



Several of the weeks in our Kingdom Stories Series have been connected to loving others and sharing Jesus with them. This summer our Outreach Team will be offering a Re-Think Workshop on the “Helping Others Do the Same” portion of our vision statement.

We want to help others know Jesus and become more like Him. It can seem intimidating at times, but it doesn't need to be! During this workshop, you'll have the opportunity to re-think what it is to share Jesus with others, not as one more thing to add to your to-do list, but as a natural part of your life.

This would be a great workshop for your Life Group (or several from your group) to attend together. Here is a Registration Link: <https://www.lincolnberean.org/eventfinder/eventdetails/?id=31534>. Each person will need to register on their own.

Introduction

This week we come to a parable told near the end of Jesus' ministry. The parable of the wise and foolish virgins seems like a strange name to us, but in Jewish culture it would have been readily understood as being about a wedding celebration. The virgins would translate to bridesmaids in our culture. In this parable Jesus begins to give us a picture of what it means to be a disciple of the King, living in the one true kingdom = living in a state of readiness to meet King Jesus!

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Due to preferences over a wide range of groups, we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

- 1) What is one of the most fun celebrations you have ever been a part of? What made it so great?
- 2) How did the Personal Spiritual Exercises go for you last week? Share your insights with the group.

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:

- a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
- b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
- c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you

Read the full passage together with your group.

Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) What is something that has stuck with you from the passage or sermon this past weekend?**

Who is Jesus speaking to when he tells this parable? Why is that significant? (You need to look back into Matthew chapter 24 to determine this.)

According to Pastor Ryan, what is the primary point of this parable?

In the application for this parable Pastor Ryan returned to our vision statement: “Coming together, to know Jesus, become more like Him and help others do the same.” The next four questions are intended to help us evaluate our own lives in relation to these ideas. The scripture passage in each question is meant to illustrate and motivate us for that part of the vision statement.

- 2) Read *Acts 2:42-47*. What do you notice about the way the early church came together?**

How has coming together both in weekend worship and in your Life Group changed the way you think about God and the way you live your life?

- 3) Read *Philippians 3:7-14*. (Consider also reading this passage in the Message paraphrase).
How would you characterize Paul's desire to know Jesus?

Think about your own relationship with Jesus. Are you pursuing Jesus in steady and fresh ways? Or are you complacent? Why or why not?

How do these verses challenge and motivate you to keep pressing forward in your relationship with Jesus?

- 4) Read *2 Peter 1:1-11*. This passage is one description of what growth might look like. Think back over the past year. What has growth looked like in your life this past year?

How do you see God working in your life to empower you to do what you can't do on your own?

How are you seeking to become more like Jesus? What is one step you could take to do this better in this coming week?

- 5) Read *Romans 12:4-21*. How does this passage help us understand "helping others do the same (know Jesus and become more like Him)?"

How are you helping others come to know Jesus or become more like Him?

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts.

Prayer Focus: This week, pray the following prayer each morning as a reminder of your desire to become more like Jesus and help others do the same.

Lord, in the silence of this newborn day,

I come to request your peace, wisdom, strength.

Today I want to see the world with eyes full of love.

To be patient, understanding, humble, gentle, and good.

To see your children behind outer appearances, as you see them also.

So that I can appreciate the goodness in each one.

Close my hearing to all murmuring.

Guard my tongue from all evil.

That only your thoughts that bless others remain in me.

I want to be so well intentioned and good that all who draw near to me feel your presence.

Transform me with your goodness & kindness Lord, and make that in this day I reflect you. Amen

Scripture Focus: Read the following passage several times this week: *Luke 17:20-21*. Ask God to reveal to you how His kingdom is in the midst of your daily life. **What does it look like to live in the one true kingdom each day?**

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?