

# COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 16, 2022

## PLEASE NOTE

This is an informal lesson this week as most of our Community Groups are on Spring Break.

### STF UPCOMING EVENTS

- ⇒ WORK AS WORSHIP MENS STUDY, TUESDAY MORNINGS
- ⇒ ESCAPE ROOM DATE NIGHT, MARCH 26
- ⇒ SPRING WOMENS CONFERENCE APRIL 1

## FOR REFLECTION

1

The Lord's Prayer is taught by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew in the middle of his Sermon on the Mount, which forms Chapters 5-7 of Matthew's Gospel. This sermon is really all about what it means to live in God's kingdom. And if we are going to pray that, "God's kingdom come", we'd better get ready to live in God's kingdom.

What do you think God's kingdom is like?

2

The first principle at Celebrate Recovery says, Realize I'm not God; I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

**"Blessed are the poor in spirit:" Matthew 5:3a**

What does "poor in spirit" mean to you?

## QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

To think about what it means to pray for God's kingdom to come, let's look at all the places in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus talks about the kingdom. Read the following passages and discuss the following comments.

#### **Matthew 5:10 New International Version**

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus recognizes that it isn't always easy to live as if we are in God's kingdom, because this kingdom has not yet come in its fullness. There are forces in this world completing against God's kingdom. Sin, death, and the devil all undermine God's kingdom. To pray that God's kingdom come is to willingly work toward its coming, and this can lead to persecution, so Jesus blesses all who suffer for righteousness' sake.

#### **Matthew 5:19 New International Version**

Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus reminds us that living in God's kingdom means living by God's commandments. Living in the kingdom means doing what the king commands. That's why in the Lord's Prayer, praying for the kingdom to come and for God's will to be done are so closely connected. They can't be separated. When we pray for God's kingdom to come, we are agreeing to do God's will; and when we agree to do God's will, we are agreeing to help God's kingdom to come.

#### **Matthew 6:33 New International Version**

But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

This verse can serve as a compass in our life, reminding us when we are lost of which direction to go. Put the kingdom of God first! When in doubt, ask whether what we are planning to is helping God's kingdom to come. Return to this verse at every fork in the road, before every major decision, and whenever we are unsure of where to turn. And trust that when we do this, everything we need will be given to us. All these things, whatever we need to fulfill God's will and to participate in the coming of the kingdom, will be given to us when we strive first for the kingdom of God.

#### **Matthew 7:21 New International Version**

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

The only way to enter this kingdom is to do God's will. And if we don't want to do God's will, why would we want to live in God's kingdom?

## TAKE IT HOME

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.” Before we ask for our daily bread, or for forgiveness, or for anything else, we take time to hallow God’s name, and pray for God’s kingdom to come.

Imagine if we spent the first half of our personal prayer-time with this focus. Imagine beginning all of our daily devotions by looking at our life under God’s watchful eye and asking what God wants us to do. How can I hallow God’s name? How can I help God’s kingdom to come? Today. At work. At home. While shopping and running errands. While on my phone or computer. How can I serve God today?

### *Writers Note:*

When we pray, “your kingdom come” we are praying something very dangerous because we are asking for something against our natural comfort. By saying, “your kingdom come” Jesus is teaching us we are ultimately meant to value God’s agenda, not our own. “Thy Kingdom Comes” means setting aside all of my own attempts of personal glory to pursue the glory of Jesus Christ.

This is what “Your Kingdom Comes” means we are praying for: history to be brought to a close; all nations will rejoice in the glory of God; that Christ is honored in every human heart; Satan bound, evil vanquished, and no more death; every knee bow, tongue confess that Jesus is Lord; and to see a new Jerusalem, new heaven, and new earth.

This is a radical prayer.

“Thy Kingdom come” carries great hope, that God may come and save us and bring us to know the fullness of His grace in the final revelation of His kingdom.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

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