Bowen-Jones	0402 746 533
Day-time	Tuesday, 10:30am	Rick Zylstra	0407 725 899

If you're not part of a group yet, why not? It might take courage to join a group, or it might take a bit of personal rescheduling, but we promise that you won't regret it!

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Introduction to the Study Guide

It's time to proclaim the Kingdom.

Welcome to our first study series for 2016. We're praying that as we study what it means to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom in Matthew's gospel, that we'd all be encouraged and challenged to be kingdom-proclaimers ourselves.

Introduction to Matthew

Matthew was a a disciple of Jesus. He had been called to follow Jesus from behind his tax-collectors' booth.

Tax collectors were often seen as sell-outs by their fellow countrymen. Tax collectors bought licences to collect taxes from the Roman government, and then collected taxes themselves, plus interest, to recoup their outlay.

But this doesn't bother Jesus. He simply calls Matthew, and Matthew leaves his booth with the money on the table and follows Jesus (Luke 5:27-32)



We don't know much else about Matthew other than that he comes from a Jewish background. A lot of his gospel is concerned with demonstrating the connection between the Old Testament and Jesus. He often references the Old Testament, showing how prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus, using the words, "As it is written..."

The Kingdom in Matthew's Gospel

Part of this focus on fulfilment relates to the Kingdom of God that was promised in the Old Testament.

God said in 1 Chronicles 17:11, speaking to King David:

"When your days are fulfilled to walk with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever."

(1 Chronicles 17:11–14 ESV)

Much of Jesus' ministry is concerned with announcing, or proclaiming, the arrival of that Kingdom, with himself as the promised "Son of David" - the King of God's Kingdom.

Matthew begins his record of Jesus' ministry with an announcement of the Kingdom:

“From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.””

(Matthew 4:17 ESV)

The biggest challenge for Jesus’ hearers, for Matthew’s early readers, and for ourselves today, is recognising the Kingdom of God for what it is.

Some have thought it is a political kingdom, established through policy. Some have thought it is an empire, established through military conquest. Some have thought the Kingdom is just a metaphor for “a new society of transformed individuals based on the timeless ethical and religious principles of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity.”



In actual fact, the kingdom Jesus is talking about, and the Kingdom of God foreshadowed in the Old Testament is none of these things. American Bible teacher R.C. Sproul has summarised the truth of the Kingdom of God like this:

“[The kingdom is] the decisive intrusion of God’s saving presence into this world through the Messiah’s life, death, and resurrection.”

This is the Kingdom Jesus proclaims in Matthew. It’s often surprising, but it’s always wonderful. And this is the Kingdom that we are called to continue proclaiming.

- Clint Lombard & Rick Zylstra
25 January 2016

How to use this study guide

Each weekly study in this guide is divided into two major sections:

Sermon

Sermon Notes

The first section of each study is based around the Sunday sermon. There is a section for you to write notes during the sermon. You might want to write down

- The major points of the message
- Things that interested you
- Important verses and other verse references

This will help you follow what is being taught, but it will also help you remember what you learnt when you look over your notes later.

The Big Idea

This block is where you can write the one Big Idea of the message. Every message should have one simple, clear '**Big Idea**' which you can take away.

Questions

It's normal to go away from a Bible message still having questions. This section is for you to write down those things, so that you can try to find out later, maybe by asking the pastor or your group leader, or discussing it with your group.

Group Bible Study

You can do these studies in your own, but to get the most out of them, you should try and attend a weekly group Bible study - a Grace Community Group. The studies in this guide are designed using an easy framework called '**COMA**':

Context: These questions help you understand where the text fits into the big picture. It's about asking, "What's been happening up to this point?"

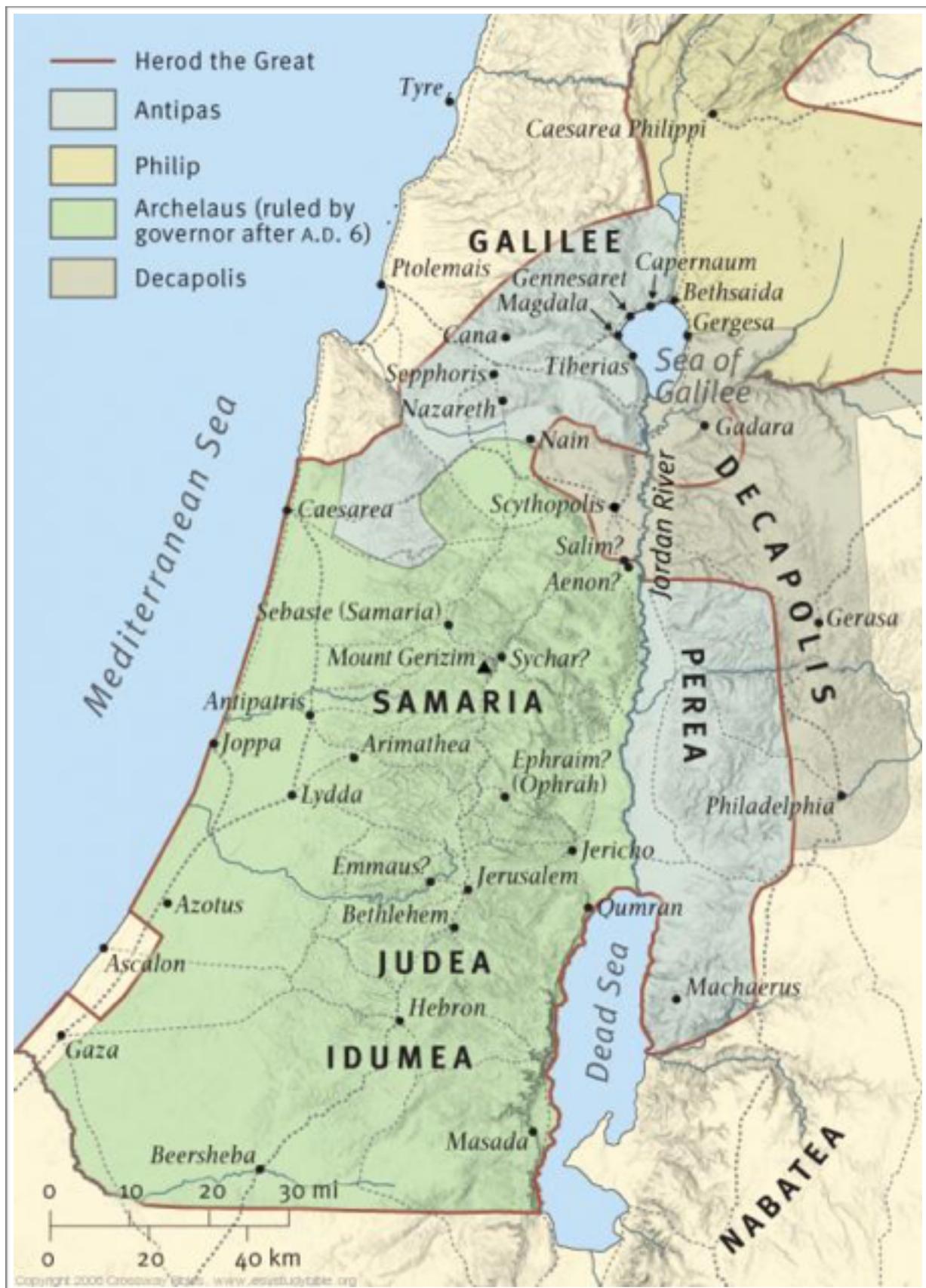
Observation: These questions help you to orientate yourself in the text by looking at what it says. It's about asking, "What ideas come up in the text?" and "What surprises are there?"

Meaning: These questions help you try to uncover what the author means. It's about asking, "What does this section tell me about God, about Jesus, and about myself?"

Application: These questions help you to work out how to respond to the Bible's message. It's about asking, "How does this passage challenge or confirm my understanding?", "Is there something in my life that needs to change?", or "What does this passage teach me about being a follower of Jesus?"

Prayer Points Finally, there is a section to write prayer points. This way you can remember to pray for each other during and after the group meeting, and also keep track of prayers answered. Prayer and praying for each other is a very important part of Christians meeting together.

Map: The Setting of Matthew's Gospel



14 February 2016

1. BLUEPRINTS

Matthew 4:12-25

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

(take these questions to your home group and try to find some answers)

Group Bible Study - Week 1

Opening Question: If you were telling someone about Jesus, where would you start?

 Ask a few people to share reading Matthew 4:12-25 for the group.

Context

1. Where has Jesus been for the last forty days? (*see Matthew 4:1-11*)

He has been in the wilderness, being tempted by the devil.

2. In v1, which 'John' had just been arrested, and why? (*see Matthew 14:3-5*)

John the Baptist had been arrested because he had spoken out against King Herod's sin in scandalously marrying his brother's wife.

Observation

3. Why does Matthew say Jesus' choice of location to begin his ministry is significant? (v14)

Because it fulfils one of the Old Testament promises in Isaiah.

4. What was Jesus message? (v17)

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

5. What is surprising about Simon, Andrew, James and John's response to Jesus' call in v19? (v20, 22)

They "immediately" leave everything and obey Jesus by following him.

6. How would you summarise Jesus' ministry in v23-24?

Proclaiming the gospel, and healing the sick and afflicted.

7. Look at the map on p.7. How would you describe the extent of Jesus fame and ministry? (v23-25)

Jesus is ministering over a wide area across Galilee, and he has gained a reputation across the entire region of first-century Palestine.

Meaning

8. Why do you think Jesus “withdrew” to a small community in the north, far away from Jerusalem, after John’s arrest? (v12)

Perhaps he didn’t want to attract violent opposition from those who were opposed to John’s ministry, as Jesus had publicly associated with John (Matthew 3:13). Jesus would eventually attract opposition, but only when the time was right (see also John 7:30)

9. Matthew connects the beginning of Jesus’ ministry with Isaiah 9:1-2 for geographical reasons, but also for other reasons. What do you think is the connection between Jesus preaching in v17, and the “great light” in v16? You might want to read Isaiah 9:1-7 for more information.

The “great light” is the coming of God’s Kingdom, also known in Matthew’s gospel as the Kingdom of Heaven. This language of Isaiah 9:1-7 is of final victory and the establishment of a new kingdom, a kingdom of peace, righteousness and justice, which will be ruled by God’s King, the Son of David, forever.

Jesus is proclaiming that this kingdom has arrived.

10. Why do you think Jesus accompanied his Kingdom-proclaiming ministry with “healing every disease and every affliction among the people”? (v12)

The healings and miracles validated his proclamation of the Kingdom, and demonstrated the arrival of the Kingdom, where God will restore all things (see also Jeremiah 30:17-22)

Application

11. When we share the gospel with someone, what are the basics that we ought to include?

Drawing from the passage, it must be emphasised that Jesus has come as God's appointed King, and that he requires the submission and worship he deserves.

However, this naturally includes other aspects of the gospel message that characterises the establishment of the kingdom: the exposure of sin, the need for repentance (see v17), Jesus' death and resurrection for dealing with that sin, and the promised hope of eternal life in God's Kingdom forever, for those who trust in God's king.

(see also '2 Ways to Live' on p.42)

12. Discuss this statement in the light of Jesus' ministry in v23-24:

“What makes Christian social involvement distinctly Christian is a commitment to reconciling the poor to God through the proclamation of the gospel.”

- p.75, *Total Church: A Radical Reshaping around Gospel and Community*,

by Tim Chester and Steve Timmis © 2007

(This is an open question. Encourage discussion, and encourage your group members to avoid being general and vague. Rather be specific and practical.

Throughout Christian history, There has been a frequent tendency for the church to overemphasise social involvement at the expense of the gospel, or even the gospel at the expense of social involvement.

This question is an opportunity to explore the middle ground where true Christian expression and imitation of Jesus in the course of our evangelism may lie.)

Prayer Points:

Christianity
EXPLORED

Personal Memo #1

*Discuss with my group who I might be able to
invite to Christianity Explored (CE) in April.*

21 February 2016

2. SALT & LIGHT

Matthew 5:13-16

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 2

Opening Question: How do people usually discover that you are a Christian?

 Ask someone to read Matthew 5:13-16 for the group.

Context

1. Scan over Matthew ch5-7. What is the context of today's text?

Today's text is part of Jesus' famous 'Sermon on the Mount'. This sermon is basically about life in God's Kingdom.

Observation

2. What does Jesus call his disciples in v13 and v14?

He calls them 'the salt of the earth', and 'the light of the world'.

3. What happens to salt that has lost its saltiness? (v13)

It becomes worthless, and is thrown out.

4. What is the logical thing to do with a lamp? (v15)

To put it on a stand so that it can illuminate the whole house.

Meaning

5. Jesus use the images of salt to describe his followers (v13). What is salt typically used for, and why might it be a good image for followers of Jesus?

Salt is used for flavour and as a preservative. Jesus followers ought to be a 'positive additive' in the world, working for the good of those around them, especially for their spiritual good.

6. What kind of person is Jesus referring to when he talks about salt that has “lost its taste”? (v13)

These are people who, though they look like followers of Jesus, do not behave like followers of Jesus.

7. What would it look like to “let your light shine before others”? (v16)

To live in the world as an ‘obvious Christian’. To act towards others in such a way that there is no doubt that you are a follower of Jesus Christ.

(Get your group to list specific practical examples.)

8. What is the purpose of letting our light shine before others? (v16)

That the world around us may see our good works, and recognise the God behind them. Our works in the world should be those of ‘citizens of the kingdom’, and bring obvious glory and honour to God.

Application

9. Why might we be tempted to put our light “under a basket”?

There may be many reasons for this, but usually its a combination of fear, anxiety and doubt. Let people discuss particular struggles that they have with living obviously Christian lives.

10. How could we encourage one-another to live lives that are obviously Christian to those around us?

(open question)

Prayer Points:

Christianity
EXPLORED

Personal Memo #2

Pray with my group for the people
we spoke about last week

28 February 2016

3. RIGHTEOUSNESS

Matthew 5:17-20

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 3

 Ask someone to read Matthew 5:17-20 for the group.

Opening Question: What, would you say, qualifies someone to be called a 'good person' in the eyes of the world around us?

Context

1. What was the big idea of last week's study in the previous section (v13-16)?

Disciples of Jesus are to be "positive additives" in the world, living obviously Christian lives for the glory of God and the good of those around us.

Observation

2. What are "the Law and the Prophets" that Jesus is talking about? (v17)

The Old Testament scriptures. These are the records of God's dealings with his people Israel, including his covenant requirements and his promises to them.

3. What does Jesus say he has come to do with the Law? (v18)

He has come to fulfil the Law and the Prophets.

4. What are the 'entry requirements' for the Kingdom? (v20)

That "your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees."

5. What does Jesus mean by the word 'righteousness' in v20?

In the context, it's obedience to God's Law. However a broader description of righteousness might be "a right relationship with God".

Meaning

6. Look at what Jesus does with the Law in 5:21-22 and 5:27-28. What problem does this present for those who wish to enter the kingdom of heaven (v20)?

Jesus is raising the bar on the Law, and setting a standard of perfect righteousness. No-one can possibly hope to be righteous like this.

Try and get you group to see that, according to Jesus' teaching on the Law, we all have disobeyed, therefore we are all unrighteous and don't meet the entry requirements for the kingdom of heaven.

7. What is the solution? Compare v17 with 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 10:4 and Galatians 3:10-14.

Jesus meets the perfect requirement of the Law, (i.e. he fulfils the Law), and thereby makes it possible for those who have faith in him to be made righteous and be fit to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Application

8. Discuss the following statement in relation to Matthew 5:17-20.

““ “People don't need to hear that they are guilty of disobeying a holy God - most people already feel bad enough about themselves. What people need to hear is that God loves them and desperately wants to show them how much he loves them.”

(This is an open discussion. The goal here is to make sure we don't fall into the trap of presenting a counterfeit gospel where sin doesn't matter, or a counterfeit God whose attributes, like love and justice, are unequal.)

9. How can we be honest and clear about the righteous requirements of the gospel, but still offer good news? How might that conversation pan out?

(The important thing here is to see the significance of Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice. Try and get your group to talk practically about how a conversation might go between them and a non-Christian friend on this issue.)

Prayer Points:

Christianity
EXPLORED

Personal Memo #3

Make intentional contact with one of the people we've been talking about, and have a real conversation with them.

6 March 2016

4. COMPASSION

Matthew 9:35-38

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 4

Opening Question: What motivates you to tell your unbelieving friends and family members about Jesus?

 Ask someone to read Matthew 9:35-38 for the group.

Context

1. Skim over Matthew ch9. What has Jesus spent most of this chapter doing?

He has been healing the sick: the paralytic in v1-8, the sick woman in v20-22, the synagogue ruler's daughter in v18-19 and v23-36, the two blind men in v27-31, and the mute, demon-possessed man in v32-24.

2. Re-read Matthew 4:23-25. What is the significance of Jesus' healing ministry in his proclamation of the Kingdom?

These healings, resurrections and exorcisms give credibility to the proclamation of the Kingdom's arrival, but these 'works of restoration' also demonstrate the arrival of the Kingdom in power.

Observation

3. Why was Jesus being followed by crowds of people? (v36, see 4:17, 23-25, 8:1-3, 18, 9:8, 33, compare with Mark 15:43 and Luke 2:25)

It appears the crowd was attracted by his teaching and his healing, but there were also many in Israel who were waiting for the coming of the Kingdom promised in the Old Testament, like Joseph and Simeon.

The crowds recognised Jesus work as ushering in the Kingdom of God, and wanted to be near him when it happened. Whether or not they understood what the Kingdom was truly like is another matter.

4. What moves Jesus to compassion for the crowd? (v36-37)

Jesus is concerned that the crowds lack 'shepherds', and that there aren't enough labourers for this great harvest.

(For now, just try and identify what the text actually says. We'll get to the meaning for these pictures in the next section.)

5.. In his compassion, what does Jesus tell his disciples to do? (v37-38)

To pray that God would send out labourers into the harvest field.

Meaning

6. Read Matthew 18:26-27, Luke 10:33-34 and Luke 15:20. In all of these instances, what is the result of the compassion that is expressed?

Compassion always leads to action; it is not just a passive feeling.

7. Read Ezekiel 34:1-6, 11-16 and 20-24. If you're in a group, perhaps ask three people to read a section each.

a) What is significant about Jesus using the images of sheep and a shepherd, according to Ezekiel 34?

This is an image that God used to describe how he will establish his Kingdom among his people. God is the shepherd, his people are the sheep. However, there are also other 'shepherds' with whom God is not pleased.

b) Who are the failed "shepherds of Israel" in the context of Matthew's gospel and Jesus' ministry? (see also Matthew 7:28-39 and 9:34)

These 'failed shepherds' are the scribes and Pharisees, who have failed to lead the people of Israel towards God's Kingdom.

c) What can we expect from Jesus, based on Ezekiel 34?

Jesus will succeed where the other shepherds have failed. He is the one who is the Son of David, who will rule over God's people.

8. What does the fact that Jesus tells his disciples to pray in v38 tell you about the place of prayer in spreading gospel of the Kingdom?

It tells us that God is sovereignly behind the spread of the Kingdom, but also that prayer is essential in the spreading of the gospel of the Kingdom. In many ways, the spread of the Kingdom begins with prayer: earnest prayer resulting from compassion for the lost (v36).

Note that this prayer is not because God is ignorant of or indifferent to the needs of his harvest. Rather, this is the process he has chosen for the spread of the Kingdom, to respond to the prayers of his people (see also Matthew 6:9-10)

Application

9. Why do we often struggle to feel a deep compassion for those who don't know Jesus?

(open question)

Suggestions:

- we tend to use the wrong categories when we consider others' well-being, e.g. wealth, status, influence, happiness, etc.*
- perhaps we don't value the gospel highly enough ourselves?*

10. How can we motivate ourselves and those around us towards more earnest prayer for the lost?

(open question)

Prayer Points:

Christianity
EXPLORED

Personal Memo #4

*Find a way to demonstrate distinctly Christian love
to the person you're hoping to invite to CE.*

13 March 2016

5. RESPONSE

Matthew 13:1-23

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 5

Opening Question: How have people responded when you have tried to tell them about Jesus?

 Ask one or two people to read Matthew 13:1-23 for the group.

Context

1. Read Matthew 12:1-2, 9-15 and 22-24. What has been happening lately?

Opposition to Jesus, his message and his ministry is increasing.

Observation

2. Summarise the parable in 13:3-9 using the table below

Type of Ground	Result
Path	Eaten by birds
Rocky ground	Sprang up quickly but withered in the sun
Among thorns	Choked by thorns
Good soil	Produced an abundant harvest

Meaning

3. What does Jesus say is the purpose of the parables? (v11-17, see also 13:34-35)

The purpose of the parables is to hide the meaning (i.e. “the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, v11), so that only those who are meant to understand will understand it. However, the Word goes out to everyone because they are under judgement and will not understand, as Isaiah prophesied.

4. What does v11 imply about the way people understand “the secrets of the Kingdom? (see Matthew 11:25-27)

God is the one who ultimately reveals “the secrets of the Kingdom”, and gives understanding to those who hear.

5. Use the table below to summarise the meaning of the different types of ground in v18-23.

<u>Type of Ground</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Path	The Word is not understood, and the evil one snatches it away from the heart
Rocky ground	Hears and Word and receives it with joy, but falls away because of the pressure of suffering and persecution
Among thorns	Hears the Word, but growth is choked by the pressures of life and it produces no fruit
Good soil	Hears the Word and understands it, and produces fruit and a harvest

Application

6. What does Jesus say we can expect when we “sow the word”?

There will be a variety of responses. Many will not respond well to the word, and many will only appear to respond.

7. How can we keep from becoming discouraged by the potential for negative responses when we tell people about Jesus?

(open question)

Suggestions:

- remember that God does the revealing, not us (v11)

- remember that God is working out his plan (v16-17)

7. Considering the possible responses to the gospel message in the parable, how might we adapt our methods in telling people about Jesus?

(open question)

(This might seem a very abstract question, but try and get your group to creatively consider how they might clearly communicate the gospel message to someone who is a sceptic - the path, or to someone who idolises wealth - the rocky ground.)

Prayer Points:

*Christianity
EXPLORED*

Personal Memo #5

Find a way to tell the person you're hoping to invite to CE about your faith in Jesus Christ.

20 March 2016

6. UNDERSTANDING

Matthew 13:24-52

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 6

Opening Question:

What expectations do we have of our efforts at sharing the gospel that might be unrealistic?

(suggestions: mass revival, instant conversions, first-time successes, etc.)



Ask a couple of people to share in reading Matthew 13:24-52 for the group.

Context

1. Look back over last week's study and remind yourself of some of the key ideas.

We can expect a variety of different responses to the gospel message, some positive, many negative, but we can also expect God to be working out his salvation plan.

2. Read Matthew 13:53-58. What happened immediately after Jesus had taught these parables?

People were offended by Jesus' teaching, he was ridiculed by those who knew him and he was rejected in his hometown.

Observation

3. List the parables Jesus tells in this section (v24-52).

- *The Weeds (v24-30)*
- *The Mustard Seed (v31-32)*
- *The Leaven (yeast) (v33)*
- *The Hidden Treasure (v44)*
- *The Pearl (v45-46)*
- *The Net (v47-50)*
- *The Master of the House (v51-52)*

4. What common introduction does Jesus give to most of these parables?

“The kingdom of heaven is like...”

5. What are some of the common themes that you notice in these parables?

- *Something small becoming large*
- *Something hidden becoming known*
- *Recognition of true worth and value*
- *Separation of the good and the bad (righteous and unrighteous)*

Meaning

5. In your own words, briefly explain the meaning of each parable.

The Weeds: The righteous and the unrighteous may be indistinguishable for now, but there will come a judgment when they will be separated

The Mustard Seed: The kingdom’s establishment may seem small and insignificant, but it will grow to great size

The Leaven: The kingdom will have an effect on everything it touches, even though it might not be immediately noticeable

The Hidden Treasure: discovery of the kingdom requires whole-hearted response, and may require extravagant action, but it also offers great joy and fulfillment

The Pearl: those who are searching for the kingdom must be prepared for whole-hearted response when they find it

The Net: at the coming of the kingdom, the righteous and the unrighteous will be separated in judgment

The Master of the House: those who understand the kingdom of heaven must be good stewards of its treasures, both its ancient promises and its present realities

6. What does the parable of the weeds tell us about the time we are living in now?
(v24-30, 36-43)

This is the time when God is being patient with humanity, and allowing the weeds to grow alongside wheat, but there will eventually be a judgement when the righteous and the unrighteous are separated. (see also 2 Peter 3:8-10)

Application

7. How are we perhaps prone to misunderstand the nature of the kingdom?

(open question)

Suggestions:

- *we expect the kingdom to be expressed in ways in which God doesn't intend to, e.g. a political kingdom, a moral or ethical kingdom, a cultural or ethnic, or national kingdom*
- *we take for granted or even ignore the small and insignificant aspects of the kingdom's establishment (cf. Matthew 18:1-4)*
- *we undervalue the kingdom, and pursue it half-heartedly*

8. What have Jesus' parables taught you about sharing the good news of the kingdom?

(open question)

Prayer Points:

Christianity
EXPLORED

Personal Memo #6

Give the person you're planning to invite to CE a personal invitation to CE.

10 April 2016

7. GO

Matthew 28:16-20

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 7

Opening Question: What is the goal of telling people about Jesus?

 Ask someone to read Matthew 28:16-20 for the group.

Context

1. Spend some time reflecting on what you have learnt about the proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom in Matthew so far.

2. Look back over the last few chapter of Matthew's gospel (ch 26-28). What's been happening?

Jesus has been betrayed (26:14-16), arrested (26:47-50) and killed (27:45-50) . His followers have scattered (26:56), and Jesus has been buried (27:57-60). Jesus has risen from the dead (28:5-6).

3. Why were there only eleven disciples in v16? (see Matthew 27:3-10)

Judas had hanged himself following his betrayal of Jesus

Observation

4. What is the basis for Jesus' command in v18? (see v17)

That all authority on heaven and earth has been given to him.

5. What does Jesus command his followers to do? (v18-19)

- *Make disciples of all nations*
- *Baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*
- *Teach them to observe all that Jesus has commanded*

Meaning

6. Why might some have 'doubted', in v17?

Jesus had just been raised from the dead - it's pretty unbelievable, even he's standing there in the flesh!

7. How is v18 significant in the development of the kingdom in Matthew's gospel and in Jesus' ministry?

Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus has finally been vindicated as God's rightful king over the kingdom, fulfilling the promises made in the OT such as 2 Samuel 7:11-16 and Ezekiel 34:20-24.

All that remains now is his ascension to heaven, which is a really like a coronation, when Jesus formally takes the position in God's kingdom that is rightfully his

8. What does it mean to make disciples? (You may want to refer back to how Jesus 'made disciples' in passages like Matthew 4:18-22, 10:1-15, 24-25.)

A disciple was someone who obediently followed a teacher, learning from them and modelling their life on theirs. Jesus wants active followers and imitators.

9. What encouragement does Jesus give to his 'disciple-making disciples' in v20?

That he will continue to be with them forever, therefore they are not left to do this work of advancing the kingdom on their own.

Application

10. How could we make our efforts to tell others about Jesus more about making disciples and less about just making 'converts'?

(open question)

(The key here is to explore what it means to make disciples, which involves sharing the good news of the kingdom, but also so much more. It might require that we focus on few people, but that we pour more effort into those people, reading the Bible with them, praying with them and for them, finding answers to their questions, and being available to help them in their journey. This is something that every Christian can do, because we're just passing on what someone else has done for us.)

Prayer Points:

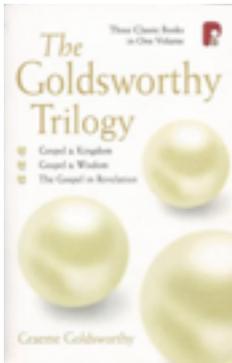
Christianity
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Personal Memo #7

Follow up on the invitation you gave out, and pray together for those you've invited.

Extra Resources

As a leader, you may want to do some further reading to help you lead your group well. Here are a few ideas. Some of these are also available from the Grace library near the front door. All of these books are available online from koorong.com, or bookdepository.com or from Koorong stores.

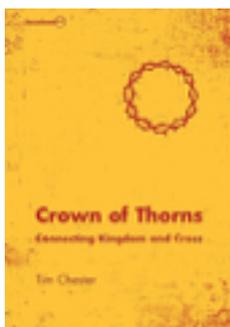
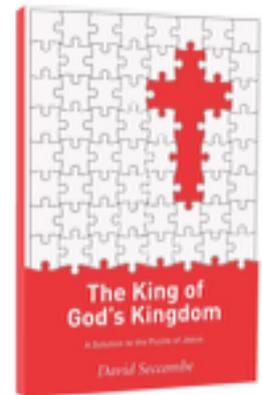


Gospel & Kingdom (in the Goldsworthy Trilogy) by *Graeme Goldsworthy* (© 2000, Paternoster Press)

The first book in this trilogy is rightfully a classic. Goldsworthy simply and clearly helps his readers to understand the whole story of the Bible, and where it's going: towards the Kingdom.

The King of God's Kingdom: A Solution to the Puzzle of Jesus by *David Secombe* (© 2002, Paternoster Press)

New Testament scholar David Secombe explores the Jesus of the Gospels, and the Kingdom he came to proclaim, debunking and dismantling revisionist and liberal approaches to Jesus along the way with a masterful understanding of the 1st century world.

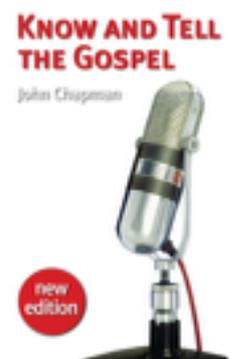


Crown of Thorns: Connecting Kingdom and Cross, by *Tim Chester* (© 2015, Christian Focus)

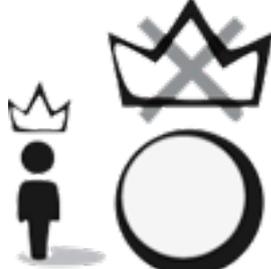
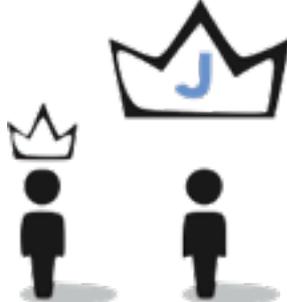
Within evangelicalism today there appear to be two contrasting gospels: one is the gospel of the kingdom with its focus on God's plan to restore the world, and the other is the gospel of the cross with its focus on the offer of forgiveness. In this book, Tim Chester shows how these two gospels are really one gospel - the message of the King who establishes justice in a surprising way.

Know and Tell the Gospel by *John Chapman*, (© 1998 *Matthias Media*)

In his characteristically friendly and engaging way, 'Chappo' provides warm encouragement, insightful biblical teaching, and a wealth of practical information on evangelism for all Christians. This new edition has been extensively revised and re-written, and contains up-to-date information and evaluation on current resources for evangelism.



Two Ways to Live (An Easy Gospel Presentation)

	<u>The Bible says</u>	<u>Think about it</u>
	<p><i>“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”</i></p> <p>(Revelation 4:11 ESV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is the loving ruler of the world • He made the world • He made us rulers of the world under him <p>But is this the way it is now?</p>
	<p><i>“None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”</i></p> <p>(Romans 3:10–12 ESV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all reject the ruler - God - by trying to run life our own way, without him • But we fail to rule ourselves, society or the world <p>Will God tolerate this forever?</p>
	<p><i>“...it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment...”</i></p> <p>(Hebrews 9:27 ESV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God won't let us rebel forever • God's punishment for rebellion is death and judgement <p>God's justice sounds hard, but...</p>
	<p><i>“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God,”</i></p> <p>(1 Peter 3:18 ESV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of God's love, he sent his son into the world - the man Jesus Christ • Jesus always lived under God's rule • By dying in our place, he took our punishment and brought forgiveness <p>But that's not all...</p>
	<p><i>“According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”</i></p> <p>(1 Peter 1:3 ESV)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God raised Jesus to life again as ruler of the world • Jesus has conquered death, and he now gives life • He will return as judge of all <p>Where does that leave you?</p>
	<p>You can live your way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reject God, the rightful ruler • Try to run your life your own way <p>Which will mean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are condemned by God • You will face death and judgement 	<p>You can live God's way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit to Jesus as your ruler • Rely on Jesus' death and resurrection <p>Which will mean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are forgiven by God • You will receive eternal life

(from 'Two Ways to Live: The Choice We All Face', for more info, visit www.matthiasmedia.com.au/2wtl/)

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