



Connect : LIFEgroup discussion guide

"Jeus & the Kingdom" Ross Stewart - Sun 21st Feb 2021

WELCOME: This week we take a slight detour in our journey and our guest preacher was Ross Stewart who works for Fresh Hope – the movement of churches we belong to. He was supported by his wife Amanda who led us in worship.

- **What benefits are there for a local church in having visiting ministry from time to time?**
- **What benefits are there for a local church in having stable leadership over time?**
- **What benefits are there for a local church in being connected to a larger group of churches?**

DISCUSSING THE MESSAGE:

Ross began the message with a video clip, showing a number of "coincidental" incidents that in the end led to one young man "James" committing his life to Christ.

- **What were your thoughts on viewing the video?**
- **How does it relate to any of the learning from Evangelism Shift in the last couple of years?**

Ross said that the Jewish people of Jesus' time had certain expectations of what "the Kingdom of God" would look like, they were expecting a Messiah who would bring them freedom from the Romans and would give them control over the Promised Land. However, Jesus redefined the Kingdom of God.

- **Read *Luke 17:20-21* what is Jesus saying about the Kingdom of God?**
- **Read *Eccl 3:11* what does this indicate about the relationship between God and people?**

Ross said that the Scriptures are indicating that rather than being a specific place, the Kingdom of God exists "wherever God reigns." He equated the Kingdom of God with having a "relationship with God."

- **What are your thoughts and reflections on this concept?**
- **What does it mean to you to have a "relationship with God?"**

In the Gospels at times Jesus describes the "Kingdom of God" in terms of the "Kingdom of Heaven," again Jesus is not talking about a specific location as much as he is about our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

- **Read *Matt 13:44* what are your thoughts & reflections on this one-verse parable?**
- **In the culture of the day, the man had a right to take the treasure because he had found it, why do you think he was prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to purchase it and the land it was hidden on?**
- **What might Jesus' audience be thinking?**

1. Understand the VALUE of the treasure

- **In what ways do you think we do or don't appreciate the value of being in relationship with God?**
- **How could we demonstrate the value of having a growing relationship with God, in the community around us?**

2. Understand the PRICE for the treasure

Jesus paid the price to be our treasure, so there is no price for discovering the treasure. However, in our response to God's free gifts there is usually a price to be paid in a change of lifestyle priorities.

- **What changes have you experienced in life related to your relationship with God?**
- **Read *Matt 16:24* what is Jesus saying about life as a Christian?**
- **Read *John 14:6* what does Jesus say about connecting in relationship with God?**

Q. Are we willing to give up everything that God identifies needs removing, to grow deeper in our relationship with God?

3. Understand the JOY in the treasure

While there are challenges and we do give up some things, for the most part the things God calls us to give up are things that are not good for us as God's children. As we walk with God there is also a deep sense of peace and joy in the relationship.

- **The man was "excited" about his discovery – the original word *chara* indicates "great joy/rejoicing" - what could we do to restore great joy in our relationship with God?**

Because of the value of the treasure available to everyone, the pioneers of our church family paid the price to purchase land and build the facilities we are blessed to use today. They understood the VALUE, were willing to pay the PRICE and invest in a community that would understand the JOY of knowing God and pass that on to others. What price will we pay to create a platform for future generations?

Pray together:

Pray for a fresh understanding of the VALUE of relationship with God personally & as a church family.

Pray for a fresh understanding of the PRICE God is challenging you and I about personally and as a church family.

Pray for a fresh understanding of the JOY available to us as followers of Jesus, personally and as a church family and a commitment to take that to the community – locally and globally.

Pray for a season to see as God sees, and to walk into God's plans for his church in Engadine, our Shire, our city, our nation and our world.