

Bring Your Kingdom In - Discussion Questions

June 2019 (02 - 29 June)

During the past few days of the last theme ["Follow Me"](#) the Sanctuary First Community has been joining with Christians from all over the world praying for their families and their communities. They have been praying in a specific way, asking that God would reveal himself to family members and friends, so that those who are seeking faith might find it. Sometimes it's easy to forget that the Christian is called to bring others to faith.

The "Thy Kingdom Come Project" is a global prayer movement, which invites Christians around the world to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus Christ. What started out as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 2016 to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.

In our readings this month we continue to reflect upon the Lord's prayer and to seek to learn from it ways in which we can sustain our lives to be a witness to those who we love.

We began 2019 with this idea of [Re-Imagining Church](#) and went on to think about our [friendships](#) and our [neighbourhoods](#), seeing them with fresh eyes. We then turned to [behold the remarkable person](#) of Jesus Christ and his life changing words, ["Follow Me"](#)!

So as we reach the halfway point of the year and with the words of Lord's Prayer ringing in our ears, let's continue to reimagine church with old and new friends, in our local neighbourhoods, beholding the man, following him and seeking to bring the Kingdom in!

The following discussion questions are designed to accompany the [Bring Your Kingdom In Resource Pack](#) to help adapt the material for small group work. They are divided into 4 parts to correspond with the 4 weeks of the Daily Worship theme.

These questions are just a guideline and there is no need to go through all questions in a single session, or in the following sequence. Feel free to pick and choose what interests your group.

| Part I: Bringing Your Kingdom In | | |
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| <p>Read Matthew 6: 10 + Acts 16: 16-23</p> <p>“Your kingdom come...”</p> <p>In this opening phrase of the Lord’s prayer we are inviting God to bring heaven on earth.</p> <p>This can be a controversial thing to do if the powers that be feel that they stand to lose out from such an invitation.</p> <p>Paul found himself paying a high price for confronting the culture of his day. What cultural challenges do we face today when we pray these words and invite God to bring heaven to earth?</p> <p>What systems of power might feel threatened by a call to God’s authority?</p> | <p>Read Matthew 6: 10 + Acts 16: 24-34</p> <p>“Your will be done on earth as in heaven...”</p> <p>The story of the jailor moving from jailhouse to household of faith within a stormy evening is an example of how God can break into the human condition and change our outlook.</p> <p>Did God reward Paul’s faithfulness in sharing the good news? Did Paul’s and Silas’ singing eventually influence the jailor?</p> <p>Does God work more often <i>despite</i> us or <i>through</i> us?</p> | <p>Read Matthew 6: 12 + Isaiah 1: 18</p> <p>“Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors...”</p> <p>Forgiveness is at the heart of the Kingdom of God. God has always been open to love and care for foolish people even when they do foolish things. This verse in Isaiah reminds us of God’s grace. The Lord’s prayer invites us to be grace filled towards others who have wronged us.</p> <p>How do you feel about the imagery in the Isaiah verse?</p> <p>Is it easier to ask for forgiveness or to give it?</p> |

| Part 2: Encounter the power and the glory | | |
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| <p>Read Genesis 11: 1-9 + Acts 2: 3-12</p> <p>Babel is reversed! Consider how these two readings are a counterpoint to one another.</p> <p>Reflect upon the idea that Pentecost ushers in a new era of openness. Communication is at the heart of community - and it's a multi-voiced communication not the single language of Babel.</p> <p>How would it have felt to stand in the crowd and suddenly hear your own language being spoken?</p> <p>Do you speak more than one language? Even a few words? If so, how does it feel to switch between them?</p> <p>Do we sometimes forget that God doesn't just speak our own language and is in fact multi-lingual?</p> | <p>Read Acts 2: 13-15 + Psalm 104: 24-30</p> <p>It's only 9 o'clock in the morning!</p> <p>Reflect upon the specific time and space that Peter says: It's 9 o'clock and it's the morning. This is not Glasgow's Sauchiehall St at closing time - this is in the midst of ordinary <i>plain as day</i> rush hour.</p> <p>Peter is saying God has touched us in broad daylight. Do you expect God to be found in the broad daylight of your life?</p> <p>Just when you're about to start work at 9am (or whenever your day starts) do you expect God to be there?</p> <p>Perhaps the words of wonder from the Psalm can cue us into finding God all around us.</p> <p>Where are you normally at 9am on a Monday? How can you be more alert to what God is doing there at that time?</p> | <p>Read Acts 2: 16-18 + Joel 2: 26-29</p> <p>It's time for visions and dreams.</p> <p>Reflect upon the idea of <i>expectation</i>. Might we not discover God when we are willing to?</p> <p>He might speak to us not only through people but through a dream or a long held vision.</p> <p>What dreams and visions is God perhaps giving you for your family, your neighbourhood, your world?</p> |

| Part 3: Living the dream, sharing the vision | | |
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| <p>This week we are going to look at a short Bible reading: Romans 5: 1-5, over each of the three sections.</p> <p>Begin by reading Romans 5: 1-5.</p> <p>Firstly, looking at the opening (verses 1-2) let's consider the word 'boast' that many translations use (...<i>boast in the hope of the glory of God</i>).</p> <p>We usually boast about things that we are proud of - that we cannot help but talk about to anyone who will listen. What and who do you tend to boast about?</p> <p>Do we boast about God in our daily lives? To our friends and family? To our colleagues and neighbours? How can we boast about God in a way that appeals to people rather than switching them off?</p> | <p>Re-read Romans 5: 3-4</p> <p>Enduring through suffering.</p> <p>It is often in our brokenness that God's glory is revealed through the cracks of our lives.</p> <p>Paul is urging us to boast in the goodness that comes out of the misery not the misery itself.</p> <p>How can we boast in our sufferings while still challenging the suffering and pain? How can we glory in our suffering without revelling in it?</p> | <p>Re-read Romans 5: 5</p> <p>Hope is eternal just like love.</p> <p>Where do we pray for God's hope to be felt in the world today?</p> <p>Who needs aid in their suffering?</p> <p>Who needs encouragement in their endurance?</p> <p>Who needs positive reinforcement for their character?</p> <p>Who needs love?</p> |

Part 4: Struggle between *Grace* and *Works*

Read I Kings 19: 1-8

Elijah is exhausted, on the run and at the end of his wits. He's ready to give up - but the action he's taken, to withdraw and get physical and mental space opens him up to a new way to experience God's grace.

It's easy when working to feel like we have to dig in and keep going at all costs but sometimes we need to stop and rest.

When we are wound up and run ragged in the midst of the demands of our work how can we get better at stopping and making time for God to speak to us and bless us with his grace?

How can we get better at seeing the warning signs that tell us we need to take a break?

Read Galatians 3: 23-29

When it comes to discipleship Christians often talk about the tension between *grace* and *works* - concerned that if we focus too much on the **grace** we have received we will become complacent and if we focus too much on the **work** we have to do we will get caught up in the details and lose sight of the bigger purpose. In this context the metaphor of being "clothed yourselves with Christ" in verse 27 is compelling.

Clothes literally come in a massive range of shapes and sizes - they are both practical tools we take for granted and beloved possessions that we take delight in.

Sometimes our discipleship calls us to accept the treasured gift of Christ and simply wear it close to our heart. And sometimes our discipleship calls us to pick up a needle and thread and follow Jesus' pattern.

Let's explore this metaphor further. What do we get from our clothes - from our favourite jumper, or our trusty coat or the gloves our granny knitted us - that we also get from Christ?

Read Luke 8: 26-39

Grace calms the troubled heart.

The main character in the story is finally discovered by his neighbours, as *The King James Version* puts it: "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind".

The story begins with a naked distressed man running wild and finishes with a scene of hope and serenity.

Where do you see rawness and fear and humiliation in the world?

What can we do to help people in such turmoil - physically, emotionally and spiritually? So that we can work with God to bring about a vision of graceful restoration.