



Life Group Study Notes

"Kingdom Come"

Sr. Ps. James Lowe - January 7, 2018

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What did you like about your home when you were growing up?
- If you could change one thing about where you currently live, what would it be?
- If you could design your own home and money wasn't an issue, what is something special you would want for your home?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Since the beginning, God has intended to express his kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. The first humans experienced the expression of God's kingdom in the Garden God had designed and prepared for them. Their rebellion, however, seemingly thwarted God's purpose. But God has since been working and guiding history to bring about the redemption of his original purpose. Through the Hebrew Patriarchs God brought forth the nation of Israel. Through Israel God brought forth a greater expression of his will for a redeemed people. God used Israel to prepare the way for his Son to come into the world. Jesus is the king appointed by God to fully establish God's kingdom on the earth for the benefit of humanity and the rest of creation, and for the glory of God.

As God's sinful creatures, we have received mercy and grace from God through Jesus. Jesus' sinless life, his obedience unto death on the cross in our place for our sins, and his glorious resurrection and ascension have made possible our reconciliation, redemption, and restoration. We have the privilege of entering in to God's spiritual kingdom which makes possible the transformation of our lives through the Holy Spirit. This in turn will impact our relationships, our work, and the world around us.

The fullness of his kingdom will be expressed when Jesus fulfills his promise and returns to the earth from heaven. In the meantime, we have access to God through Jesus Christ. God has removed every barrier between him and us through Jesus. He has made himself available to us. Yet it our responsibility to turn to him through Jesus. Our experience of God's intimate presence will in the long run be determined by our level of spiritual hunger for him and our willingness to continue to repent and follow him. Jesus said that we are his friends if we do what he commands.

Psalms 24:1-10 ESV The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory!

This Psalm is historically associated with King David when he brought the Ark of God's Covenant and Presence to Jerusalem. David and the priests were motivated by the fact that Obed-Edom, the man who was the interim caretaker of the Ark, was blessed in his entire household by God. At the same time they had a healthy fear of the Lord, because Uzzah, the man who disobeyed the Lord's instructions and touched the Ark the last time it was moved, had been struck down dead by the Lord. (See 2 Samuel 6:5-15.)

This Psalm teaches us that God wants to envelop us in his glorious presence and bless us richly. In response we must seek him. In doing this we must confess our sins and ask for forgiveness. We must cease from ruling our own lives independent of God, and instead honor him as king in our hearts and lives. We must surrender our lives to doing his will and fulfilling his purposes. With God's help we must live our lives so that we help express and advance his kingdom here on earth.

His kingdom is good and holy, and reflects his character. His kingdom is characterized by righteousness, peace, and joy.

Let us seek God in prayer and fasting, and let us long for and labor for the second coming of Jesus!

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- Why does God desire to bring us close to himself?
- What has Jesus done to make it possible for us to draw near to God?
- What do we need to do to draw near to God?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Thank God for his great love for us shown to us in Jesus Christ.
- Ask God to speak to us about what pleases him and what displeases him in our lives.
- Ask God to draw near to us as we seek him.