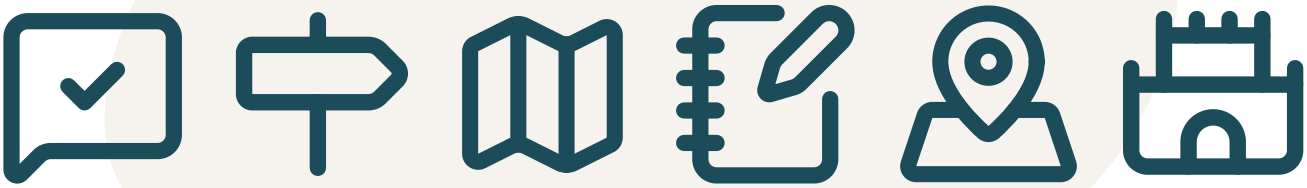
THE KING & HIS KINGDOM PEOPLE

CONVERSATION STARTER

WEEKDAY LIVING

Weekday Living



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NAME + CONTACT INFORMATION

LEADER'S NAME + CONTACT INFORMATION

BEST PRACTICES FOR CONVERSATION GROUPS

- Do your best to read a portion of the passage and guidebook each day.
- Try to meet together once a week for a conversation.
  - When and where will you meet?

- Take the time to pray for those in your Conversation Group. There is a page at the end of the guidebook to record prayer requests.
- Be thinking about who you know that might be interested in joining the conversation.
- Be thinking about how you can live as salt and light during the weekdays.
- No certificates or credits will be earned. Do your best. This is your life. We are trying to create an unstoppable pattern of a thriving weekday faith. Offer yourself lots of grace, stick with it, and trust God.



WHAT MAKES CONVERSATION STARTERS UNIQUE?

Objective

The most important endeavor in all of life is to enjoy a vibrant spiritual life. When our spiritual lives are heading in the right direction all of life goes better. While our challenges will not be erased, spiritual vitality provides needed direction and fulfillment.

Approach

- **The content is Bible-based, yet scripture will not be embedded in the curriculum.** We want to help you learn both from the Bible and about the Bible. Bibles can also include helpful items like maps, timelines, and other verses for reference. All of which can transform the Bible from an ancient book that is challenging to engage into a dynamic collection of stories you embrace.

- **The content intends to be accessible to all regardless of spiritual background with unlimited growth expansion as you mature.** Everyone starts in a different place yet we are all headed in the same direction. One story in the Bible can contain inspiration and direction that lasts a lifetime.

- **For centuries the Bible stories were passed from one generation to the next by having important conversations in the home and among peers.** There would be holidays and festivals established to retell important parts of faith history. It would take thousands of years until the printing press was invented and the Bible would become mass produced. The content you experience is intended for one on one or one with a few type conversations with those you know and trust.

- **Conversations Groups are intended to self-multiply as you are inspired in your faith desiring to share with those you know and trust.** The path toward God and with God is best experienced with those closest to us. Jesus found twelve friends then they shared their experience over many decades across the ancient world as their lives travelled to different places. Ultimately the story of Jesus has made it to us so we keep the tradition alive by sharing it with others.

- **Conversation Groups are intended to help you be fruitful by living as salt and light during the weekdays.** (We will encourage you to rest over the weekend and serve your local church.) Being busy is different than being productive. Just as we long for inner peace and contentment, humans also long to live fulfilling lives. Every weekday we traffic with people and by people who need encouragement. Sometimes just a simple word is needed, other times an act of service is most appropriate. You might even feel compelled to serve alongside others through a local nonprofit cause. Giving is receiving. It is a powerful expression that not only helps others, but expands personal joy.

OUTCOMES

WE HOPE YOU LEARN FROM THE BIBLE.

WE HOPE YOU LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE.

WE HOPE YOU FEEL CONFIDENT AND RESPONSIBLE TO CHASE A VIBRANT SPIRITUAL LIFE.

WE HOPE YOU FEEL INSPIRED TO LIVE DURING YOUR WEEKDAYS AS SALT AND LIGHT.

WE HOPE YOU FEEL INSPIRED TO INVITE OTHERS TO LEARN WITH YOU IN THE FUTURE.

LETS GET STARTED

THE KING & HIS KINGDOM PEOPLE CONVERSATION STARTER

This study introduces one of the most foundational concepts in the Bible. God is King over his kingdom people. However, the journey through the Bible will reveal the human struggle to embrace this important principle of how a faith relationship with God is intended to function. While it might be common to think of Jesus as Savior, Lord, Son of God, even friend. The role of King can feel anciently distant.

In the Old Testament God begins his relationship with his people as King. They may not realize this is happening, but God seeks to instruct them in this way. Then, the people of Israel decide they want to become the nation of Israel by establishing a king just like all the other nations. They wanted a human king, a real man with a physical body. This seemed like the most secure path forward.

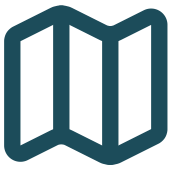
Yet, the prophet Samuel sees it as abandoning God as King. God agrees and warns the people of the dangers this trading of authority will bring upon their lives. As it turns out God is right. Here are some important facts to understand as we read about King God and his kingdom people.

1. God's desire is to have a people of faith who follow him as King. This is his Plan A for our lives.
2. Kings have kingdoms. This means they lead with power and authority. The King protects, provides, instructs, even demands. It is a word called dominion which is not a democracy. This is his rightful place as God which is best for his people.
3. God's people live with a physical human king leading them for only 300-400 years of their history. Men like Saul, David, and Solomon are the most widely known doing a pretty good job. However, the bulk of the kings fail. God's people not being led by him is Plan B. It starts well, but ends in disaster.
4. These failing kings result in a civil war which divides Israel into two smaller kingdoms making them vulnerable to their enemies. Ultimately, Assyria and Babylon conquer the divided Israel which is referred to as Israel and Judah. They take captive the people, burn the temple, ending the reign of Israel's king and kingdom. This is how the story in the Old Testament concludes.
5. The New Testament begins with Rome as the dominant world power ruling in the region of the world formerly known as Israel. This is where Jesus lives.
6. Jesus teaches that the Kingdom of God is near. He will be revealed as the Savior King as well as the future coming King at the time of his second return. However, from his first day until his last day on earth, his kingly reign is strongly rejected by all. It is actually the reason he is crucified.
7. The bulk of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, God is the acting King of his people. His authority and dominion are unstoppable, but humans struggle to embrace them.
8. As you near the end of this guidebook, you might find yourself wishing you had marked in your Bible the words king and kingdom as they are being used in reference to God or Jesus. Feel free to leverage this helpful hint from the outset of your journey.

01

LESSON 1

GOD'S PLAN A FOR OUR LIVES
DEUTERONOMY 28:1-14



OVERVIEW

Do you want to have the best life you can possibly have on earth? I think we would all say a resounding "YES!" There is only one way to achieve our best lives. We must experience the best spiritual life possible on this side of heaven. This leads to the real question, do you want to have the best spiritual life you can possibly experience? I want to pause for just a moment so you can ponder this idea. If we desire the best life possible, which is only experienced on the other side of a dynamic spiritual life, we are going to need to invest in our spiritual relationship with God as our life priority. This isn't a selfish pursuit, but a very generous act to all those around us.

This lesson series will begin by unpacking God's Plan A for every person on earth. Namely, to see him as King actively living by his kingdom rule.

In the near future, we will read about the day God's people pivoted to Plan B–rejecting him as King and desiring a physical king named Saul. But before we get there, let's spend some time unpacking God's Plan A as the King leading his kingdom activity in our lives.

Deuteronomy 28:1-14 will be our focal passage. It is not going to unpack the easy life of faith, but the obedient life of faith with an abundance of blessings. God's design is for every one of us to see him as King with an organized kingdom that is constantly advancing in our lives and through our lives. From Genesis to Revelation, the idea of God's kingly rule is clear. The Bible ends with a vision of his throne. Everyday he is King. Everyday his kingdom is active. Everyday we have a chance to follow, be blessed, and play a part in his heavenly work on earth. I am not making this stuff up, God said it himself in Deuteronomy 28. Let's simply take him at his word to see what happens.

As you read this passage you will discover:

(1) **Kingdom Faith** - In the modern world, we might be more comfortable with phrases like principles, instructions, or teachings. However, every King creates edicts with the expectation of compliance. Commands are very different from requests or suggestions. The King is making more than a request. He is stating a fact of his kingdom. Obedience is critical. Kings reign supreme with complete dominion and authority.

(2) **Kingdom Finances** - This passage is extremely detailed when it comes to God's blessings over many aspects of our lives. It addresses our travel, along with our work. I am really inspired as it speaks of our present gathered resources for day-to-day usage while also providing for our future. There is a big difference between what is stored in a pantry and what is stored in a barn. When you consider the principle of multiplication through loan interest—the limitless abundance of the King's storehouse, the vastness of the sky, and the harvest produced when rain falls on a single seed—the possibilities become astonishing.

(3) **Kingdom Family** - Who doesn't want their family, marriage, kids, and extended family to experience the blessings of God? Of course, we all do. Just imagine kids being raised in a family where they personally witness again and again the principles and promises of the King in action. Our first calling is to advance the kingdom in our homes, then through our homes. It is easy to be impressed by the ministry pastors have from the stage each Sunday as they influence thousands of people every year. However, they are not in our homes or at our work. These are our ministry domains. The kingdom is advanced through the networks of God's people everyday as we live the way of the King.

Take the time to seriously ponder the kingly rule of God over the universe. He is working his purposes in his people and through his people right now. Nothing has ever been able to stop the eternal mission of the King—not the serpent in the Garden of Eden, nor the cross at Calvary. If we want to live our best life, we must first pursue the best spiritual life. This, in turn, is the result of obedience to the King.

01

LESSON 1

GOD'S PLAN A FOR OUR LIVES
DEUTERONOMY 28:1-14

OUTLINE

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

This is King God establishing a covenant with his people. It is conditional on their following it. However, the blessings of obedience are too vast to mention. God's covenant contains both commands and promises. When we follow God's wisdom, blessings we can not manufacture occur. Yet, when we disobey his life wisdom the blessings do not arrive. All of us intuitively know that good choices lead to great results while bad choices do not. This covenant is the same principle.

Deuteronomy 28:3-6

The list of blessings range from travel to work to home. The basic economy was agriculture and God's people were on the move surrounded by foreign powers. They would be traveling, farming, ranching, selling, trading, and consuming resources. God's favor would be on everything and everyone.

Deuteronomy 28:7-8

As enemies were encountered, and they would be, God's blessing of protection would be extended. Following God obediently doesn't promise a life of ease. It does promise blessings when we endure obediently. These two verses speak of resources available to provide for their future needs (stored in a barn) as well as the security that comes from owning land he will give them.

Deuteronomy 28:9-14

Their future would be unbelievably bright. This journey they were on would end in a land of promise where they would flourish. This unique relationship with God as their covenant King would be recognized by all nations as a message of hope. The best life is on the other side of our best spiritual life and the best spiritual life was in a covenant relationship with God as King.

01

LESSON 1

GOD'S PLAN A FOR OUR LIVES
DEUTERONOMY 28:1-14



OUTCOME

What inspired you from the reading?

What challenged or confused you from the reading?

What in the reading reminded you of something you have previously read in the Bible?

Did you find an interesting map or history timeline fact?

What in the reading reminded you of something you have experienced in life?

What lesson will you take from the reading into your current weekday?

Let's think about people we might want to start a conversation with in the future because we think they would enjoy it and find it helpful.

Let's think about how we can live as salt and light in our everyday lives.

CONVERSATION NOTES

02

LESSON 2

A KINGDOM BREAKTHROUGH
JOSHUA 1:1-18

OVERVIEW

In order to have the best spiritual life, it is going to involve some battles and some breakthroughs. I want to continue unpacking God's Plan A of living under his kingly rule as his kingdom advances within and through us. In the future, we will take a look into the dynamics of God's Plan B, when we give his throne to another influence. For now let's cement the work of the unstoppable kingdom in our minds and hearts. Its framework must become the dominant force.

When we arrive at Joshua 1, God is King of his people. They have leaders, officials–even soldiers–but no physical, human king. The last physical king they remember is the Pharaoh of Egypt when they were slaves prior to the supernatural deliverance by King God. For over forty years, they followed their King God and experienced his ways. God miraculously provided food and water. He established a lasting covenant. He defeated enemies and was on the verge of ushering them into what is referred to as the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

As they arrived at the Jordan River, with decades of experience following the King, their greatest test lay before them. Would they obey—and in doing so, experience the greatest breakthrough of their lives as they entered the land of promise?

02

LESSON 2
A KINGDOM BREAKTHROUGH
JOSHUA 1:1-18

OUTLINE

Joshua 1:1-5
The people had been on a 40-year journey, learning many lessons and growing a strong faith. God was their King; they had traversed the ancient world with all its challenges safely. Now, a long awaited promised land was in front of them. It would be inhabited by foreign powers that were quite formidable. But God had a plan.

Joshua 1:6-9
Promised hundreds of years earlier—first to Abraham, then to Isaac, Jacob, and Moses—the present generation was honored to witness this long-awaited breakthrough. Joshua reiterates the covenant promise: obey God as King and watch what he does. There will be fear and uncertainty, but there must not be compromise. Feel what you feel, but do what he says.

Joshua 1:10-15
They need to be prepared and organized. They would neither go alone nor quit until the mission was complete. Quitting guarantees failure 100% of the time, but remaining steadfast in God, His promises, and his people guarantees success.

Joshua 1:16-18
This is the verbal response of hearing and submitting. It is confirmation of the message received. God is looking for a verbal “yes” from all of us.

02

LESSON 2

A KINGDOM BREAKTHROUGH
JOSHUA 1:1-18



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CONVERSATION NOTES

03

LESSON 3
WHEN COMPROMISE ARRIVES
JUDGES 2-3

OVERVIEW

First, we experienced God's covenant promise through his leader, Moses, to his people, Israel. Then, we witnessed the leadership of God's people being passed along to Joshua as they continued to follow the covenant commands. Now, we will see what happens when the leadership of Joshua is passed on to a specific level of leaders called judges.

Israel is still operating under God's kingship, but they are not left with a void of leadership. They have judges who assist the people with staying true to God's plan. They also have priests and military men. In our current reading we see compromise make its way into their lives along with its consequences. Sometimes the leaders lead well, sometimes they do not. Sometimes the people follow well, sometimes they do not.

We will not read all of Judges 1-3, but only selected passages. If you are interested in reading all of it, be on the lookout for some rather interesting stories.

Also, you may discover a subtle sequencing of words that are fun to think about how they work together. I read from the CSB (Christian Standard Bible Version). In my translation there is a progression with words like thorns and trap (Judges 2:3), test (Judges 2:22, Judges 3:1, Judges 3:4), and teach (Judges 3:2). Take note of what your translation says, giving thought to how these words interact, revealing new depths of insights.

03

LESSON 3
WHEN COMPROMISE ARRIVES
JUDGES 2-3

OUTLINE

Judges 2:1-5
The people are reminded of the covenant God made with them. When they follow his way of life, things go well. Trials and troubles are not removed. Enemies are not absent, but God's direction, protection, and blessings are present. While the people diligently followed God's plan in the past, now they have done far more than stumble. They are embracing the gods of other peoples.

Judges 2:6-10
Under Joshua's leadership the people faithfully succeeded and God was with them in powerful ways. Now, Joshua dies along with this generation. A new and younger group of Israelites are present. They do not have the maturity or experience needed to keep up the pace, so compromise arrives.

Judges 2:11-15
We are reading about the worst-case scenario on all fronts. The consequences of significant and repeated compromise are heartbreaking.

Judges 2:16-19
A pattern is revealed. It is one that exists throughout the Bible. God's people struggle with staying faithful on a consistent basis. It is important to understand the level of compromise. We are not talking about isolated, innocent mistakes. The sin is blatant idolatry and waywardness from God. It is being chosen willfully, repeatedly, and dramatically.
Yet, the Lord does not compromise his faithfulness to the covenant he made. God continues to relate as a benevolent and loving King, who is also powerful enough to overcome their choices. He faithfully and repeatedly sends judges to provide the necessary leadership for a return to covenant living. The people walk in and out of this wonderful relationship while God stays true through it all.

Judges 2:20-23
Finally, God's plan results in a test. He needs to see if they can learn once and for all. They invited the thorns. Now they are trapped. A test awaits. This test is not intended to create failure, but future success.

03

LESSON 3
WHEN COMPROMISE ARRIVES
JUDGES 2-3

OUTLINE

Judges 3:1-6
The test is explained. It is intended to teach. This generation needed some experiences that could prove to help them in the future. The only way muscles get stronger is we have to use them, work them out. Faith is the same. It is time to grow faith.

Judges 3:7-11
The pattern of King God's leadership and victory provided by his judges repeats itself. The people continue to walk in and out of compromise.

BONUS READING

Judges 1
The book of Judges provides a quick overview of how the seeds of compromise were sown by the people. As they settled across the promised land, God commanded them to rid the region of its large population of foreign idols with all the associated practices. The first half of Judges 1 goes according to God's plan. However, the rest of the chapter is a different story. Take note of how many times it repeats the fact that the foreign inhabitants with their idolatrous practices were allowed to remain living among the Israelites.

Sometimes the people of God appeared to not be strong enough to fight through to complete victory. Other times it was possibly just easier to force the foreign population to remain as servants. All seems innocent enough until you get to Judges 2 when convenience and compromise create catastrophe.

03

LESSON 3
WHEN COMPROMISE ARRIVES
JUDGES 2-3



OUTCOME

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CONVERSATION NOTES

04

LESSON 4

THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGED OR DID IT?
1 SAMUEL 8:1-22; 1 SAMUEL 12:13-25

OVERVIEW

Today's focal passage is also the focal passage for this entire series. It was the one day in Israel's history that appeared, on the surface, to irreparably change everything between God's people and their King.

Samuel was both a prophet and judge, but he was not a king. He was old and on the verge of dying. His sons were in line to inherit his leadership roles with the people of Israel. Their reputations were far from stellar. The people knew it. They wanted no part of Samuel's sons as judges, so they requested their first official human being as a king.

Samuel was shocked. Not by his sons' well-earned reputations, but the people's utter rejection of God as their King. Samuel has a conversation with God about it. God tells him not to take it personally. He further instructs Samuel to give them a scared-straight type conversation about how a human king actually functions with stuff like war, taxes, and property ownership.

The conversation with the people falls on deaf ears. The people want a king and God gives them one. Thus, this is the day the world changed for God's people–or did it?

04 LESSON 4

THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGED OR DID IT?
1 SAMUEL 8:1-22; 1 SAMUEL 12:13-25

OUTLINE

1 Samuel 8:1-5; 1 Samuel 12:19-20
The people are striving to solve what they perceive to be their problems. They are tired from the journey and the battles. Always being without a physical king surrounded by enemies is an exhausting lifestyle. It is tiring physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. The results of bad leadership have been clearly experienced in their past. They are trying to not sign up for it again.

1 Samuel 8:6-9
Solving our own problems can ultimately be a rejection of God as our King. At first, I am sure the people didn't see it this way though they hint at it in 1 Samuel 12. I think they just didn't want the risk of bad leadership, as if saying, "give us a good leader is all we are asking for and everything will be just fine."

1 Samuel 8:10-18
Only King God can see the future. For a people who never had a king, they had idealistic expectations, which never proved to be accurate. Even the leader they trusted, Samuel, with a direct word from God was not sufficient.

1 Samuel 8:19-22
The people get their way and their first king. Would this break the covenant? Would God resign as their King?

1 Samuel 12:13-15
The people get two kings of sorts. They gained a physical king named Saul and God does not resign as their ultimate King. Additionally, God does not erase his prior covenant. He actually restates the principles regarding God's Plan A from Deuteronomy 28 like this: if you and your human king obey me as King we will keep on moving forward together. However, disobedience will continue to get a different result.

So the world did change for the Israelites in one regard: they gained a physical king. However, the long-term call of obedience to King God and his covenant is still in place.

04

LESSON 4

THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGED OR DID IT?
1 SAMUEL 8:1-22; 1 SAMUEL 12:13-25



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CONVERSATION NOTES

05

LESSON 5

HOW TO START LIVING UNDER THE KING'S DOMINION
PSALM 145

OVERVIEW

The most famous king Israel ever had was David. He was their second king, following Saul, and was succeeded by his son, Solomon. These three are probably the most well-known. David was a military leader and conquering king, achieving extraordinary success during his reign. Under his leadership, Israel expanded greatly and became the most powerful nation in the region.

Yet David's significance extends far beyond his military victories. King Jesus would one day be born through his lineage. God promised David that his throne would endure far beyond his lifetime, into the immeasurable future that only he creates. In the days ahead, our study will return to God's Plan A, when he reigns as the King of his people.

David's significance is also evident in his worship. He was the most powerful man in the land, yet he wrote many poems and songs directing praise to the one true King, God. If even David needed to worship the King, then all people are called to bow to him. Let's take a closer look at David's personal thoughts toward the one and only King.

05

LESSON 5

HOW TO START LIVING UNDER THE KING'S DOMINION
PSALM 145

OUTLINE

Psalm 145:1-3

Begin your day with a view of the King on his throne. Say something out loud to yourself at the beginning of your day that reminds you, your feelings, and the dark culture around you that, "My God is my King and I will bless his name all day." You can say this right after your alarm goes off, while you are having your morning coffee, or during your commute. Start your day with powerfully reminding and confessing the King's dominion over everything.

Psalm 145:4-7, 10-12

Talk to others about how you see the King at work. Make a call, send a text, or shoot an email to someone who will receive your testimony with positive encouragement about how God is at work in your life. We are surrounded by messages that could cause doubt and discouragement. There is plenty of darkness. Speaking the works of King God boosts our faith. It has the power to redirect your mind and to refocus your intentions.

Psalm 145:8

Receive grace daily, every time you step outside of the King's dominion. Just like God's people of the past, you will mess up many times in the course of a day. The covenant of love is still unconditionally in place for you. Enjoy it.

Psalm 145:9

Give grace to others that are stepping outside of the King's dominion. One of the real tests of the King's dominion in our lives is how well we share grace. Typically, it can be easier to receive the King's grace, but dominion living calls for giving grace. If God is good to everyone, let's join him sharing goodness.

Psalm 145:13-14

Trust the King when you feel fear, worry, and anxiety. He has your future in his hands. Be on the alert for the experiences that expose weakness. If you have been tracking along with the story, we know enemies surround and influence us. Be on the alert for deception that can be both subtle and tricky. You, your family, and friends are all in his care.

Psalm 145:15-21

The King will meet your needs as well as your desires. Remember his list of blessings extend to every area of our lives. Your enemies will lose. Your tongue will confess the goodness of God over and over again.

05

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PSALM 145



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CONVERSATION NOTES

06

LESSON 6

THE KING BRINGS AN END TO THE KINGS

DANIEL 7

OVERVIEW

This lesson is prophetic, but I will break it down as simply as I can. Try not to get lost in the minute details, but rather look for the overarching theme of God's victory. The history of God's people as recounted in the Bible can be a real mystery. We often read stories, but sometimes fail to grasp its place in the larger story. This is because the Bible is not organized in a historical timeline. It is put together based on the type of literature and size of each book. Think of it more as a library of books that are all tied together by God's one story of faith for all mankind.

Here is a very broad understanding of the story. God's people live under the rule of an internal king of Jewish heritage for only a few centuries. They experience a division created by a civil war resulting in two nations, Israel and Judah. Given their weakness, they succumb to the foreign powers of Assyria and Babylon. You may know some of these stories like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego being thrown into the fire along with Daniel in the lion's den. These occurred as Israel was falling and the Old Testament was ending.

In the midst of this turbulent season, God commonly spoke through prophets to help correct the people, as well as give them hope for their future. Though things seemed bleak, this would not be the conclusion of God's story. We find our way to the revelation given to Daniel, while the people are readjusting to being under the rule of a foreign king. This new political structure will become long-term for all God's people. Babylon is now in charge, and Israel will no longer have a physical king. In the future, the Roman Empire will rule during the era of Jesus and the beginning of the church. This is the context of the New Testament. Finally, believers today do not have a physical king. This places us squarely in God's Plan A.

Today we will read this prophecy in Daniel 7 and then again in Revelation 13. It speaks across time—from the experience of God's people in the Old Testament, through the New Testament, and into the modern day.

A TIP FROM THE AUTHOR: Many people avoid reading the prophets because there is so much we do not understand. As you read, begin by zooming out. Try to stay focused on the overarching story of how kingdoms will war against the values of God's kingdom. It has always happened and will continue to happen. Sometimes it can be pretty rough sledding. However, the major point being God and his people win. The prophets call us back to God's way or inspire us with a hope-filled future, despite our present circumstances. Please do not let what you do not understand keep you from what you can understand. Finally, much of what you will read in Daniel and Revelation has already happened in the past.

06

LESSON 6

THE KING BRINGS AN END TO THE KINGS
DANIEL 7

OUTLINE

Daniel 7:1-8
God's people are back under the reign of foreign human kings, which continues through the time of Jesus, right up to the present day. These beasts are representative of different world powers that will persecute the people of God until the second coming of Christ.

Daniel 7:9-14
The title, Ancient of Days, is a reference to the one and only King. God reigns over every king and kingdom, despite the force they may seek to inflict upon kingdom people. It will look to human eyes as if the kingdom and kingdom people are losing, but that would be false. The Ancient of Days is joined by the Son of Man, which is a title used to refer to Jesus many times in the New Testament.

Daniel 7:15-25
The world will experience a great tribulation caused by the conflict of kingdoms versus the kingdom. This tribulation will be a mixture of both persecution for the people of God from culture, and wrath for those living according to the culture of darkness.

Daniel 7:26-28
The King, his kingdom, and kingdom people will be victorious in unstoppable fashion. The King desires grace and repentance. Once this season is complete, wrath and the final judgement will occur. Believers are protected from ultimate destruction and will reign with their King in the end.

(Remember the tip from the author as you approach Revelation. Stay zoomed out and avoid the discouragement that can come from what you do not understand. Stick to the major theme of God's ultimate victory that he shares with his people.)

Revelation 13-14
Now for some additional juice, the King leverages the dream of Daniel for the benefit of all believers in Christ. In Revelation, the world power has moved from Babylon to Rome. They are killing believers. It looks like A kingdom is winning over THE kingdom until the final day of judgement, when victory will be enjoyed by the King and his kingdom people. From Daniel to Revelation, the overarching message is clear. The King and his people will not lose despite the forces that war against them.

06

LESSON 6

THE KING BRINGS AN END TO THE KINGS
DANIEL 7



OUTCOME

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What in the reading reminded you of something you have experienced in life?

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Let's think about how we can live as salt and light in our everyday lives.

CONVERSATION NOTES

07

LESSON 7

THE BABY KING ARRIVES
MATTHEW 2-4

OVERVIEW

Let's set the stage to how the New Testament begins. God's Plan A was to be the one and only King for his people. This plan was incredible, but the people opted for Plan B, a physical king just like all the other nations. While Plan B starts well, by the end of the Old Testament, it ends in a judgmental disaster.

However, God has now restored his Plan A. He is the one and only King of his people. The Assyrians and Babylonians have fallen. Rome is reigning over the land known as Israel including important cities like Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The people of God were called to have God as their King by faith, while Caesar was imposed on them as king by force.

God's Son, Jesus, will be born into this era of history. Jesus arrives as a baby King. All the Old Testament prophecies about the future eternal King of God's people line up with his life. Their long awaited desire for a powerful King of their own was finally here. What could go wrong?

Jesus leads the Kingdom of God while living under the authority of an opposing kingdom, namely Rome. It was God's Plan A in live action, which means it can be mine as well. What can I learn about living today with God as my King in a world that does not support my faith on a daily basis?

However, along with the Romans, Jesus had a double whammy because his people, the Jewish community, were out for his life. What a shocking plot twist! The rejection of God as their King in the Old Testament has now reached an unprecedented level.

Our Old Testament learning of God as King and his kingdom advancing through his people despite being under antagonistic rule is being modeled for us by Jesus himself. We will spend the next few lessons diving into the different times Jesus was referred to as King and his teachings on the kingdom. All this occurs in the midst of a secular culture and a wayward religious system.

07

LESSON 7
THE BABY KING ARRIVES
MATTHEW 2-4

OUTLINE

Matthew 2:1-23

So it begins day one for Jesus. His kingdom is a threat to Rome, the ruling power. There is a covert pursuit to kill Jesus. This innocent baby is a concern to the most powerful man in this ancient region of the world. Dreams, prophecies, and angels get involved to keep the kingdom moving forward.

Matthew 3:1-17

A few decades later, John the Baptist shows up on the scene, preaching “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” in reference to Jesus. This theme would often be repeated in the future by Jesus himself. A movement of followers for the kingdom begins right alongside established religious opposition. Both Roman and Jewish leaders are pressing against the King and his kingdom. Jesus' ministry goes public as he demonstrates and teaches the kingdom of God seeking to train God’s people.

Matthew 4:1-25

The threats get ramped up even more as Satan creates opposition to the King and his kingdom. Yet, Jesus echoes the message of John the Baptist with his words “the kingdom of heaven has come near.” God’s Plan A is in full force. Jesus wins over temptation, preaches his first message, and begins recruiting disciples he can train.

07

LESSON 7

THE BABY KING ARRIVES
MATTHEW 2-4



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CONVERSATION NOTES

08

LESSON 8
JESUS' SERMON ON THE KINGDOM
MATTHEW 5-7

OVERVIEW

The most famous sermon ever delivered belonged to Jesus. It is the Sermon on the Kingdom delivered on the mount. Most know it as the Sermon on the Mount, but you are about to see it in a whole new light. It is the longest recorded talk we have that is delivered by Jesus, so let's pay good attention to its content.

Just imagine the Israelites, the people of God, have lived under foreign authorities for hundreds of years. They could feel powerless and hopeless because Roman rule was reigning over them and their territory, including the Holy City, Jerusalem. They were subjects of a foreign, pagan, and oftentimes adversarial king.

So Jesus teaches the Israelites about the Kingdom of God where he can be their King and they can join his mission while living as subjects to an earthly, unsympathetic king.

OUTLINE

Matthew 5:1-12
This section is traditionally known as the Beatitudes. I want you to imagine the audience feeling oppressed and even depressed because of their life situation. Jesus' kingdom is filled with blessings. It reminds me of the Deuteronomy 28:1-8 passage we read several lessons ago.

Matthew 5:13-16
Despite what they are experiencing, the opportunity to be salt and light is still the priority. This also reminds me of Deuteronomy 28:9-14. Learning to serve the kingdom during your weekdays is an important part of our faith. It helps us grow by living in obedience and it spreads the kingdom's message.

08

LESSON 8
JESUS' SERMON ON THE KINGDOM
MATTHEW 5-7

OUTLINE

Matthew 5:17-20
Again, this reminds me of Deuteronomy 28:1-2 and Deuteronomy 28:13-14.

Matthew 5:21-48
The Kingdom of God has a moral standard. Jesus is going to define it, by redefining the very familiar laws of the Old Testament. Many of these had been compromised again and again by both the religious leaders and the people. Jesus does not lower the wisdom of God to their lifestyle; rather, he raises the standard of kingdom living.

Matthew 6:1-18
Jesus now unpacks the inner life of the kingdom by addressing three important spiritual habits: praying, fasting, and giving. We need all three of these activities in our lives to thrive as kingdom people.

Matthew 6:19-34
In contrast to the habits of praying, fasting, and giving, Jesus addresses common things we feel, say, and do. The values, principles, and practices of the kingdom will fight against the natural draws of this world with all its distractions, temptations, concerns, and worries.

Matthew 7:1-12
Be humble. See things clearly. Keep pursuing. Live generously. You and your faith will get there.

Matthew 7:13-23
There is a line in the sand regarding kingdom citizenship. Just because you were born in the lineage of Israel doesn't qualify you for Jesus' kingdom. This would be a shocking message to them.

Matthew 7:24-29
Jesus now reveals that the Sermon on the Kingdom is the best way to live. It is building your house upon the rock. Nothing can destroy it and no external force can remove it. Jaws are dropped.

08

LESSON 8

JESUS' SERMON ON THE KINGDOM
MATTHEW 5-7



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CONVERSATION NOTES

09

LESSON 9

WHEN JESUS COULD NOT STOP TALKING ABOUT THE KINGDOM
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 10-13

OVERVIEW

Get ready for mind-blowing passages of scripture! Jesus was so committed to the reality of the kingdom that he wove it into many conversations and teachings. He simply could not get away from it. He used kingdom language as he commissioned his disciples. He comforted his people by sharing his kingdom power and secrets. He was clear about kingdom battles as well as outcomes. In the end, he closes this discourse with one extremely direct and pointed question, "Have you understood all these things?"

Ok, we cannot miss this teaching. We are called, empowered, trained, supported, directed, and will be held accountable to the Kingdom of God whether we like it or not. Let's dive in!

OUTLINE

Matthew 10:1-15
In this section, Jesus deploys what looks like an ill-conceived plan, or at the very least a massive risk. He trusts humans with his kingdom mission. He grants them authority. He gives them a plan. They are to replicate his ministry wherever they go. Crazy stuff!

Matthew 11:11-15
The kingdom of heaven has always had ambassadors long before the twelve disciples. John the Baptist, the prophets of the Old Testament, even the laws given by God to Moses. However, the kingdoms of this earth have fought against the Kingdom of God.

09

LESSON 9

WHEN JESUS COULD NOT STOP TALKING ABOUT THE KINGDOM
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 10-13

OUTLINE

Matthew 12:25-28
A healing becomes a problem that Jesus turns into a teaching moment. The real power behind the kingdoms warring against God's kingdom is none other than Satan himself. Jesus reveals that the Kingdom of God comes in full power when it wins over evil.

Matthew 13:10-17
This begins an important section of parables where Jesus teaches secrets about the kingdom. Each parable begins with a repeated thought, "the kingdom of heaven is like…." This intriguing teaching style pulls a large crowd of interested people to the edges of their seats making the spiritual world both understandable and compelling. Others will opt for blind eyes, deaf ears, and hard hearts. (See Matthew 13:1-9 for the first parable. Jesus explains the parable in Matthew 13:18-23.)

Matthew 13:24-33
Again using agriculture as a metaphor, Jesus addresses how good and evil kingdoms coexist in our world, while revealing that his kingdom is distinguished by the good it does and is unstoppable in its expansion. Ultimately, a judgement will occur, making everything clear. (Jesus explains the parable of the weeds in Matthew 13:36-43.)

Matthew 13:44-50
Jesus now moves from agriculture to finance. What is the kingdom worth and will our actions clearly display the value? Next theme up: fishing. What's a keeper and what isn't according to the kingdom? This is where the parables end with abundant clarity. No one can argue the message being delivered to a culture that fishes for a living, sells it in the marketplace, or purchases it as a dietary staple in every home.

Matthew 13:51-52
There is only one question to answer at this point: do you understand the importance of the kingdom?

09

LESSON 9

WHEN JESUS COULD NOT STOP TALKING ABOUT THE KINGDOM
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CONVERSATION NOTES

10

LESSON 10

EIGHT SHOCKING KINGDOM SURPRISES
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 16-20

OVERVIEW

I truly hope the sheer volume at which Jesus is addressing the kingdom is beginning to raise your awareness for how critical this concept is to our faith and the future of the people of God. Beyond any shadow of a doubt, we are called to live the kingdom individually as followers of Jesus, as well as collectively as the church.

Now, in this portion of scripture, Jesus' teachings about the kingdom are filled with surprising applications. Some are surprising in a good way; others are surprising in a shockingly stark way, while yet remaining good.

So let's dive in.

OUTLINE

Matthew 16:13-20
Kingdom Surprise #1-Keys to the Kingdom
Keys hold power, responsibility, and authority. Think about the keys to your house and car for a moment. Who do you easily share them with, and who would never be trusted? Keys also grant permission, access, and future gifts. Think about the valuables you might keep under lock and key, as well as how far a car key can take you.

Matthew 16:24-28
Kingdom Surprise #2-The Kingdom is Coming Soon
The fullness of the kingdom was still to come. This would be experienced in part during the resurrection and ascension of Christ. It would be witnessed by the people to whom Jesus was currently speaking. Confusion about the kingdom would continue to be strong even for Jesus' inner circle.

10

LESSON 10

EIGHT SHOCKING KINGDOM SURPRISES
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 16-20

OUTLINE

Matthew 18:1-14; Matthew 19:13-15
Kingdom Surprise #3-Kids Are the Greatest in the Kingdom
Children–along with the greatest and the least–are about to become repeated themes. The kingdom has values that appear to be upside-down from the current world system we inhabit.

Matthew 18:21-35
Kingdom Surprise #4-Kingdom Forgiveness
The opportunity to forgive surrounds us. Hurt, pride, and protection are powerful motivators that deny true forgiveness to others.

Matthew 19:11-12
Kingdom Surprise #5-Kingdom Loyalty
Eunuchs were considered highly loyal people and were welcomed servants in the King's palace.

Matthew 19:16-30
Kingdom Surprise #6-Kingdom Riches Part 1
Wealth holds the temptation of [faux] power, success, and security. It serves as a practical example of the first versus the last, the greatest versus the least, and the priority being placed on a childlike faith.

Matthew 20:1-16
Kingdom Surprise #7-Kingdom Riches Part 2
God is generous with his gifts in a way that confounds common business practices. This is another shocking teaching like the abundance of forgiveness and loyalty of a eunuch.

Matthew 20:20-28
Kingdom Surprise #8-Kingdom Servant
I guess parents have always thought their kids deserved more playing time from the coach. Kingdom priorities are oftentimes the opposite of our natural ambitions. Other first-to-last and least-to-greatest passages include Matthew 18:4, Matthew 19:30, and Matthew 20:16.

10

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EIGHT SHOCKING KINGDOM SURPRISES
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 16-20



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CONVERSATION NOTES

11

LESSON 11

THE KING'S PASSION WEEK
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 21-27

OVERVIEW

The last week of Jesus' life provided a compressed opportunity to intently deposit very specific kingdom teachings to his people. He pulls no punches. Many will be invited, but few will choose the kingdom way.

This theme finds its way into his Second Coming, Last Supper, and trial.

OUTLINE

Matthew 21:1-11
This passage is a fulfillment of prophecy regarding the kingship of Jesus. Also, in verse 9, they sing songs of his royal lineage to the most famous and successful King David. However, this prophecy and these songs reveal a dramatically different outcome by the end of the week.

Matthew 21:28-32
The most irreligious people would be welcomed into heaven before the religious. Believing in Jesus, the revealed King–as preached by John the Baptist–was key. This is also a reference to the 'first shall be last and the last first' principle.

Matthew 21:33-46
Lack of fruit and the murder of the heir are prophetic in themselves, considering where this week is headed. This passage also reflects back to the cleansing of the temple (Matthew 21:12-13) and the barren fruit tree (Matthew 21:18-19). Jesus had higher expectations of the religious leaders. Instead of leading, they were misleading.

Matthew 22:1-14
The King has full and final authority over all life. The invitation is gracious, but the standard is high. It is his righteousness alone granted by simple faith. The standard of the religious will prove itself to be weak.

11

LESSON 11

THE KING'S PASSION WEEK
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 21-27

OUTLINE

Matthew 23:13
Jesus doubles down on his firm, even harsh teachings. Not only are the religious people outside the standard of the kingdom, but they are also hypocrites and deceivers. The entire chapter is a pretty brutal summation of their current spiritual lives and eternal futures.

Matthew 24:7, 14
As he turns from hypocrisy to hope, Jesus begins the most clear teaching on the end times, preaching the kingdom to the ends of the earth, and his Second Coming. Feel free to read the entire chapter if you need a play-by-play regarding the Second Coming of King Jesus. The thrust of the message is: the Kingdom of God will come in full revelation in the future.

Matthew 25:1-13
The King's Second Coming will involve a delay then arrive unsuspectingly. Believers are to stay on point for the mission. Live ready!

Matthew 25:14-30
The word "it" in verse 14 is a reference to the kingdom previously mentioned in verse 1. Not only are we to be ready, but we are also to be fruitful. Both of these parables are a direct contrast to when Jesus previously called out the religious leaders in chapter 22.

Matthew 25:31-46
Forgiveness, peace, and eternal life are all immeasurable gifts that stand alone in eternal value. However, the generous King just keeps on giving. Jesus served all. Nothing confirms authentic faith and kingdom citizenship like the humble servanthood of his people.

Matthew 26:26-30
The kingdom is so important that Jesus weaves it into his Last Supper so it will be woven into every communion service moving forward!

Matthew 27:11-14
From his birth to his death, he was King! His mission on earth was clearly proclaimed from the beginning to the end. The inevitable could no longer be avoided. The King must die.

Matthew 27:29, 37, 42
This is such a sad and ironic ending to the story. The Israelites' original cry for a king in 1 Samuel 8 has resulted in complete rejection of the perfect King. A relationship with him is free, permanent, and bountiful. Yet, we struggle to accept this beautiful gift.

11

LESSON 11

THE KING'S PASSION WEEK
SELECT PASSAGES MATTHEW 21-27



OUTCOME

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CONVERSATION NOTES

12

LESSON 12

THE KING'S FINAL KINGDOM LESSON
ACTS 1:1-11; ACTS 28:30-31

OVERVIEW

We have made it to the end of this lesson series on the Kingdom. In this final Conversation Starter, it is significant to understand that Jesus' last interaction on earth was about the kingdom–both its continued confusion among the disciples and its future reality.

Let's dive in.

OUTLINE

Acts 1:1-3
Acts 1 begins somewhere between day 41 and 49 following the death of Christ. We know this because Acts 2 begins on the Day of Pentecost, which is celebrated 50 days after Passover and Luke (the author of Acts) mentions the prior 40 days in Acts 1:3.

Did you happen to notice the focus of Jesus' final teaching during these 40 days? Pretty interesting how powerful the kingdom theme was to his mission. Before he leaves earth, he wants to do his best to cement these principles in his disciples so they can pass them on to future generations.

Acts 1:4-6
The resurrection has occurred and the disciples have gone through the mental and emotional process of receiving it. Now, they ask their most important question to Jesus based on his teaching. This question would also be their final conversation with him.

Despite having lived the teachings we reviewed for many months in the Gospel of Matthew regarding the kingdom, the disciples are stuck on the Old Testament desire that began our entire journey in 1 Samuel 8. The people let fear of the future propel a request for a physical king and earthly kingdom. They were preparing for Jesus' next big act: taking authority over the ancient world. Little did they know, he would soon depart and leave the kingdom mission in their hands.
Understanding the King and his kingdom ways is still a challenge today for modern believers, but we can be comforted that the disciples also struggled.

12

LESSON 12

THE KING'S FINAL KINGDOM LESSON
ACTS 1:1-11; ACTS 28:30-31

OUTLINE

Acts 1:7-8
Jesus swiftly redirects their attention to the task at hand regarding the kingdom while assuring them that his eternal kingdom would be coming in an undetermined time in the future.

In no way was this a new message or novel experience. In fact, from the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry, He both taught and modeled that the gospel—the good news of heaven—is a witness to the kingdom. Jesus has modeled the kingdom and its calling his entire life. The King is now directing his subjects to go into, bring voice to, and fulfill the kingdom.

Acts 1:9-11
This is how Acts 1 begins and Jesus' time on earth concludes. What did the disciples do after Jesus left the earth? What did the next generation of believers do?

Acts 28:30-31
To respond to my first inquiry regarding what the disciples did with Jesus' command, you can fast-forward to the final two verses in the book of Acts. You will discover that the Apostle Paul, a second-generation believer, had received this Kingdom message clearly from the disciples and had committed his life to pass it along to the third generation of followers. Jesus' Kingdom reality had been received and delivered to the following generation successfully.

To answer my second inquiry regarding what the future generations of believers did with this command, look no further than your local community and personal life. Does a vibrant Kingdom church exist? Do you have a vibrant Kingdom faith?

If we measure a generation as 25 years from 1AD to the present day, then generations 78, 79, and 80 are currently populating the earth. The kingdom continues to be faithfully passed along. We must lean in and step up to our kingdom call.

The kingdom is most certainly alive, well, and very active all around us. I know culture makes it look like we are losing. It can create its own message of fear and isolation for believers. We can even desire an earthly king to solve our inner worldly angst. However, the way of the King is his kingdom.

Now what will you do with what you know about the kingdom?

12

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THE KING'S FINAL KINGDOM LESSON
ACTS 1:1-11; ACTS 28:30-31



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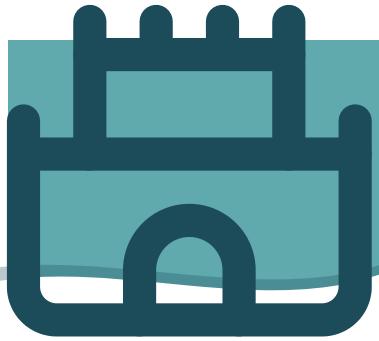
CONVERSATION NOTES



REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS AS YOU CONCLUDE THIS STUDY

What is your one big takeaway from this lesson series?

Do you think you are ready to start a conversation with someone you know and trust that would be interested in this lesson?

Do you want to walk through another lesson?

Do you think you are ready to explore living as salt and light in a way that is in your wheelhouse of passion, experiences, and strengths?

PRAYER REQUESTS

CONVERSATION NOTES



TODD MCMICHEN

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START A CONVERSATION TODAY

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