

Study 5. We love the kingdom

Big idea: the kingdom of God is awesome, nearly here, and we can be part of it.

Where do you think of as “home”?

Observation and interpretation

Divide up some of these Old Testament passages. What do they contribute to the idea of the “kingdom of God”?

You could draw them on a diagram in the middle of the group.

- 1 Samuel 12:12
- 2 Samuel 7:4-17
- Ezekiel 37:22-25
- Isaiah 9:1-7
- Isaiah 11:1-10
- Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Read Mark 1:14-34

- What does the kingdom of God mean for each of these people in this section?
 - The first disciples (verses 14-20)
 - The people at the synagogue (verses 21-28)
 - Simon’s mother-in-law (verses 29-31)
 - The people outside the house (verses 32-34)
- When is the kingdom arriving?
- Why does Jesus seem troubled in verses 35-3? What’s on his mind?

Read Luke 7:20-23

- What are the signs that the kingdom of God has come in Jesus?

Read Mark 4:30-34

- What does this parable tell us about the arrival of the kingdom of God?

The kingdom of God is *both* future *and* present reality. It is “near” (Luke 21:31) and “here” (Luke 9:27, 17:21). It is something which has been announced since John the Baptist (Luke 16:16), is felt breaking into this world in the person and the work of Jesus (Luke 17:21), and is seen visibly in his transfiguration (Mark 9:1). And yet its full consummation will only be seen when Jesus returns.

Implications

Why do we want to enter the kingdom of God? What do you look forward to about the kingdom of God?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. It seems lots of things make us unfit for the kingdom of God. How can any of us be sure that we will enter it?

Why must we “repent” (Mark 1:15) in response to the coming kingdom? What does it mean to do this?

Read Luke 18:16-29. What attitudes are necessary for people who are entering the kingdom?

Prayer ideas

Give thanks for the long promised kingdom of God. Perhaps you could also lament the aspects of this world that are not in line with his rule.