



What is the Gospel?

The Kingdom: Expectation

Romans 8:18-25; 1 Corinthians 15:42-58;

Revelations 21:1-4, 22-27

Message-based Group Lesson

Overview

Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand and that this truth was Good News. Jesus gave a foretaste of what that eternal Kingdom would look like in its fullness as he healed the sick, cared for the hurting, and modeled an intimacy with God. He opens this Kingdom of wholeness and intimacy to all by giving his life on the cross. He calls his people to live in a way that stands as a witness and a warning to all that this way of the Kingdom is what God intended and toward what God is working.

The problem is that, as we follow this calling, we do so in a world that often has little or no evidence of this Kingdom. That can be discouraging. In Romans 8 and again in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul encourages us to keep our focus on the promise, the promise that God is restoring all things to his intended order and purpose. We have a future secured by him, not in some disembodied spirit existence, but in a renewed full humanity. We will serve and worship him together for all eternity. Because this is true, Paul says, our labor now is not in vain.

Engaging with each other

1. How does your anticipation of and preparation for the holiday season impact your life today, good or bad?

Engaging with the Bible

1. Read Romans 8:18-25. In these verses Paul talks about "groaning." The creation groans and we groan. What does this groaning reveal about our current situation and what does it imply for our future on the new heaven and earth?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 15:42-58. Here Paul gives us a lengthy comparison of our humanity before and after the resurrection of the dead. Here is a list of these comparisons:

Perishable	Imperishable
Dishonor	Glory
Weakness	Power
Natural	Spiritual
Mortal	Immortal

For each of these, what is implied about both our current and future existence?

3. Read Revelation 21:1-4 and 22-27. What strikes you most about this description of eternity? What about this gives you hope for now?

Engaging with our lives

1. Re-read 1 Corinthians 15:58. How should our assured future impact our current lives in God's Kingdom?
2. This assured future should give you great freedom. What is one area where you want to trust God more now in light of the freedom you have in your assured future?
3. Reflect on this series, "What is the Gospel?" How has this changed your thinking about what is meant by the Gospel?

The King
The Kingdom
Becoming Kingdom People
Living as Kingdom People
The Kingdom: Proclamation
The Kingdom: Demonstration
The Kingdom: Incarnation
The Kingdom: Expectation