

The Story that Makes Sense of Everything
Part 3 of 5
Sunday, May 3rd, 2020
Love Came to Town

LEADER NOTES

LEADER NOTES: Hi LifeGroup leaders! Welcome to part 3 of “The Story that Makes Sense of Everything”. The goal of this series is that we would understand the metanarrative (overarching story) of the Bible. The more we understand His story, the more we are able to make choices and act in ways that align our story with His. This week we’re looking at the Kingdom of God and how this kingdom changes everything for us. God has chosen to show us mercy and has set about to restore all things. Jesus called the location of this healing/restoration/reconciliation the Kingdom of God. We can begin to experience life in the Kingdom of God (which is life with God) right here, right now.

SLIDE 1

The Story that Makes Sense of Everything
Part 3 of 5
Love Came to Town

To kick off your study time, remind the group of the goal of this series, to better understand the metanarrative (overarching story) of the Bible. This week’s topic is called, “Love Came to Town”. Today we’ll be talking about God’s Kingdom. Here’s the really cool thing. God’s kingdom isn’t just something we read about in the Bible. His Kingdom is a reality God longs for us to embrace each day. Today we’re going to dive into what that looks like and what we can do to cultivate an awareness of God’s presence, God’s kingdom, in our daily lives. After you’ve checked in with each other and introduced the study topic, watch Pete’s video for this week’s study.

SLIDE 2

Romans 5:6-8 New International Version (NIV)

⁶You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person

someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Q - How have you experienced God's grace at work in your life in ways that you weren't even looking for it and certainly didn't deserve?

Have someone in your group read the Scripture passage to the group then ask the question on the slide. It may help, before you ask the question, to share some of your experience with receiving God's grace when you weren't looking for it. Then ask, "So, how about you? Anyone else have a similar experience to me?" The truth that God is the initiator or first one to act is essential to how Christians understand God's relationship to humankind. We don't find God, God finds us. We don't save ourselves, God saves us.

SLIDE 3

READ Matthew 5:21-26 & 5:43-48

Q- In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus sets a pretty high bar. How have you understood His teachings in the past and did your understanding change after hearing the sermon?

In the sermon Pete pointed out that Jesus didn't come to bring a new religion by which we could earn our way to God. He came to bring us transformation from the inside out so we could return to our role as image bearers. This is why the bar is so high, because he empowers us to become these kinds of people. It may be helpful to share some of your own insights or takeaways from Pete's sermon. How does the Sermon on the Mount speak to you about experiencing the Kingdom of God in your life?

SLIDE 4

Mark 1:14-15 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Announces the Good News

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Q- How do you understand God's presence in the world right now especially during such a difficult time? Are you a person who sees God at work everywhere or do you find your experience to be that he is absent?

When we are in a difficult season of life, it can be a hard to experience God's presence. In challenging times, we may not realize God is near. We may not always feel it, but Jesus tells us He is very present. Mark teaches us in these verses and throughout his gospel that everywhere Jesus went he was preaching that the Kingdom of God was arriving. An easy way to understand this is to say that God's presence, power and peace were now at work in the world in a new way. As a leader, you can speak words of hope to your group members who are feeling like God is absent. Through your listening, love and prayer, you can show God's presence is real in the lives of your group members.

SLIDE 5

Q – What can you do to experience more of God's presence in your difficulties this week?

As a group, think back to Pete's sermon. What did Pete share about cultivating an awareness of God's presence? What ideas can you share with each other? For example, if you find yourself feeling angry, or lonely, or depressed, take a moment to stop and talk with God. Tell Him how you're feeling. Ask Him to flood your heart with His Spirit. Also, remember to stay connected to one another during the week. If you're having a bad day, or a difficult moment, let the group know. Share your burdens with each other. They are a lot lighter when you have others to help carry them. As a group, you can help each other experience God's presence in the coming days, regardless of what they bring.

SLIDE 6

MISSIONS PRAYER REQUESTS

Creekside partners with Carmen Bajo Alliance Church in Quito Ecuador.

Ecuador is one of the hardest-hit countries in the Americas with COVID19, and the country has been in physical distancing measures since March.

Pastor Fabian and his wife Grace have been visiting the community to pay staff, take care of administration, and provide supplies for the families of the church. They are also conducting services online via Zoom.

Please pray for the church in Carmen Bajo to remain united and have a strong witness for Jesus.

