

"Nothing matters but the kingdom, but because of the kingdom everything matters."
Gordon Spykman

1. I must see the Kingdom

- a. Not for all but for you, the 'insider" (Matthew 13:11) b. Not born to reign but born again into royalty (Luke 17:21, John 3:3, Revelation 1:6)
c. Not a privileged class but privileged to go into all spheres of life as He commands (Matthew 5:13-16; 28:18-19, 1 Cor 10:31) d. Not an optional tour but a compulsory battleground (1 John 5:19, Ephesians 2:2)

2. I can flourish in the Kingdom

"To claim Jesus as king demands that we submit all of life to his kingship...The call of the kingdom is for God's reign to shape all of life." Jeremy Treat

- a. Not of this world... (John 17:14, 1 John 2:15,16)
b. ...yet fully *in* it

- We can work because God cares about all work.
- We can rest because He reigns.
- We can play or take part in sports because it is a gift from Him to delight in His creation.
- We can enjoy food because it is His gift pointing to His goodness.
- We can engage in artistic endeavours because we are made for beauty and wonder by our Creator God.

- c. From surviving to thriving in His kingdom

- Draw near to the King to stay true to your true identity. (John 15:5)
- Dream with Him. (Matthew 6:10, John 5:19-20, Ephesians 2:10)
- Do what matters most to the King. (Romans 14:17) • Deploy your God-given gifts and abilities. (Matthew 25:14-30)

Questions for Personal Study or Group Discussion

1: Read Rev 1:5-7. How do these verses motivate us to embrace the royal standing he has bestowed on us?

2: Read Matt 5:13-16. As salt of the earth, we delay the rot and decay we see and experience around us. Knowing our nature of being salt is not only as a role to do but a powerful reality with potential to penetrate spiritual darkness, what in your situation do you think can benefit from your presence and influence?

3: In Matt 6:33, the meaning of "seek first" in Greek is to "devote serious effort to realise one's desire or objective". Examine how you spend your time, talent, treasures each week; which aspects of your life are off-limits? What have you compartmentalised as "not spiritual"? Repent and commit to setting your affections on Him and pursuing

what matters most to Him.

4: Do you now believe that God cares about your work, rest, play, food or art? How does this awareness make a difference to you? Where do you honestly struggle?

5: How does nurturing your time spent with God build up your faith?

6: Do you have an unrealised dream, accomplishment, or bucket list? Is it also His dream? Would you like to dream with Him to realise His purposes and 'good works' meant for you? What obstacles do you need to overcome by His strength and wisdom?

7: Read Romans 14:17. Discuss how you can specifically bring His "righteousness, peace and joy" into your situation at work, home, school, at play, through art.

8: In Matthew 25:14-30, some theologians say the one talent in this parable is already roughly equivalent to today's US\$600,000. This means everyone (be it five, two or one-talented) has truly been graciously given much to 'work with'. In light of this, no wonder the master was angry, judging the one-talent servant as "wicked and lazy" instead of "good and faithful". This parable is meant to strike the appropriate fear of the Lord in us lest we be tempted to undermine what He has graciously given us, how He has wired us. But instead of being paralysed by the sober warning, be liberated to know He has indeed equipped you sufficiently and there is therefore no need to compare ourselves with others. Realizing this, how will you deploy and steward what He bestowed you for His purpose?

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

1. Describe a time when you have seen something or someone be transformed by someone's relationship with Jesus (i.e. an occasion where God's truths were lived out or honoured, where you saw something 'majestic' in the mundane)
2. What struggles and obstacles do you face in trying to see God at work in ordinary life?
3. In your own life where is the greatest battleground between God's Kingdom and the kingdom of the world?
4. What do you think it would be like if we could see every part of our lives (e.g. work, rest, play, eat) as part of life in God's Kingdom?
5. Do you feel that what you do each day has value and meaning in God's Kingdom? What does God think about it?