

BOOK OF *Matthew*

FALL 2026

Life Group Curriculum

Based on the Sermon Series



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A graphic featuring a crown of thorns centered over a bright, glowing light source, possibly a sunrise or sunset, which creates a strong reflection on the surface below. The background is a soft, hazy landscape. In the top left corner, a dark rectangular box contains the text 'WEEK 1' in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, the words 'THE WAY OF' are in a white, serif font, followed by 'The King' in a large, elegant, gold-colored script font. On the right side, there are decorative, flowing gold-colored lines.

THE WAY OF *The King*

THE FAITH OF OUTSIDERS

Matthew 15:21–39 | August 16

THE FAITH OF OUTSIDERS

Matthew 15:21–39 | August 16

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

In Gentile territory, outside the boundaries of what was familiar, a Canaanite woman approaches Jesus with bold desperation, crying out for mercy. At first, His response seems surprising, even distant. But she doesn't walk away. She presses in with humility and persistent faith, trusting that even a crumb of His grace is enough. And Jesus responds, not by turning her away, but by honoring her faith.

In this moment, Jesus reveals something powerful: Access to Him isn't based on background or status, but on faith. Those who recognize their need and come to Him will always find more than enough. He makes room for all who come—healing and restoring, regardless of whether they are considered outsiders.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Faith, not background or status, is what brings us to Jesus.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What stands out to you about the way the Canaanite woman approaches Jesus and how He responds to her?



HEART: Do you believe Jesus is willing to meet you in your need, or do you hesitate to come to Him? Why?



HANDS: Who is one person in your life who might feel like an “outsider”? How can you intentionally make room this week to show them the compassion and welcome of Jesus?

CLOSING PRAYER

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A graphic featuring a crown of thorns centered over a bright, glowing light source, possibly a sunrise or sunset, which creates a strong reflection on the surface below. The background is a soft, hazy landscape. In the top left corner, a dark rectangular box contains the text 'WEEK 2' in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, the words 'THE WAY OF' are written in a white, serif font, followed by 'The King' in a large, elegant, gold-colored script font. On the right side of the image, there are several thin, flowing, gold-colored lines that curve upwards and outwards.

THE WAY OF *The King*

THE CONFESSION OF THE KING

Matthew 16:1-20 | August 23

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

The Pharisees and Sadducees ask Jesus to provide them with a sign, but not because they're ready to believe. What they lack isn't evidence, it's openness. Jesus warns His disciples to watch out for their "yeast," a slow, subtle influence that can shape how we see and respond to Him. It's a reminder that disbelief isn't always loud or obvious. Sometimes it quietly grows beneath the surface, hardening our hearts over time.

Then Jesus turns to His disciples: "Who do you say that I am?" It's a simple question and deeply personal. Peter responds with clarity and conviction, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." This wasn't something he figured out on his own. It was revealed to him by the Father. And on that confession, Jesus begins to build His Church. This moment reminds us that following Jesus isn't just about what we've heard, it's about what we believe, and that shapes how we follow Him.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Who we believe Jesus is shapes how we follow Him.

QUESTIONS

HEAD: What do you notice about the way Jesus' disciples respond to Him?



HEART: Who do you say Jesus is? How is that shaping your life right now?



HANDS: Where is God giving you an opportunity to speak openly about who Jesus is in your life?

CLOSING PRAYER

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A graphic featuring a crown of thorns centered over a bright, glowing light source, possibly a sunrise or sunset, which creates a strong reflection on the surface below. The background is a soft, hazy landscape. In the top left corner, a dark rectangular box contains the text 'WEEK 3' in white. Below this, the words 'THE WAY OF' are in a white serif font, followed by 'The King' in a large, elegant, golden script font. On the right side, there are decorative, flowing golden lines.

THE WAY OF *The King*

THE CROSS AND THE KINGDOM

Matthew 16:21-28 | August 30

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

Jesus tells His disciples that as the Messiah, He will suffer, be killed, and be raised on the third day. They weren't expecting this. They were looking forward to being lead to victory, not to death. So Peter pushes back. But Jesus responds sharply, showing that even well-meaning people can resist God's plan when they're focused on their own expectations.

Then Jesus declares: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me." This is the way of the Kingdom. It's not about preserving our lives, but surrendering them—not about gaining the world, but giving ourselves fully to Him. On the other side of that surrender is true life, rooted in Him and shaped by Him.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Following Jesus means surrendering our plans and expectations to Him.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What stands out to you about how Jesus responds to Peter?



HEART: What part of “denying yourself” or “taking up your cross” feels most challenging to you right now? Why?



HANDS: What is one specific way you can choose surrender over control this week as you follow Jesus?

CLOSING PRAYER

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THE WAY OF *The King*

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE KING

Matthew 17:1-13 | September 6

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

Up on a high mountain—away from the crowds, away from the noise—Jesus is transfigured before His disciples. His face shines like the sun, and His clothes become radiant. This is more than a moment of glory, it's a revelation. The Law and the Prophets point to Him. Everything has been leading to Jesus.

Then the voice of the Father breaks in: "This is my Son, whom I love; listen to Him." Jesus is not just another teacher or prophet, He is the Son of God, set apart above all. The disciples fall facedown in fear, but Jesus comes to them, touches them, and tells them not to be afraid. The glory they witnessed was meant to deepen their trust. And the same is true for us.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Seeing Jesus for who He is leads us to deeper trust.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What do you think it means that Jesus was “transfigured”?



HEART: When was the last time you were in awe of who Jesus is? What stirred that in you?



HANDS: What is one simple way you can choose to trust Jesus in a decision you’re facing this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

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THE WAY OF *The King*

Matthew 17:14-27 | September 13

[illegible]

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

When a father brings his tormented son to the disciples and they are unable to help, Jesus responds with both compassion and correction, healing the boy and exposing His disciples' lack of faith. Though they had been given great authority, somewhere along the way they began to rely on themselves instead of trusting in Him. In this moment, Jesus reminds them that even faith as small as a mustard seed, when placed in the right place, carries real power.

In a quieter moment, Jesus once again speaks about His coming death and resurrection, reminding His disciples that His power is not separate from His mission, but revealed through it. In every moment—whether confronting darkness, preparing His disciples, or meeting a practical need—Jesus is perfectly in control. And He invites His followers not only to believe in His power, but also to trust Him in every part of life.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Trusting Jesus means relying on His power, not our own.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What does the temple story show us about Jesus' authority in everyday life?



HEART: Where in your life are you tempted to rely on your own strength instead of trusting Jesus?



HANDS: What would it look like to make prayer your first response this week instead of trying to solve things on your own?

CLOSING PRAYER

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A banner for 'The Way of The King'. It features a crown of thorns centered over a bright, glowing light source, possibly a sunrise or sunset, which creates a strong lens flare and reflects on the surface below. The background is a soft, hazy landscape. In the top left corner, a dark rectangular box contains the text 'WEEK 6' in white. The title 'THE WAY OF The King' is written across the center, with 'THE WAY OF' in a white serif font and 'The King' in a gold-colored script font. On the right side, there are decorative, flowing gold-colored lines.

WEEK 6

THE WAY OF *The King*

WEEK 6

THE WAY OF *The King*

GREATNESS IN THE KINGDOM
Matthew 18:1-9 | September 20

GREATNESS IN THE KINGDOM
Matthew 18:1-9 | September 20

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

The disciples come to Jesus asking, “Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” They’re thinking in terms of status, position, and recognition. But Jesus completely reshapes their understanding. He calls a child to stand among them and says that unless they become like little children, they won’t even enter the Kingdom, let alone be great in it.

He warns that to cause others—especially the vulnerable—to stumble is a grave offense. This is the way of the Kingdom: not pride, but humility; not self-promotion, but self-denial. True greatness is found in making room for others and letting go of anything that keeps us from fully following Jesus.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God’s Word as best as you can without teaching. You don’t have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Greatness in God’s Kingdom is found in humility.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What do you think Jesus means by “become like little children”?



HEART: Where are you tempted to seek recognition, status, or control instead of humility?



HANDS: What is one thing that you need to let go of this week in order to make room for others?

CLOSING PRAYER

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A graphic featuring a crown of thorns centered over a bright, glowing light source, possibly a sunrise or sunset, which creates a strong reflection on the surface below. The background is a soft, hazy landscape. In the top left corner, a dark rectangular box contains the text 'WEEK 7' in white. Below this, the words 'THE WAY OF' are in a white serif font, followed by 'The King' in a large, elegant, golden script font. On the right side, there are decorative, flowing golden lines.

A graphic featuring a crown of thorns centered over a bright, glowing light source, possibly a sunrise or sunset, which creates a strong reflection on the surface below. The background is a soft, hazy landscape. In the top left corner, a dark rectangular box contains the text 'WEEK 7' in white. Below this, the words 'THE WAY OF' are in a white serif font, followed by 'The King' in a large, elegant, golden script font. On the right side, there are decorative, flowing golden lines.

GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS PT 1 - THE HEART OF GOD
Matthew 18:10-14 | September 27

GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS PT 1 - THE HEART OF GOD
Matthew 18:10-14 | September 27

Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

In a world that values influence and visibility, it's easy to assume that some people matter more than others. But Jesus makes it clear: No one is insignificant in the Kingdom of God. He reveals that the Father sees, knows, and deeply values every single person. To make this clear, Jesus tells a story.

A shepherd has a hundred sheep, and when one wanders off, he leaves the ninety-nine to go after the one. Not because the ninety-nine don't matter, but because the one does. This is the heart of God: not distant or indifferent, but pursuing and personal. He doesn't wait for the lost to find their way back. He goes after them. And when they are found, there is joy. Gospel conversations begin with a heart that sees people the way God does and moves toward them with the same compassion.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

God's heart moves toward the one who is lost.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What do we learn about what matters to God through this passage?



HEART: How does this passage challenge the way you see or respond to people who are far from God?



HANDS: Who is one person in your life who may feel far from God? How can you come alongside them this week with the heart of God?

CLOSING PRAYER

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THE WAY OF *The King*

GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS PT 2 - THE PLAN OF GOD

Matthew 18:10-14 & Assorted | October 4

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

In the parable of the lost sheep, Jesus reveals the heart of God—a Father who sees, values, and pursues the one who is far from Him. But God’s heart doesn’t stop at compassion, it moves into action. He doesn’t just care about the lost, he has a plan to reach them. From the beginning, God’s desire has been to restore what is broken and bring people back into relationship with Him.

And His plan includes us. Throughout Scripture, we see that God works through His people to carry His message of hope to the world. We are not just recipients of grace, we are participants in His mission. Gospel conversations are not about having all the right answers or saying everything perfectly. They begin with a heart aligned with God’s and move forward through simple obedience. As we speak, God works through us to draw others to Himself. This is the plan of God: that those who have been found would join Him in seeking the lost.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God’s Word as best as you can without teaching. You don’t have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

God invites us to be part of His plan to reach the lost.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: How does God's plan build on what we learned about His heart in the parable of the lost sheep?



HEART: How do you feel about being part of God's plan to reach others? What excites you or holds you back?



HANDS: Who is one person God may be prompting you to engage, and what is one step you can take this week to begin a gospel conversation with them?

CLOSING PRAYER

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THE WAY OF *The King*

Matthew 18:15-35 | October 11

Matthew 18:15-35 | October 11

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

Jesus teaches us how to handle sin, calling His followers to move toward one another with truth, humility, and a desire for restoration. The goal isn't winning an argument or proving a point, it's helping a brother or sister find their way back.

Peter asks a question many of us feel: "How many times should I forgive?" But Jesus invites us into a lifestyle of forgiveness, one without limits or keeping score. When we truly understand the mercy we've received from God, it reshapes how we extend mercy to others. Forgiveness flows from a heart that has been deeply forgiven.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Freely forgiven people freely forgive others.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What stands out to you about the difference between the two servants in Jesus' parable?



HEART: Is there someone in your life that you're struggling to forgive? How does remembering the mercy you've received from God challenge that feeling?



HANDS: What is one step you can take this week toward forgiveness, whether in your heart, your words, or your actions?

CLOSING PRAYER

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WEEK 10

THE WAY OF *The King*

THE WAY OF *The King*

MARRIAGE AND THE KINGDOM

Matthew 19:1-15 | October 18

MARRIAGE AND THE KINGDOM

Matthew 19:1-15 | October 18

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

The Pharisees approach Jesus with a question about divorce—not to learn, but to test Him. Jesus points them back to God’s original design. From the beginning, marriage was created as a covenant, a faithful, lifelong union between a man and a woman that reflects God’s commitment and care. “What God has joined together, let no one separate.”

That kind of commitment feels weighty, even difficult. The disciples themselves wonder who could live this way. But Jesus reminds them that God’s design is not just a standard to meet, but a life to receive. Whether in marriage or singleness, every follower of Jesus is called to trust His wisdom and walk His calling.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God’s Word as best as you can without teaching. You don’t have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

We are called to trust God’s authority and receive His design for our lives.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: Why do you think Jesus brings up eunuchs in this moment?



HEART: How do you respond when God's calling for your life feels difficult or different than what you expected?



HANDS: What is one area of your life where you need to stop trying to reshape things and start trusting God's design?

CLOSING PRAYER

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WEEK 11

THE WAY OF *The King*

A banner for Week 11 of 'The Way of the King'. The background is a soft, golden-yellow gradient with a bright light source in the center, creating a lens flare effect. A crown of thorns is positioned in the center, with its reflection visible below. The text 'WEEK 11' is in a white, sans-serif font inside a dark rectangular box on the left. The title 'THE WAY OF The King' is written in a mix of white serif and gold script fonts across the center. On the right, there are decorative, flowing golden lines.

WEEK 11

THE WAY OF *The King*

ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM

Matthew 19:16-30 | October 25

ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM

Matthew 19:16-30 | October 25

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

A rich young man approaches Jesus with what seems like the right question: “What good must I do to have eternal life?” He’s sincere. But his question reveals a dangerous assumption that eternal life can be earned. Jesus tells him to sell his possessions, give to the poor, and then follow Him. At this, the man walks away. His wealth had a greater hold on him than he realized.

Entrance into the Kingdom isn’t about what we achieve, it’s about what we’re willing to surrender. Anything we hold onto more tightly than Jesus becomes a barrier to following Him. That’s why Jesus says it’s hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom. But with God, all things are possible.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God’s Word as best as you can without teaching. You don’t have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

We can’t earn our way into the Kingdom.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: Why does Jesus first point the man to the commandments?



HEART: Where do you tend to look for security or identity outside of Jesus?



HANDS: What is one area of your life where you're holding on too tightly, and how can you surrender it to Jesus this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

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GRACE IN THE KINGDOM

Matthew 20:1-28 | November 1

Matthew 20:1-28 | November 1

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

Jesus tells a story about a landowner who hires workers throughout the day, some early in the morning and others late in the afternoon. But at the end of the day, he pays them all the same wage. Those who worked longer are frustrated; it doesn't seem fair. But the landowner sees it differently. He gives out of generosity, not obligation.

In this moment, Jesus exposes how easily we measure worth, effort, and reward and how different His Kingdom really is. God's grace doesn't operate on our system of earning or comparison. It's not about who worked the longest or who deserves the most—it comes from His generosity. And when we serve others, we begin to reflect that.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

God's grace is given, not earned.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What does Jesus mean by “so the last will be first, and the first will be last”?



HEART: When do you find yourself comparing your life, effort, or rewards to others? Why?



HANDS: What is one way you can reflect God’s grace this week by choosing generosity, humility, or service toward someone else?

CLOSING PRAYER

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THE WAY OF *The King*

Matthew 21:1-22 | November 8

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

As Jesus enters Jerusalem, the crowds gather with expectation. They lay down cloaks and palm branches, shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” and celebrating His arrival with triumph. As the passage continues, Jesus reveals His authority in powerful ways, cleansing the temple and cursing the fig tree.

When His disciples ask about the fig tree, Jesus points them to the power of faith, reminding them that anything is possible through God. Because of this, we can trust Him to take care of us and come to Him with bold, believing prayer.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God’s Word as best as you can without teaching. You don’t have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Because Jesus is King, we can pray boldly.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What is the significance of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey rather than a horse?



HEART: When you pray, do you approach Jesus with confidence or hesitation? Why?



HANDS: What is one specific thing you can bring to Jesus in bold, faith-filled prayer this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

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THE WAY OF *The King*

Matthew 21:23-46 | November 15

Matthew 21:23-46 | November 15

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

Jesus is confronted by religious leaders in Jerusalem, who question His authority. He responds with a question of His own, exposing their unwillingness to acknowledge the truth, even when it's right in front of them. Their refusal to answer reveals that they are more concerned with protecting their position than submitting to God's authority.

Jesus then tells a series of parables that make the issue clear. The problem isn't a lack of knowledge, it's a lack of obedience. Those who appear to be far from God are entering the Kingdom because they respond in faith, while those who should recognize Him refuse to believe. In the Kingdom of God, it's not about what we claim or what we know, but how we respond to His authority. He is not just a teacher to be questioned—He is the King to be trusted and obeyed.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Knowing Jesus matters, but obeying Him matters more.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What do the parables Jesus tells reveal about obedience and response to God?



HEART: Is there a gap between what you know about Jesus and how you're living? Where?



HANDS: What is one thing you know Jesus is asking of you that you can act on this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

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THE WAY OF *The King*

Matthew 22:1-14 | November 22

Matthew 22:1-14 | November 22

Sermon Notes

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Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

Jesus tells a parable about a king who throws a wedding banquet for his son. The invitation goes out, but those who are invited refuse to come. Some ignore it. Others reject it outright. What was meant to be a celebration is met with indifference and resistance. So the king extends the invitation to anyone who will come. The banquet is filled, not with those who were expected, but with those who responded.

When the king arrives at the banquet, he notices a man who is not dressed for the occasion and casts him out for his unpreparedness. It's a sobering moment that reminds us that the invitation to God's Kingdom is open, but it must be received and received rightly. Simply showing up is not enough; our hearts must be prepared. And that preparation starts with obedience.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Being invited into the Kingdom is not enough—we must respond in faith and obedience.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: Why does the king react so strongly to both rejection and unpreparedness?



HEART: What keeps people from taking God's invitation seriously? Do you see any of that in yourself?



HANDS: What do you need to do to make sure your heart is prepared to receive His invitation?

CLOSING PRAYER

P _____

R _____

A _____

Y _____

THE WAY OF *The King*

Matthew 22:34-45 | November 29

Matthew 22:34-45 | November 29

Sermon Notes

[illegible]

[illegible]

Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

The religious leaders once again try to test Jesus, asking Him which commandment is the greatest. Jesus doesn't hesitate: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." And then He adds, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

This is the foundation of life in the Kingdom of God—a heart fully devoted to Him. Everything we do flows from this relationship. It shapes the way we live and how we treat others. When we understand God's love for us, we begin to love the people around us in a way that reflects Him.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Loving God changes the way we love people.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: Why do you think Jesus ties these two commandments together?



HEART: What might your love for others reveal about your love for God?



HANDS: What is one way you can show God's love to someone this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

P _____

R _____

A _____

Y _____

HE TOOK OUR DEATH AND GAVE US LIFE

John 1:1-14 | December 6

John 1:1-14 | December 6

[illegible]

[illegible]

Welcome _____

Opening Prayer _____

Purpose (Why are we here?) _____

Ground Rules _____

Icebreaker _____

BRIDGING THE GAP

Before Bethlehem, before the manger, before Mary and Joseph, Jesus already was. Jesus is the eternal Word—fully God, the Creator of all things, and the source of life and light. Then comes one of the greatest miracles in history: the Creator stepped into His creation. The Author of life entered a world marked by death. He didn't come merely to teach us how to live a better life. He came to rescue us from the death our sin deserved.

That is the great exchange of the gospel. Jesus took our guilt so we could receive His grace. He took our death so we could receive His life. This isn't something we earn through effort or deserve because of our goodness. It's a gift received through faith. Because Jesus came, we no longer have to live in darkness, striving to earn God's acceptance. We are invited to walk in His light as beloved sons and daughters, experiencing the fullness of life that only He can give.

TELL THE STORY



Tell the story



Read the story

Tell this story from God's Word as best as you can without teaching. You don't have to memorize it word for word. Try not to express opinions or make your own points. Just tell the story. Then read it aloud together in your group.

KEY TRUTH

Because Jesus came, He took the death our sin deserved and gave us the life we could never earn.

QUESTIONS



HEAD: What does John reveal about who Jesus is before describing His birth, and why is that significant?



HEART: Have you ever found yourself trying to earn God's acceptance instead of resting in the life Jesus freely offers? What does that reveal about your view of the gospel?



HANDS: What is one area of your life where you need to stop striving and begin trusting the life Jesus has already given you through His grace?

CLOSING PRAYER

P _____

R _____

A _____

Y _____

THE GIFT OF LIFE GROUPS

December 13

December 13

[illegible]

[illegible]

As you enjoy a night of fellowship, take a few minutes to reflect on the gift of Life Groups.

KEY TRUTH

A Life Group is not a gift meant to sit beautifully on a shelf collecting dust. It's a gift with a bigger purpose: to help us live on purpose, together.

Life Groups are one of the ways God makes disciples. They are not the source of transformation, God is. But He often uses ordinary rooms, honest conversations, shared meals, open Bibles, and imperfect people to draw us to Himself as we help one another grow in faith.

QUESTIONS

Gifts are exchanged this time of year. If you could package the gift of a Life Group into one word, what would that word be?

How would you describe that gift to someone who has never experienced a Life Group?

Who in your circle needs that gift?

Have you ever opened a beautiful package with excitement, only to feel disappointed by what was inside?

What can we do to make sure someone new who “unwraps” a Life Group for the first time experiences the warmth, welcome, and purpose God intends?

WAYS TO PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Here are a few ways you can pray for one another over the break. Use these prompts to encourage and support each other as you continue growing in your walk with Jesus. Each one follows our P-R-A-Y prayer pattern:

Praise, Respond, Ask, and Yield.

PRAISE

- Praise God for the ways He is already working in your friend's life.
- Thank God for the gifts, strengths, and growth you see in them.
- Celebrate God's faithfulness and remind one another of specific prayers He has answered.

RESPOND

- Pray for the courage to confess sin honestly and receive God's forgiveness.
- Ask God to reveal any attitudes, habits, or distractions that are pulling them away from Him.
- Pray that they would respond to God with humility, obedience, and a renewed desire to follow Jesus.

ASK

- Ask God to give them wisdom for the decisions and challenges they are facing.
- Pray for strength, peace, protection, and encouragement in their daily life.
- Ask God to help them grow as a disciple who makes disciples by seeing and serving the people around them.

YIELD

- Pray that they would trust God's timing, even when the next step is unclear.
- Ask God to help them surrender their plans, fears, and expectations to Him.
- Pray that they would listen for the Holy Spirit's direction and faithfully say yes to whatever God asks of them.

APPENDIX

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COMPONENTS:

WELCOME

Honoring others by welcoming & valuing them

OPENING PRAYER

Inviting the Holy Spirit into our presence

PURPOSE

Remembering why we are here

GROUND RULES

Establishing healthy boundaries for Life Groups

ICEBREAKER

Setting the stage for trust, transparency and relationships

BRIDGE

Discussing God's Word together

STORY

Retelling the story in God's Word without adding opinions or teaching

QUESTIONS

Applying what we have learned to our lives

CLOSING PRAYER

A time to worship God, focus on His mission, confess, and present any requests to Him

GROUND RULES:

WHY GROUND RULES?

Our ground rules are designed to facilitate a safe and comfortable environment. They provide freedom for us to openly share with the assurance that our group will respectfully listen. We depend on the Holy Spirit to govern our responses to one another.

CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY

What is shared in Life Group stays in Life Group. We must be true to this important commitment so that we can be real, open, and honest in our discussions.

NO CROSS TALK

When one of us shares, the rest of us should actively listen. When we do, we won't have side conversations, overlapping dialogue, or interruptions.

DON'T RESCUE

We allow others to verbally process their thoughts without immediately intervening to help. Instead of offering advice or counsel, we listen and are sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit in these moments.

NO FIXING OTHERS

We are not here to fix each other. We resist the temptation to try to solve each other's problems. We are a group dedicated to love and support one another in Christ's love.

USE "I" STATEMENTS

We make "I" statements in Life Group discussions to acknowledge our own points of view and experiences. This ensures personal responsibility and prevents generalizations. Speaking for ourselves keeps the focus on our own faith journeys.

LISTEN & PAUSE

We listen intently to the words being shared and to the feelings expressed. After one of us shares, we pause and feel the weight of what has been spoken. We allow the Holy Spirit time to work in hearts and minds.

STAY ON TOPIC

We must stay on topic, because our time together is limited. Some of us must leave promptly at the conclusion of the study. Let's stay focused and avoid rabbit trails.

ALLOW OTHERS TO TALK

We give each person opportunities to talk. Each of us is careful not to dominate the discussions. We are especially sensitive to those who are uncomfortable speaking in groups.

AVOID DIVISIVE SPEECH

We strive for unity as we acknowledge our differences. We avoid speech that can divide. Our words should always be seasoned with grace and inspired by the Word of God.

CELL PHONE USE

Many of us use our cell phones to reference Bible scriptures and commentary. Also, we recognize that, at times, it's necessary to stay in touch with others. As we use cell phones in our group, please set them on silent or a distraction-free mode.

PRAYER PATTERN:

Praise

Response

Ask

Yield

Many believers lack confidence in their prayer life, primarily because they have simply never been taught how to pray. Most of us learn by listening to others around us rather than going to Scripture to learn at the feet of Jesus. Fortunately, He laid out a very specific way for us to pray in the Gospels. We call it the Lord's Prayer. While many recite it word for word, it can also be used as an outline for us to use in our specific circumstances and place in life. We use the acronym P-R-A-Y, with each letter of the word "pray" serving as a different movement of the prayer.

- **Praise:** This involves beginning prayer by acknowledging and praising God for who He is, His greatness, and all He has done. It helps to shift focus from personal issues to God's character and majesty. This step is key, and the rest of our prayer is built upon it.
- **Respond:** It's only after seeing who He is that we can see clearly who we are. After acknowledging what is true about Him and giving Him praise for it, we acknowledge what is true about ourselves and respond to Him. This step involves confessing sins, acknowledging wrong dispositions of the heart, and asking for forgiveness. It is about turning away from sin and self and seeking God's help to live rightly.
- **Ask:** Acknowledging what is true about God and what is true about ourselves changes our requests. It shifts the focus from our comfort to His Glory. Here, we bring our specific needs and desires to God, for ourselves (petition) and for others (intercession), with His Glory in mind.
- **Yield:** The final step involves surrendering our control and submitting to God's will and plan for our lives, trusting that His ways are best. It is about making time to listen to God and aligning our desires with His.

DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY:



OUR VALUES:



We Dig Deep... because Living Water is worth the work

We're not afraid to pursue truth, ask hard questions, and embrace the cruciform life. We believe real growth happens when we anchor our lives in God's Word and drink deeply from His presence.



We Make Room... because the Gospel creates space for everyone at the table

We open our lives, our church, and our hearts to those on the margins. We prioritize people over preference and welcome all as image bearers of God.



We Kneel Down... because you can't wash feet while standing up

We serve sacrificially—even when it costs us. Following Jesus means choosing humility, stepping into the mess, and loving others through action.



We Team Up... because Jesus calls us out of isolation into participation

We lean into community and carry the mission together. We depend on one another's strengths and joyfully share the work God has given us.



We Have Fun... because Joy is the culture of Heaven

We celebrate, laugh, and enjoy the journey of faith together. We believe that life in Christ is not just meaningful—it's joy-filled, and worth sharing.

DISCIPLESHIP DNA:

HUNGRY LEARNER

I depend on the Holy Spirit daily by listening and praying through Scripture in community.

- What spiritual Disciplines are you currently engaging in – personally or with others – and what impact is that having on your walking with Jesus in all of life?
- What habits are currently stoking or starving your delight in Jesus?

COMPASSIONATE WITNESS

I see and sacrificially engage those around me for the sake of the Gospel.

- When was the last time you got uncomfortable for the sake of the Gospel?
- How have your actions reflected the Gospel to others?

FAITHFUL FRIEND

I fight for others, not against them; rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep.

- Who in your circles is rejoicing or weeping, and what are you doing to love them well in this season?
- Who is the Lord prompting you to invest in, and how are you guiding them to their next step?

CONFIDENT CULTIVATOR

I empower others to fulfill their God-given calling for Kingdom impact.

- What is currently fueling or distracting your investment in others?
- How are you positioning yourself to invest in the next person?

ICEBREAKER QUESTION IDEAS:

(Quick ones are in bold):

1. **What was your first job?**
2. Tell us about a memorable cooking experience.
3. **What household chore do you actually enjoy?**
4. **What's the longest trip you've ever been on?**
5. Say a line from your favorite movie and see if the group can guess it.
6. What do you wish someone taught you a long time ago?
7. **What is the weirdest job you've ever had?**
8. **What is your worst habit?**
9. **If you could be any item in the grocery store what would you be?**
10. What's the weirdest food you have eaten?
11. Share of an encounter you had with a famous person.
12. What was your favorite hangout as a teenager?
13. What takes a lot of time but is totally worth it?
14. What is the worst meal you've ever made?
15. **What is one non-living item you can't live without?**
16. **If you could only eat one thing for breakfast, lunch, or dinner for the rest of your life, what would it be?**
17. **What's the last song you listened to?**
18. **Share two words that best describe you.**
19. What is your biggest phobia?
20. If you were in the Olympics, what sport would it be?
21. What is one moment in your life that has defined you?
22. **If you could only have one of your five senses, which would it be?**
23. Share of a time when you laughed at an inappropriate time.
24. What website or app doesn't exist, but you really wish it did?

- 25. If you could be a fly on a wall, where would you most want to be?
- 26. What is your favorite soda?**
- 27. What do you think is an ideal age?**
- 28. If you could be a fictitious superhero, who would you be? Or what super power would you most want?**
- 29. Greatest peer pressure as an adult?
- 30. What is your favorite music genre?**
- 31. How do you react when people sing “Happy Birthday” to you in a restaurant?
- 32. When someone finds out what you do, or where you are from, what questions do they always ask you?
- 33. Who is your favorite singer?**
- 34. What topic could you give a 20-minute presentation on without any preparation?**
- 35. What is at the top of your bucket list?**
- 36. How would you describe God to a child?
- 37. What color best describes you and why?
- 38. What was the high point of last week? The low point?
- 39. What one word would be your theme for the year?**
- 40. Name one person who has had the greatest impact in your life and why?
- 41. If you could visit any place in the world, where would it be?**
- 42. If you had a million dollars to spend for the benefit of mankind, how would you spend it?
- 43. What give you the greatest satisfaction?
- 44. What is your favorite memory as a child?
- 45. What was your worst haircut experience?
- 46. What’s your most embarrassing moment?
- 47. What would you do with an extra free day off of work?

48. Where would you go if you could go anywhere in the world?
49. **If you could become an animal for one day, which would it be?**
50. **What is one place in your house that you only clean on special occasions?**
51. If you knew your time were cut short, what one thing would you change about the way you are living?
52. If you could be famous, what would you be famous for?
53. If you could go back in time and not return, what would you try to accomplish even if you knew you might change the course of history?
54. If someone were to write a book about you, what do you think the title and theme would be?
55. If your animals could talk, what would they tell you?
56. Which emoji best describes you and why?
57. **What was the make, model, year, and color of your first car?**
58. What's your biggest pet peeve?
59. What scene in a movie always gives you a certain feeling, every time you watch it?
60. What is your favorite Christmas carol and why?
61. If you could have coffee with anyone in history, who would it be and why?
62. What were your favorite TV shows when you were growing up?

Notes

[illegible]

Notes

[illegible]



*Making Disciples
Who Make Disciples*

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