



When it comes to understanding why Jesus came, we don't have to put words in his mouth. He made a number of very clear statements about the subject. So this series will explore the reasons behind the greatest mission ever.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 This series is going to explore why Jesus came. Before you jump into the content of this first message take a moment to reflect on the various reasons Jesus came. Share as many as you can. Which one resonates with you the most and why?

2 JESUS CAME as a king. Rick reminded us that *“Christmas does not just celebrate the birth of a redeemer, but the arrival of a ruler.”* **Read Luke 1:32-33.** What's significant about the description the angel gives in these verses? How does that differ from the view some have of Jesus today that “robs him of his authority” and what impact has that had on our society?

3 Rick emphasized, *“I believe every other reason given for the coming of Jesus must be seen through the lens that he came to bring a kingdom. It's not that his coming brought the kingdom of God into existence, but it brought the kingdom of God within reach.”* Why do you think this viewpoint is so central to understanding why Jesus came?

4 JESUS COMES... to bring us good news. Jesus's favorite subject to preach on was the gospel of the kingdom. **Read Matthew 4:23; 24:14; Acts 1:3.** Rick noted, *“We are not just being saved from something; we are being saved into something—the kingdom of God.”* What's significant about this distinction? Follow up: how would you define the kingdom of God? (Note:

one definition for the kingdom of God is *“where what God wants done is done”* – Dallas Willard).

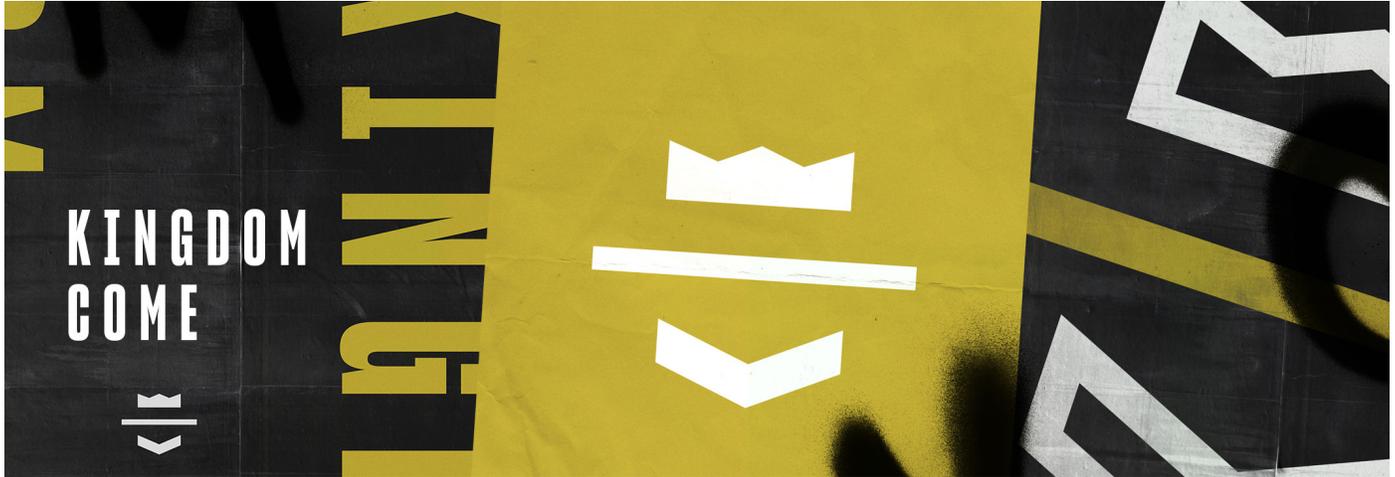
5 Read Matthew 4:17. Rick reminded us that *“Repent”* was not a rebuke but an invitation. How have you experienced this to be true in your life?

6 JESUS COMES... to show us true reality. The enemy wants to seduce us into believing other dominions deserve our allegiance—especially *“the kingdom of me.”* But our best possible life depends on our alignment with this one unalterable reality: it's about *“thy kingdom come.”* **Read Matthew 6:33.** How does seeking the kingdom of God above all things help us prioritize the rest of our lives correctly?

7 JESUS COMES... to call us to surrender. The kingdom is here, it can be found, and it can be entered...but only on the King's terms. **Read Luke 18:18-25.** What stands out to you the most about Jesus' response to this man? What is one thing you can take away from this man's encounter with Jesus and apply to your situation today?

8 Give thanks that **JESUS IS COMING to reign over all!** Close by reading **Colossians 1:13-18** and discuss how we can hold on to this view of Jesus in a world where he doesn't always seem in charge. Pray for God's kingdom to continue to come.





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1 Rick began by reminding us that when Jesus comes a second time there will be no doubt that he is the King but when he came the first time there was a lot of uncertainty. What was the primary reason for this uncertainty among the religious leaders in Jesus' day? Is this still a problem for us today? Explain.

2 **Read Mark 2:13-16.** Why was Levi a surprising choice for Jesus to call? What does Jesus' calling of Levi show us about His character and His mission? Follow up discussion: Have you ever developed an "unlikely friendship" with someone religious people would call "sinners"? How did that experience impact how others viewed you?

3 The religious leaders asked Jesus' disciples, "Why does he eat with such scum?" What disturbs you most about their reaction? Have you ever found yourself thinking similar thoughts about other people?

4 **JESUS CAME for sinners. Read Mark 2:17.** Rick pointed out that "Jesus came to bring a different kind of kingdom, because he intended to bring a different kind of people into it. The most amazing thing about this kingdom is that the one condition for entering it is admitting you are not fit for it." Why are Jesus words in verse 17 offensive to both secular and religious people?

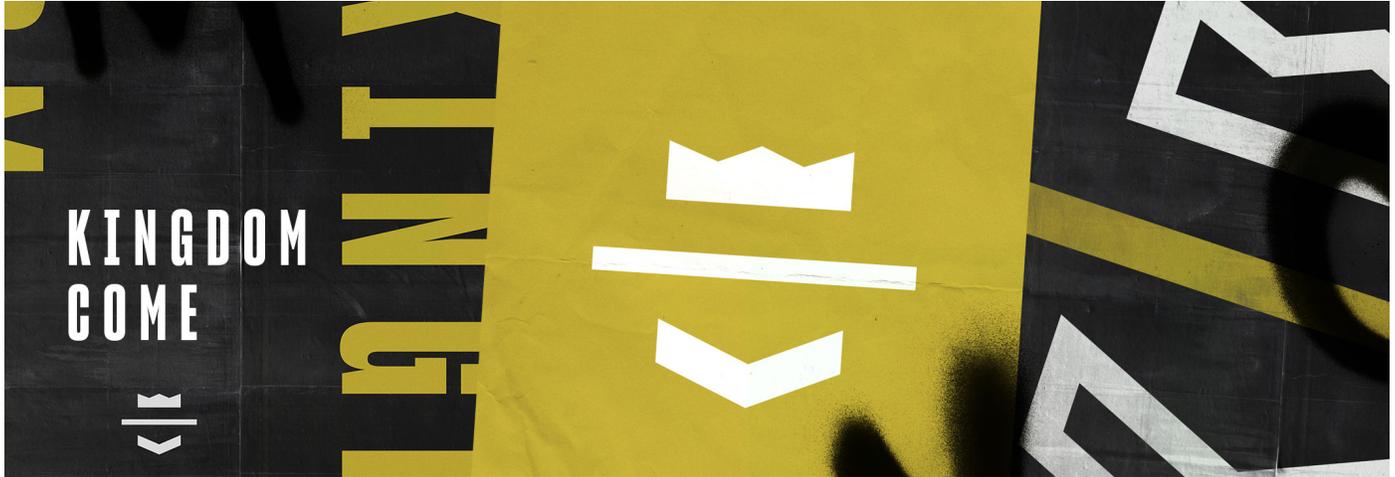
5 Rick also mentioned that "One thing this text reveals is that Jesus did not come to change God's mind about us, but to change our minds about God." What is significant about that statement? Share an example of how your relationship with Jesus has changed your mind about God.

6 **JESUS CAME... He saw patients.** Jesus didn't see people as problems; he saw people with problems. He did not practice "separation for fear of contamination." How should that change the way you see people and how you interact with them? Follow up discussion: When have you struggled with seeing people through a "morality grid" instead of through a "redemptive lens"?

7 **JESUS CAME... He was patient.** Jesus didn't say, "Get well and start following me"; he said, "Follow me and start getting well." **Read Romans 3:10, 23.** How do these verses blow up "morality grid" theology? How can this help you become more patient with people?

8 **JESUS CAME to become sin.** The reason we can enter the kingdom is because the King himself has transferred his fitness to us. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.** What stands out to you the most from this verse? Who is one person in your life in need of a doctor like King Jesus? How can you further your relationship with him or her this week?





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1 Read Matthew 11:2-6. Why might being in prison have raised doubts for John about Jesus' identity? Follow up discussion: What kinds of "prisons" (for example, difficult circumstances, isolation, disappointment, etc.) tend to bring up doubts for you regarding Jesus? Why are we sometimes hesitant to voice our doubts to God during times like this?

2 It's safe to bring our doubts to the King. John Ortberg wrote a book called *Faith and Doubt*. He says the most important word in that title is the middle one. With that in mind, why are doubt and questioning important to faith development? Follow up discussion: what stands out to you about the way Jesus went on to speak to the crowd about John the Baptist after he had doubts (**see Matthew 11:11**)

3 The King can keep His promises without meeting our expectations. John knew prophecies about the Messiah like **Isaiah 9:2-7** or **Malachi 3:1-5**. But Jesus' answer points to other promises the Messiah would keep (**see Isaiah 35:5-6 and 61:1**). Sometimes we base all of our expectations on only one part of God's Word. Why is it dangerous to evaluate God based on our expectations (**see Matthew 11:6**)?

4 Read Matthew 11:16-17. Taylor shared these words from Jesus as a reminder that "*The Kingdom comes on His terms, not ours.*" Why is that important to remember? In what ways would a faith founded on "your version of Jesus" actually make you disappointed in the real Jesus?

5 The King answers our doubts with His words and His actions. Read Luke 7:20-22. In response to John's doubts, Jesus said, "*Go back and report to John what you've seen and heard...*" In what ways would these things have provided an answer to John's doubts? How can it provide hope and encouragement for us today?

6 Taylor closed by paraphrasing this thought by John Mark Comer, "*The goal of life in the Kingdom is not a life free of doubt, but a life full of trust.*" What stands out to you most from this quote? What are some practical ways we can help one another deal honestly with our doubts? What is one thing you can focus on or do this week that will help you develop a life more "full of trust"?





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1 "Who's the boss?" or "Who's the greatest?" is a common and often heated conversation. But it's a conversation that should go when the kingdom comes. **Read Mark 9:33-35.** What does the disciples' argument tell you about their understanding of who Jesus was and why He had come? Follow up discussion: In what ways are Jesus' words counter-cultural both today and in Jesus' day? What does this say about the condition of the human heart and our natural assumptions about service?

2 You would think that would end the conversation but notice what takes place in the next chapter. **Read Mark 10:35-45.** Rick noted that "Jesus does not rebuke His disciples for wanting to be great." Why is that significant? How does Jesus reframe the definition of greatness? What surprises you the most about how Jesus defines greatness?

3 WE MUST connect why He came to how He came. Jesus said, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant." When disciples of Jesus get this wrong things go very wrong. **Read Philippians 2:3-7.** What stands out to you the most from this passage? Why is it important to connect why Jesus came to how He came?

4 IN HIS KINGDOM... "Servant" is the only identity. We are not disciples because we serve; we serve because we are disciples. We serve because we are followers of a servant King. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:5.** In what ways is our identity as servants part of our message to the world? Share a story of how you've seen someone come to Christ because of how someone else served.

5 Rick reminded us that Jesus "doesn't just save us from something; He saves us for something." What's significant about that distinction? **Read 1 Peter 4:10.** How would not using your gifts to serve others be an example of poorly stewarding the grace of God?

6 Rick went on to say "We must exchange 'What can the church do for me?' with 'What can the church do through me?'" Why is this such a difficult shift to make? Share an example of how you've witnessed this change in someone else or how you've experienced it yourself.

7 IN HIS KINGDOM... "Serving" is the only strategy. Rick pointed out that "Jesus brought a kingdom that would transform the world not from above but from beneath by a reborn community of faithful servants." What was wrong with the strategy Jesus' disciples had in mind? Follow up discussion: "This is not to say that Christians should avoid positions of leadership. This is to say Christians should avoid replacing servant strategy with boss strategy." Share some examples of people you've seen do servant leadership well.

8 WE MUST send servants wherever we want God to send the kingdom. Jesus will never stop being a servant (see **Luke 12:35-37**). Neither should you. That is one reason that **Serve Others** is one of our Next Steps. What can you do to more consistently serve others in the church and in the community? How can we as a group intentionally encourage one another with this effort?





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1 Read Ephesians 6:12 and 1 John 3:8. What was the worldview of the NT authors when it came to the existence of evil in the world? Why does our culture find the idea of a devil and evil spirits more "unreal" than many other cultures around the world?

2 JESUS CAME... to take the battle to the enemy. The gospel accounts don't depict Jesus as trying to avoid the devil, but as trying to pursue him. And the enemy knew he was coming. **Read Luke 4:34 and Matthew 8:29.** Why is it significant to remember that this has been his mission since the beginning of the Bible (**Read Genesis 3:15**)?

Note: Rick pointed out that *"Bethlehem was D-Day, and Jesus came into enemy territory to turn the tide of the battle. All his healings and exorcisms were acts of war. To rescue He had to destroy."*

3 JESUS "DESTROYS"... by exposing lies. From the beginning Satan's chief tactic has been to deceive. **Read John 8:44.** What are some of the ways Satan tries to "normalize untruths" in order to deceive us? Share some examples of how believing these types of lies can have very "destructive" consequences in a person's life. Follow up discussion: Jesus came to teach us to love God with all of our mind, and He did so by constantly exposing commonly held lies. Share some examples from the teachings of Jesus that demonstrate how He was exposing the lies of the evil one (**see Matthew 6:27, 7:12, Luke 12:15, and John 3:16**). Which of these have been most helpful to you?

4 JESUS "DESTROYS"... by releasing captives.

Jesus came to destroy the strongholds that destroy people. **Read Matthew 12:28-29.** What stands out to you the most from this passage? Follow up discussion: Rick went on to say, *"Every conversion is a power encounter where Satan is obliged to release his hold on someone's life and acknowledge the superiority of Christ."* Share a recent example of how you've experienced this to be true (how you've seen the "kingdom come").

5 JESUS "DESTROYS"... by disarming death. The death and resurrection of Christ is the battle that has decided the war. **Read Hebrews 2:14-15 and Revelation 1:17-18.** What are the implications of the fact that Jesus's death and resurrection disarmed Satan and his power?

6 JESUS' VICTORY is available and unassailable.

Rick closed by reminding us that *"It is true that right now the serpent still slithers and the evil he sows still destroys. But followers of Jesus need not live intimidated or incarcerated lives. We are washed in the blood, filled with the Spirit, and clothed in Christ."* With that in mind, why is it important to know that you are fighting from victory, rather than fighting for victory? As you go through this next week reflect on this question, *"Are you living like the kingdom has come?"*





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1 Rick began by reminding us that *“Some issues have a greater capacity to divide families than others.”* What are some of the issues that often divide families?

2 **Read Matthew 10:16-23.** What stands out to you or surprises you from these words by Jesus? What do you think it felt like to be a disciple and hear Jesus say that these types of things would happen?

3 **PUT JESUS FIRST... and some relationships won't last. Read 10:34-36 and Mark 10:29-30.** It is important to note that *“Jesus is not meaning that disturbing the peace is the purpose of His coming; He is acknowledging that it is often the effect of His coming.”* In what ways can a person's decision to follow Jesus lead to potential division? How have you seen or experienced Jesus disturbing the peace in a family?

4 **Peace is very important to Jesus.** Jesus never advocated violence as a way to advance the kingdom (see **Luke 22:49-51**). Rick went on to say, *“Jesus came to wage peace wherever possible, and to train His disciples to go into the world as His ‘peace corps.’”* **Read Matthew 5:9 and Romans 12:18.** Why is this so important for us to remember? Share some examples of how you've seen the kingdom come through the offer of peace.

5 **Peace is not more important than Jesus.** Rick said *“The King did bring a sword in the sense that He came to cut us off from all our illegitimate allegiances. He will not accept any place but first place. And that means Jesus is willing to disturb the peace when it comes to our most sacred idol—our families.”* **Read Matthew 10:37-38; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 9: 59-62, and 11:27-28** to see how Jesus radically de-idolized the nuclear family. What shocks you most about these words from Jesus? What are some of the negative consequences or outcomes of putting our family before God? How is putting Jesus before our family an example of how we “take up our crosses?”

6 **LOVE JESUS MOST... and you will love others more.** Rick pointed out that *“The best thing you can do for your family is put Jesus first.”* Why is that statement so significant and true? What are some of the positive implications of consistently doing this?

7 What is one thing you can do this week to make/keep Jesus more important than any other relationship in your life?





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1 Take a moment to reflect on the previous lessons in this series. Which of the statements about why Jesus came have resonated with you the most (*to bring the kingdom, to call sinners, to answer doubts, to serve, to defeat the enemy, to disturb the peace*)?

2 Jesus never wondered why he came. His life started on mission, stayed on mission, and ended on mission. **Read Mark 10:45 and John 10:17-18.** Rick pointed out that “Jesus’ life was not taken from him; it was given by him.” Why is that distinction so significant?

3 JESUS’ DEATH... was Jesus’ choice. Jesus understood that he was born to die. **Read Hebrews 10:5-7 and Philippians 2:8.** What stands out to you in regards to how these verses remind us that for Jesus death was “*an intentional act of loving humility*”? What impact should that have on our choice to follow him?

4 HE GAVE HIS LIFE... to pay our debt for us. Rick mentioned 3 expressions people use to show they are offended by the cross (“*God is not all that holy*,” “*people are not all that bad*,” and “*Jesus is not all that necessary*”). Which of these have you heard someone express recently? How does the good news of the kingdom respond to statements like these? Follow up discussion: **Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 and Hebrews 9:22.** What do these verses emphasize about why Jesus came to give his life?

5 Religion says men can build their own bridge to God. Christianity says God must build the bridge, pay for the bridge, and then give us access to the bridge for free. **Read Romans 3:22-25.** What does being “*made right with God*” mean to you? What difference has this made in your life?

6 HE GAVE HIS LIFE... to show the way for us. Rick said that “*Jesus’s choice to give his life should inform and inspire all our choices.*” **Read Galatians 2:20.** Share some examples of how living a crucified life impacts things like *race relations* (see Ephesians 2:15-16), *sexual stewardship* (see 1 Corinthians 6:20), *reconciliation* (see Ephesians 4:32), and *marriage* (see Ephesians 5:25). What is one area you would like for Jesus to have more impact on in your life right now?

7 HE GAVE HIS LIFE... to prove God is for us! Rick reminded us that one reason people often struggle to believe in God’s unfailing love is because all other loves are conditional at some level but God’s love is based on His nature, not ours (see Romans 5:8 and 1 John 4:10). **Read Romans 8:31-32, 33-39.** What is significant about each of the words in the phrase “*God is for us*”? What evidence of God’s love do you see in your day-to-day life? How has viewing God’s love through the lens of the cross shaped your life?





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1 Read John 9:39 and John 12:47. What should we do when Jesus' teachings or other parts of the Bible seem to contradict themselves?

2 Read John 3:16-17. According to this text, **the King didn't come to condemn.** Instead, Jesus came because of God's love for a world that needed saving. How can we as Christians keep this message to the world clear?

3 Read John 3:18. While Jesus didn't come to judge, **our judgment is based on faith in Jesus.** How would you explain this text to someone brand new to Christianity? What does it mean to "believe" in Jesus?

4 Read John 3:19-21. Passages like these often make us uncomfortable. What are examples in the world of people choosing darkness, evil, and their own interests over others. What are examples in your own life?

5 Read John 12:46-48. Someday there will be a judgment, and we are warned that **whoever rejects the light remains in darkness.** How should the reality of judgment keep us humble toward those who don't believe in Jesus? Should mentioning judgment be part of sharing our faith (*for an early church example, see Acts 17:30-31*)?





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1 Read Luke 19:1-10. What are some of your first impressions about the encounter Jesus has with Zacchaeus? What stands out to you the most from this story?

2 THE KING CAME on a search and rescue mission. Why would most people in Jesus' day have been surprised by the fact that Jesus was looking for someone like Zacchaeus? **Read Luke 2:10-11.** What is significant about the truth that Jesus came not only as King but also as Savior?

3 People really are lost. Rick pointed out that "Lost" has become a four-letter word among Christians. Why is that the case? Why are most people unwilling to admit to being lost even though they will often admit to being a sinner? Follow-up discussion: Rick shared 3 reasons why "*We must not lose a theology of lostness.*" First, because "lost is a "Jesus word." Second, "lost" is an accurate word. Third, "lost" is a "love word." **Read Matthew 10:5-6, 15:24, 18:12, Mark 4:38, Luke 15:22-24, and Romans 3:23.** How do these verses amplify the point Rick made about the significance of the word "lost"?

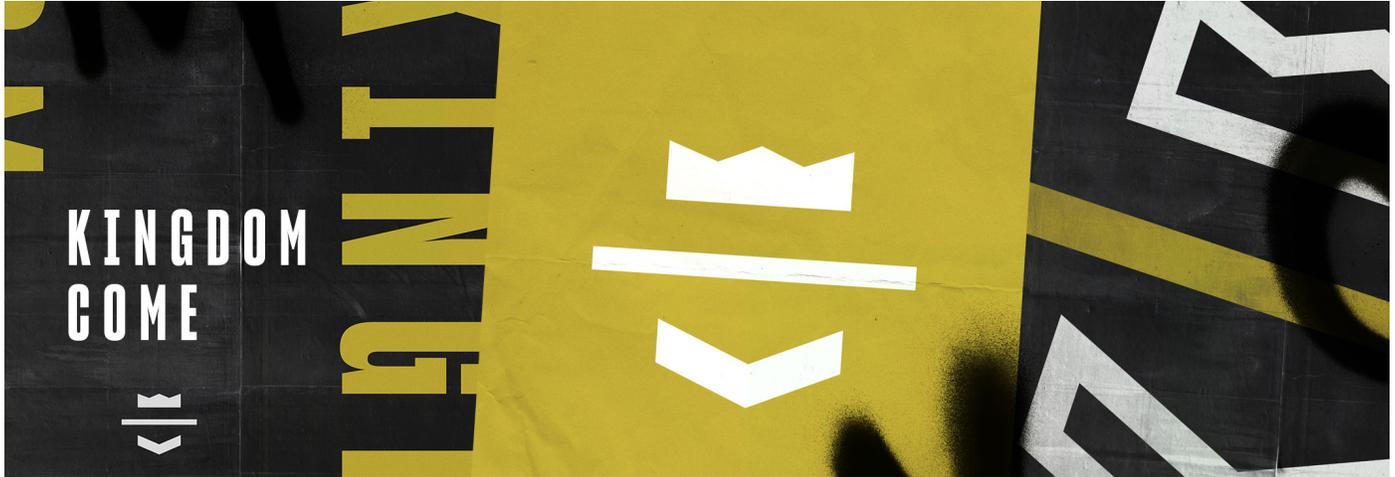
4 Jesus really is good at finding. **Read Luke 19:5-6.** This story reminds us that people do not accidentally find God; they providentially find God. How has that been true in your own life (share the story of how Jesus met you)? Follow-up discussion: **Read 1 Timothy 1:15.** What is one thing that encourages you from that verse?

5 THE KINGDOM COMES... when we embrace the cause. Rick said, "*There should be a culture of urgency in the church of Jesus Christ.*" What are some of the reasons a church often drifts from the mission of reaching lost people? **Read 2 Corinthians 5:19-20.** In what ways does this passage remind you of our mission and your role in the cause?

6 THE KINGDOM COMES... where we accept the cost. The man in Luke 18 went away sad when he realized that finding the King meant losing ownership of his wealth. Zacchaeus, on the other hand, immediately grasped that being found meant finding a new purpose for his wealth. Share some examples of how the kingdom comes with a cost. What is something God might be calling you to do in order to look for more lost people?

7 Near the end of this message Rick emphasized that he wants "*every member of our church to be instrumental in giving heaven another reason to throw a party.*" With that in mind, he gave us 3 things to do to get started: (1) Ask God to increase your burden for the lost, (2) Look for your Zach, and (3) Pray the Bible over him/her. **Read John 3:16** and then close by praying that we would remain focused on the mission of intentionally partnering with Jesus to find people far from God.





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1 This series has focused on why Jesus came. In this lesson Rick reminded us that Jesus also talked a lot about leaving. **Read John 16:5-7.** Why do you think Jesus wanted his disciples to know why he was leaving? How do you think they felt knowing Jesus was leaving?

2 JESUS WAS eager to leave. Read Luke 9:51. In what ways did "his going away" give him courage to go to the cross (as he "resolutely set out for Jerusalem")? How is his leaving connected to more of the kingdom coming? Follow up discussion: **Read Acts 1:9-11.** Why do you think the ascension of Jesus is not mentioned often when people speak of the gospel? Why should the message of Jesus not stop with his resurrection?

3 JESUS LEFT to declare his reign. While the resurrection declares that Jesus is Savior, his ascension declares that He is King. **Read Acts 2:32-35 and Ephesians 1:19-21.** Share some examples of how followers of Jesus can experience "his reign as a present reality." What role does the Holy Spirit play in this?

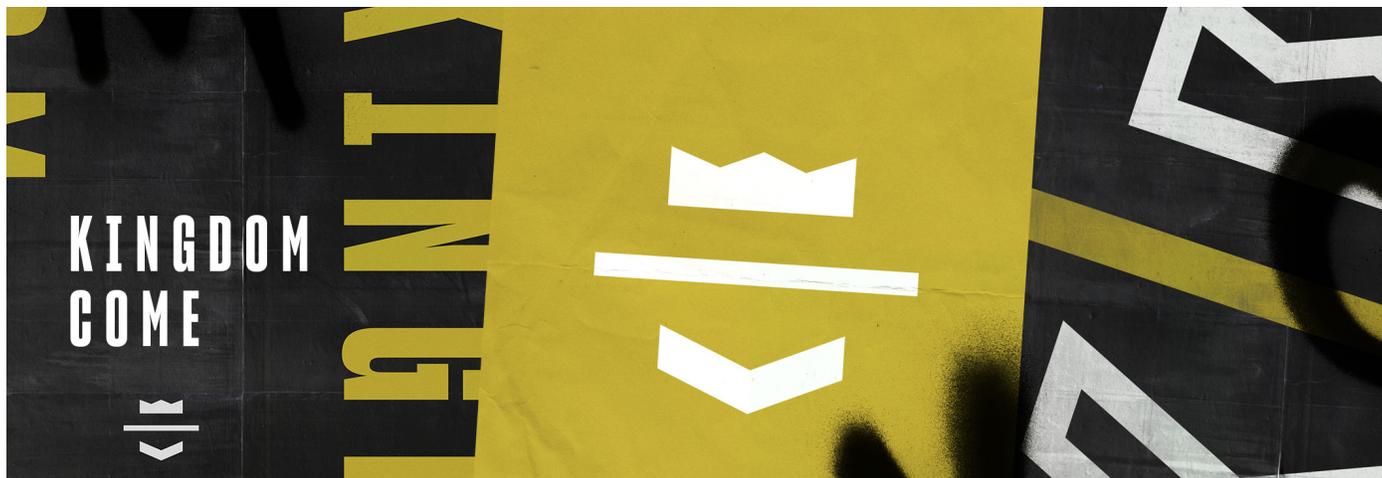
4 JESUS LEFT to ensure our salvation. What are some of the reasons that Christians often doubt their salvation? **Read Hebrews 9: 24; 10:12-14, and Romans 8:34.** In what ways do these amazing verses remind you of the powerful ways Jesus ensures our salvation? What encourages you the most from these verses?

5 JESUS LEFT to prepare our home. Has the Holy Spirit ever prompted you to consider that the world we have is not the world we are meant for? Explain. **Read John 14:1-2.** How does it make you feel knowing that Jesus is preparing a place for his people?

6 Rick pointed out that "What we believe about the future shapes how we handle the present." How have you experienced that to be true? **Read Colossians 3:1-4.** How does setting your sights on "the realities of heaven" change your outlook while on earth?

7 JESUS IS eager to return! Read John 14:3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. Rick reminded us that "Jesus is not sending a subordinate; he is coming for us himself." With that in mind, how can we "encourage each other with these words" (as Paul said in verse 18)? What else resonated with you from this message and what is one thing you are convicted to do because of it?





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1 Read Matthew 25:31 and Acts 1:11. Jesus is coming back **to keep his promises.** God's people have longed for the day when Jesus will bring the kingdom in full. How does God's nature reinforce our trust in Christ's return? How does God's faithfulness in the past and present give us hope for the future?

2 Read John 5:22, Acts 17:31, and 1 Corinthians 15:25-26. Jesus is coming back **to end everything wrong.** How is Jesus' judgment part of our hope and not our fear?

3 Read Revelation 21:3-4. Part of the eternal kingdom is defined by what's not there. Looking to Christ's return in hope, how would you end this sentence: "There will be no more _____."

4 Read Revelation 21:5-7 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. Jesus is coming back **to make everything right.** What are key parts of God's ideal for the eternal kingdom? What is our eternal relationship to the Father?

5 Read Revelation 22:3-5. The King will reign forevermore. The final vision of Scripture is of God enthroned in His Kingdom. How should this encourage us in our lives today? (For Paul's answer, see 1 Corinthians 15:58).

