



SESSION 5

SERVING HIS KINGDOM

Disciples serve Jesus by expending time,
talents, and resources in His kingdom.



WORSHIP

READING PLAN

Read through the following Scripture passages this week. Use the space provided to record your thoughts and responses.

Day 1

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Day 2

Mark 10:35-45

Day 3

1 Peter 4:1-11

Day 4

Galatians 5:1-15

Day 5

John 13:12-20

Day 6

Matthew 25:31-46

Day 7

Philippians 2:1-11

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The concepts of a kingdom and a king are foreign to most of us in the United States. Yet, we have many examples from history and popular culture of kings and kingdoms.

In the space below, describe some attributes of a kingdom and some characteristics of a king, both good and bad.

How does this metaphor help you understand God's kingdom and God at work in our world?

Consider the city in which you live. Could you describe it in one sentence? If you try, what about the restaurants you forgot to mention. What about the mayor who didn't quite make it in the description? How about the parks, the schools, and the residents? What about the street names, the plant names, and the shop names? Did you remember to include the elevation? The population? The average temperature in the summer? You see, to reduce the enormous complexity of even the smallest city into just one simple sound bite is to attempt the impossible.

If instead, you began to experience the city, walk the streets, meet the residents, patronize the shops, eat the food, get lost and ask for directions, sit still as the shadows get longer at the end of the day, walk barefoot across the grass dew in the park at sunrise—then you might get a glimpse of what your city is. Truth be told, a lifetime in a city still isn't enough to grasp the fullness of it.

Infinitely more is the task of grasping the kingdom of God. And yet, Jesus says that children are better equipped at experiencing it (see Mark 10:15). Perhaps there is a sense of awe and wonder that we grow out of as we mature into adulthood that is the necessary variable in experiencing God's kingdom.

What keeps many people from giving themselves fully to serving Jesus, the King of kings?

What choices can you make to serve the kingdom today?

Read each of the following passages and note what each says about the kingdom.

Matthew 6:31-33

John 18:33-38

Luke 17:20-21

There is no greater investment with our time, talents, and treasure than investing in the kingdom of God, “where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal,” and where we find at the center of it all the most valuable treasure of all—Jesus (Matt. 6:20).



OUR PLACE IN GOD'S KINGDOM

Every kingdom has a king. Thankfully, there is none like King Jesus. He is a humble King, a mighty King, a righteous King, a faithful King, a just King, a merciful King, and so much more. The more you get to know Jesus as King, the more you will experience and learn about His kingdom.

We see a glimpse of Jesus as King in Matthew 25, but it may not be what you expect. We find our King identifying Himself with “the least of these”—the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned.

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on His right and the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you took care of Me; I was in prison and you visited Me.’ ³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or without clothes and clothe You? ³⁹ When did we see You sick, or in prison, and visit You?’ ⁴⁰ “And the King will answer them, ‘I assure you: Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me.’ ⁴¹ Then He will also say to those on the left, ‘Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels! ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger and you didn’t take Me in; I was naked and you didn’t clothe Me, sick and in prison and you didn’t take care of Me.’ ⁴⁴ “Then they too will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or without clothes, or sick, or in prison, and not help You?’ ⁴⁵ “Then He will answer them, ‘I assure you: Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me either.’ ⁴⁶ “And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

MATTHEW 25:31-46

Who do you most identify with: the sheep or the goat? Why?

Jesus clearly lays out in this parable how we are to love, care for, and serve one another—especially the disadvantaged. Jesus also doesn't stand back at a distance and give these instructions without first giving Himself as an example. Throughout the New Testament, we find Jesus serving and helping those in need. And He also taught this to His disciples.

⁴² Jesus called them over and said to them, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles dominate them, and their men of high positions exercise power over them. ⁴³ But it must not be like that among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first among you must be a slave to all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life—a ransom for many."

MARK 10:42-45

Jesus models for us a life of constant service to different kinds of people in various types of situations, and He expects the same from us. We love one another because Christ loved us. We serve one another because Christ served us. We sacrifice and die to our comforts and conveniences for the sake of others because Christ sacrificed His life for our sake on the cross.

Are there specific types of people you find easier to serve? What are some types of service that you enjoy providing for others? Explain.

How can you stretch yourself this week by serving outside your comfort zone? Write a plan below.