



Life Groups in Central Telford Parish

Spring 2017 "The Lord's Prayer"

Week beginning 9th April 2017

D - Persistence - Running for the Prize

The Aim of this Session

The idea of being subject to anyone is not a popular one these days but the national celebrations suggest that we still like the idea of being part of something which gives us an identity. For Christians, the Body of Christ and the kingdom of God give us a corporate meaning and something to identify with – but what actually *is* the Kingdom of God – and whose *is* the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory? Who do we turn to win the prize for?

- **Welcome**

What makes a good head of state, whether President, King or Queen ...?

- **Worship**

Read Isaiah 40:25-31 and wonder at the awesome strength and nature of God described in these verses. Offer your worship in response!

- **Word**

Think in earthly terms ...

- ❖ What makes a good King or Queen?
- ❖ What makes a good citizen of a Kingdom?
- ❖ What causes a Kingdom to grow in strength?
- ❖ What causes a breakdown in a Kingdom?

Think in heavenly terms ...

- ❖ How do you understand God as a "King"?
- ❖ Is it easier to think of Jesus as a King?
- ❖ How is God's Kingdom different to a human one?
- ❖ What are God's rules? Do they work?
- ❖ What causes God's Kingdom to grow?

Matthew chapters 5 to 8 are referred to as "The Sermon on The Mount" and they are, in essence, Jesus' manifesto for the Kingdom he had come to bring. If you have time, read the headings in the sections of these chapters to get the wider picture of what the Kingdom of God envisages, but it is summed up in Luke 10:25-27.

Read John 18:36-38

- What did Pilate understand as the basis for a kingdom?
- How did Jesus differ in this?
- What "truth" did Jesus refer to (John 14:6 may help!)?
- Why could Pilate not understand this?

Where did Jesus say the Kingdom of God is in Luke 17:21, Matthew 4:17 and Matthew 6:10. The Kingdom is anywhere that God reigns – in our lives, in the Church and ultimately, Heaven.

Read Matthew 13:31-35

- In what way does the image of a Mustard Seed help in our understanding (v31)?
- How does it grow (v32)?
- In what way does the image of Yeast help us (v33)?
- What effect does Yeast have on the bread?
- What do these images say about the Kingdom in each of the places that God reigns?

- **Walk**

With her Diamond Jubilee and 90th Birthday, recent years have seen literally millions of people celebrate the reign of the Queen. Many of them, probably most of them, are not actively aware of her reign each day of their lives but have simply accepted the positive effect of her presence and her rule on their lives. The Queen's rule is, of course, by influence rather than by the exercise of power – but that leads us to recognise that so is God's rule: he chooses to use the influence of love over his undoubted power, although one day that power will be used when the Kingdom comes in all its fullness.

If we are fully playing our part as citizens of the Kingdom of heaven ...

- ❖ How do we become citizens?
- ❖ What are the commitments and cost of citizenship?
- ❖ How should we be living in practice?
- ❖ How should it affect the way we react when things go wrong?
- ❖ How can we make the Kingdom grow?
- ❖ What do we mean when we pray "Your's is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory"?

What challenges does this present us with in our lives – pray about them?

Be bold and brave – share with one another and discuss what you sense God is saying. Pray for any other specific issues people are facing in the Life Group. "***You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.***" (Isaiah 26:3 NIV)

