



# What Is The Good News?

Matt VanCleave  
January 2, 2022

## GROUP ICE BREAKER

What's one resolution or goal you've set for the New Year? If you didn't set any, why?

## REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will surrender to what Jesus would have for me.
- I will not allow old systems of belief or thinking to creep back into my thinking.
- I will accept Jesus' offer of a life free from the burden of being perfect.

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

What is the good news Jesus went around announcing? He preached the kingdom of God. God's power and presence and reign has now become available to ordinary human beings like you and me.

A lot of people think of the gospel as the arrangement where you get a ticket to heaven so they have to let you in. Here's the problem; where in the New Testament does Jesus ever say, "Now I'm going to tell you the minimal entrance requirements for getting into heaven when you die?" He never does.

Dallas Willard summarized the Gospel when he wrote, "All the preliminaries have been taken care of, and the kingdom of God is now accessible to everyone. Review your plans for living, and base your life on this remarkable opportunity."

What Jesus talks about as the kingdom of God, Paul describes with the phrase in Christ. He uses that phrase 164 times. To be in Christ is to be in his kingdom, to be in his presence, his power, and his favor. This is the news that makes all of the Sermon on the Mount true and good.

So what kingdom are you living in? Kingdoms are systems of personal power. The kingdom of God is the place where God has influence, where he rules and reigns, where his will is done. The King is here, and he's here without an ego. He's here in humility, a carpenter, a servant. He is not on a throne but on a cross.

Will the gospel of Jesus become your gospel? If you want to respond to Jesus' gospel, he says "repent." Revise your strategy for living in light of this most remarkable opportunity and become a disciple of Jesus.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What's the best news you've ever been given and how did you respond to it?
2. How has the Gospel been defined to you by churches and/or Christians in your experience?
3. What has been your understanding of the "kingdom of God" until now?
4. Read Matthew 6:25-34. What do you think Jesus meant when he says, "Seek first his kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."? What is the promise he's making?
5. Each one of us has a "kingdom," that little sphere in which what you say goes. How well would you say your kingdom reflects the kingdom of God?
6. We are followers of Jesus helping up there to come down here. In what way can God use you to bring His kingdom – His will, His rule, His reign – to one situation around you (i.e. – at home, work, etc.)?

## NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I will read the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5-7.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Matthew 4:23-24
- Mark 1:14-15
- Luke 8:1
- Luke 9:1-2
- Acts 1:3
- Acts 28:31
- Matthew 6:32-33
- Genesis 1:26
- Romans 8:38-39
- Mark 1:15

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Take time to share how you can be praying for each other over the next week:

- 
- 
- 
- 
-