

GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS

EPISODE 6: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Main Points

Here are the big ideas you want people to understand:

- For most of his life Jesus is a hidden Messiah. He works in obscurity as a carpenter. Then, around the age of 30, he begins his public ministry.
- As Jesus travels and preaches, he announces that the Kingdom of God has arrived and that people should take action by repenting
- Jesus used many parables to explain the Kingdom of God. One was to describe it as a field that had been sown with wheat and weeds.
- All of us are either wheat or weeds. All of us are the work of either the field's owner or his enemy. All of us will face the harvest, so we ought to prepare now while there is time!

EXPLORING THE STORY

◀ Look Back

Before diving into this week's session, give the group a chance to share and catch up to see where each person is at. Start with the following:

1. One-up (or One-down)

Invite each person to share one thing that has happened over the past week that they are grateful for (or, they can share one thing that has been weighing on them)

2. Prayer

Have a time of prayer and thanksgiving based on what was shared

3. Review

Quickly summarize where we've been before moving into this week's story:

“ **Last time...** After centuries of waiting, the promised Messiah finally appears. Yet most people do not take notice of him. He comes into a world that he himself created, but the world does not recognize him. He comes to his own special people, the people of Israel, but they do not welcome him. He comes on a mission: to purchase a people for God by taking away their sins. He comes to be sacrificed as the spotless Lamb of God.

▲ Look Up

Now that you've reviewed where we've been, shift to this week's episode.

4. Setting the Stage

“ For years Jesus the Messiah was hidden, working as a carpenter in a small village. Then, around the age of 30, he began his public ministry. He traveled around performing amazing miracles, healing the sick and teaching people about God. His main message was that the Kingdom of God had arrived and that people should repent.

As we read the story, be thinking about these things:

- How does Jesus describe the Kingdom of God?
- What determines whether someone is wheat or a weed?

5. Read **Matthew 4.17; 13.24-30, 36-43** and then discuss:

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- What do you like about this story? What questions do you have about it?
 - Based on this story, how did Jesus see the world and the people in it?
 - How does his description of the world and what's happening in it differ from what most of us think about it?
 - What reveals whether a person is good seed (wheat) or a weed?
 - How would you explain what it means to repent?
 - How does being “good seed” fit with Jesus' call to repent? (Matthew 4.17)

► Look Ahead

Help people process the implications of this week's reading and how they should apply its truths to the way they think and live.

6. Implications and Applications

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- Do you see the world as a kingdom that belongs to God? Have you ever made a choice to repent and live under God's rule? To serve him as your king?
 - What is the next step you need to take to live a kingdom-centered life?

7. Closing Prayer