

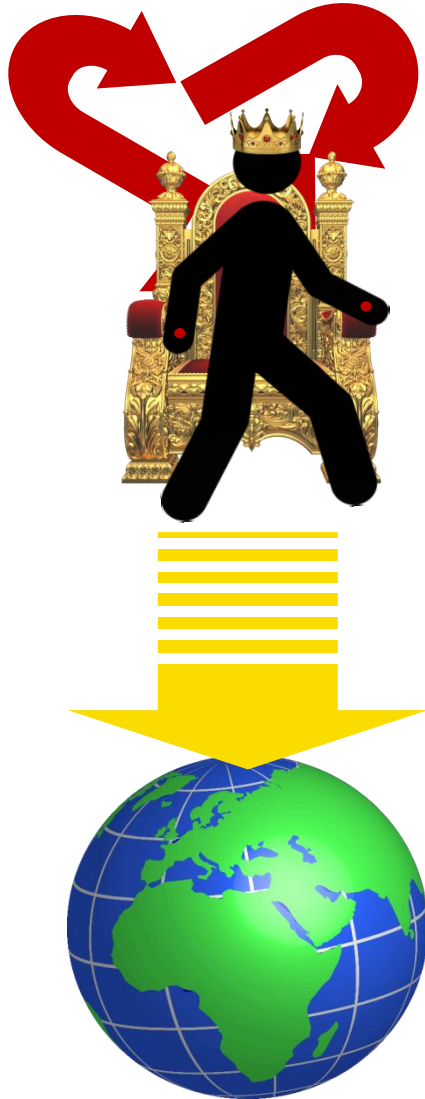
## **PICTURE THIS!**

### **The Big Picture of Our Faith in Pictures!**

*A study for all ages @ Gorrie Bible Fellowship!  
September – December 2016*

#### **Week #10 – The Kingdom of God**

**Picture It!**



**Caption It!**

*The Kingdom of God is the realm of God's rule in which Jesus reigns as King and God's will is in full effect. The Kingdom of God was represented in the world in the person of Jesus and now in His church, but will only be fully present in the world when Jesus comes again.*

**Save It!**

*The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit... Romans 14:17*

## Picture It!

### 1. The Kingdom of God

- a. A kingdom is a realm of authority that is ruled by a king whose will is in full effect.
- b. The Kingdom of God is the realm of God's rule.
- c. When God created the universe, His intention was that Creation would thrive under His life-giving rule.
- d. However, when Adam and Eve sinned, they rebelled against the authority of God. God could have eradicated sin and sinners from the world that He made in order to maintain the purity of His kingdom, but instead He allowed the first people, the caretakers of His world, to have what they had chosen; a world without God's rule.
- e. Immediately, the world that God made became a world of chaos, sin and violence. Things were so bad that God had to send a flood upon the world to curb the chaos of sin (Genesis 6).
- f. However, the story of history, the story of the Bible, is a story of redemption. It is a story of God's plan to rescue humanity and all of Creation from the chaos of sin so that His kingdom can once again be restored on the earth.
- g. The first stage of God's plan of redemption was to redeem an earthly kingdom that would become a representation of God's heavenly kingdom. This earthly kingdom was the nation of Israel. God gave Israel His law and His presence in the tabernacle/temple. There were times in Israel's history, especially under the kingship of David and his son Solomon, when it represented God's kingdom on earth very well, but even David and Solomon were deeply flawed kings and time and again, Israel fell into idolatry and sin.
- h. But God promised that eventually a king would be born from David's line who would be the King of kings; a king who would bring about God's redemption for a broken world. This king was Jesus!

## 2. Jesus and the Kingdom of God!

- a. When Jesus began to preach He said, *“The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”* (Mark 1:15).
- b. Why did Jesus say that the kingdom of God had come near? First, because *He* had come near! Jesus had come from heaven to earth as God in human flesh! Since God had come to earth, the kingdom of God had come! But Jesus didn’t just come as a representative of God’s Kingdom, He came as the King! This is why this week’s picture shows Jesus sitting on a throne and wearing a crown. Jesus is the king of the Kingdom of God!
- c. Jesus preached a message that He called the Gospel or Good News. More specifically, He called it the “Gospel of the Kingdom.” Some people think that Jesus preached a different Gospel message than the church is to preach today, but that is not true. Jesus knew of only one Gospel. He said, *“this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations...”* (Matthew 24:14). This means that the Good His broken world. He intends to bring His kingdom back to earth, inviting all people to surrender to His gracious and perfect rule.
- d. Jesus not only preached the Good News about the kingdom of God, but He put the Kingdom of God on display in every aspect of His life. His character put the ‘upside down’ values of the Kingdom on display. His teaching explained what life in the Kingdom of God looks like. His miracles reversed the catastrophic effects of sin and put the perfection of God’s rule on display.
- e. But Jesus died! While His crucifixion seemed like a death-blow to the Kingdom of God, it provided the necessary sacrifice that was required to redeem people from sin. His resurrection demonstrated God’s power and the victory Jesus had accomplished over sin and the curse. After His resurrection, Jesus ascended to Heaven and took His place on a heavenly throne. He is indeed the king of God’s Kingdom!

### 3. The Church and the Kingdom of God

- a. So is the Kingdom of God in effect in the world today? The answer is yes and no! Yes, the kingdom of God is alive and well in the followers of Christ who have become the ambassadors, or representatives, of God's Kingdom on earth. But no, not yet. The chaos in the world reminds us that our humanity is still rejecting God's rule and the Kingship of Jesus. The world continues to live outside of the gracious and loving rule of God.
- b. In the picture, Jesus is shown on a throne above the earth because He has not yet returned to the earth to rule and reign. But there is a broken glory arrow coming from His throne down to the earth. The arrow represents the glorious presence of the kingdom of God during Christ's first coming to earth. It also represents the presence of the Kingdom of God in and through God's people, the church. But the arrow is broken to remind us that while Jesus rules and reigns in Heaven, He has yet to establish His kingdom on earth. He is patiently waiting for sinners to repent so that they can have a place in His future kingdom! (2 Peter 3:9).
- c. Those who are followers of Jesus are already citizens in God's kingdom (Philippians 3:20). The kingdom of God is alive within them. True believers submit their lives to the loving and wise rule of Jesus. Their lives put the kingdom of God on display in this world just like Jesus did.
- d. Followers of Jesus put the kingdom of God on display as an alternative to the kingdom of this world. They do this through their godly character and their heavenly values. They do this through lovingly lifting the pain of the curse whenever and wherever they can. They do this through proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom!

### 4. An Upside Down Kingdom

- a. In His teaching and by His life, Jesus demonstrated that God's kingdom turn the values the world upside down. This is why Christians have the opportunity to display God's kingdom so vividly in the way that we live.
- b. As we have seen, God is a relationship of three Persons who love, honor and serve one another. Life in God's Kingdom is characterized by the selfless 'dance' of living for the other rather than self.

- c. The world says “get.” Jesus says “give.” (Luke 6:38)
- d. The world says “live.” Jesus says “die.” (1 John 3:16)
- e. The world says “be proud of yourself.” Jesus says “humble yourself.”  
(Matthew 23:12)
- f. The world says “be first.” Jesus says “be last.” (Matt. 20:16)
- g. The world says “be independent.” Jesus says “depend on God.”  
(Matthew 5:25-32)

### **Panorama!**

God created the world and the universe to thrive under His perfect, loving rule. But when humanity, who had dominion over the world, rebelled against God, they rejected God’s rule and embraced a worldly kingdom that has resulted in chaos and destruction. God has not given up on His Creation, and through King Jesus He has provided redemption and salvation and will soon fully restore His Kingdom on earth.

### **Selfie!**

As a human being, I was created in God’s image to have rule over God’s creation as a representative of His Kingdom. Like all sinners, I have rejected God’s perfect and loving rule and have made myself king of my own kingdom. Through salvation, God invites me back into His Kingdom and promises that I will rule and reign with King Jesus in the Kingdom of God. As a believer, I am to represent God’s Kingdom on earth through my actions and words.

### **Instagram!**

The kingdoms of this world are kingdoms of chaos and destruction. God offers us entrance into His Kingdom to live in dependence under the loving rule of King Jesus.

### **Key Story!**

Jesus accused of being possessed – Luke 11:14-20

- Jesus was accused of casting out demons by the power of Satan
- Since Jesus actually drove out demons “by the finger of God”, it proved that the Kingdom of God was present on earth.

## Key Questions!

1. What is the Kingdom of God? (Every follower of Christ should be able to answer this question!)
2. Who is the King of God's Kingdom?
3. In this week's picture, why is the yellow arrow coming from Christ's throne a broken arrow?
4. How does 'the dance' demonstrate the upside down values of God's Kingdom?
5. How did the miracles of Jesus put the Kingdom of God on display? List a few examples.
6. How is the choice to follow Jesus a choice between kingdoms?
7. What is the church's role when it comes to God's Kingdom in the world today?  
How does the church fulfill this role?
8. As Christians, we often feel threatened and uneasy when we see the kingdom of the world moving farther and farther away from God. In what ways should believers see these negative changes in a positive way?
9. What does the Lord's prayer mean when He says, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven"?