

Small Group Guide

CONSUMMATION OF THE KINGDOM

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

October 28, 2012

Revelation 21:1-22:5

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

Relate . . .

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Welcome—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

Reflect . . .

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)

Message Outline

CONSUMMATION OF THE KINGDOM

Revelation 21:1-22:5

- We live between two worlds.
 - We are pilgrims on a journey in this country today.
 - We are citizens of a kingdom in a country to come.
- We live between two times.
 - The birth of Christ: The King has come!
 - The kingdom of God is a present reality.
 - The return of Christ: The King is coming!
 - The kingdom of God is a future hope.
- We live for one purpose.
 - To experience the consummation of God's kingdom.
 - A kingdom...
 - People who are ruled by the King.
 - A place where the King has dominion.
 - A purpose for the King and his kingdom.
 - God's kingdom...
 - God is bringing His people...

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- To His place...
- For His purpose.

“Consummation of the Kingdom”*

- God’s People: God’s Final Blessing And Judgment
 - For all who have revered the King...
 - Inexpressible joy.
 - Heaven exemplifies God’s eternal blessing for conquerors who have turned from this world to Christ.
 - For all who have rejected the King...
 - Irreversible justice.
 - Hell exemplifies God’s eternal judgment for cowards who have turned from Christ to this world.
- In God’s Place: Eternal Fellowship
 - We will be with Him.
 - Death will be replaced by life.
 - No more sin.
 - No more sorrow.
 - No more sickness.
 - No more separation.
 - Night will be replaced by light.
 - Corruption will be replaced by purity.
 - Curse will be replaced by blessing.
 - We will see His face.
 - We will reign with Him.
 - Our bodies will be resurrected.
 - All creation will be restored.
- For God’s Purpose: God’s Glory Enjoyed By All Peoples
 - See this diverse throng...
 - Every nation, people, tribe, and tongue living, loving, working, and worshiping together.
 - Hear their unified song...
 - Worthy is the Lamb!
 - Glory to our God!

**Additional chart outlining the overarching story of God’s kingdom in Scripture can be found at end of this Small Group Guide.*

Message Summary

The culmination of everything in the Bible and regarding the history of the world is described in today’s passage. The tension for those who remain on the earth is found in the already and not yet nature of God’s kingdom. Although the birth of Christ made the kingdom of God a reality for us, the final redemption and judgment of the kingdom is still a future event that will take place when Jesus returns. Therefore, we exist in a tension between being residents of this earth, marred tragically by sin, and being citizens of God’s kingdom, which is yet to fully come. As we live in this temporary country, we are responsible in all that we do for the sake of the eternal country to come. We live, then, for the purpose of glorifying God in anticipation of the consummation of His eternal kingdom. In this new kingdom, God is bringing His people—all of those who have turned from their sin and trusted in Christ—to exist in eternal fellowship with Him and enjoy His glory forever. Those who are not citizens of this kingdom have rejected Christ and will receive irreversible justice and experience God’s eternal judgment.

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Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- Today's passage makes it clear that the children of God are only temporary residents of this world—this world is not our home. Yet, the whole teaching of Scripture clearly commands us to responsibly interact with this world. What drives our motivation and guides our actions as we live for Him? How is your life reflecting that you are pilgrim and not a citizen of this earth?
- Where do our affections lie when we are living in view of God's eternal kingdom?
- How is our behavior affected in this world when our hearts are focused on the reality of a coming eternal kingdom?
- When we have been waiting over 2000 years for Christ's return, it is easy to lose sight of its reality. How can we continue to live in anticipation of Christ's return even when the sufferings in this world seem too much to bear and the end does not seem to be in sight?
- How has our worldly culture and church culture groomed us to think about heaven? How does this contrast with the picture of heaven that Revelation 21-22 gives us?
- We often sing and talk about mansions, personal health, personal comforts, and other material aspects of heaven. What does it reveal about us that we think of material things as the best parts of heaven? What does it reveal about our view of God?
- How is our approach to sharing the gospel affected by the realization that the enjoyment of God, Himself, is the reward of heaven?
- Scripture is clear that there will be those in the church who confess God but show no evidence of a changed life. Why should this be a warning to us personally and to us as we proclaim the gospel?
- What attitudes or sin in our life are preventing us from viewing God as the greatest joy and blessing of eternal life?
- How are we portraying our enjoyment of God to those around us? Do our lives demonstrate that our greatest joy in life is obeying and worshiping God? Why or why not?
- How is God's character revealed in the consummation of the kingdom, particularly concerning judgment and joy?
- How does the idea of a joyful family influence the way that we view our eternal dwelling with God?
- How can we pray in light of our desire for the coming kingdom?
- How can we lead our families to keep the kingdom at the forefront of our attitudes and actions?

Respond . . .

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today's study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church..

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Weekly Prayer Focus ... (from our worship guide)

- *For Our Lives:* Revelation 21 gloriously describes the new heaven and the new earth where we will live in God's presence, behold His majesty, experience His mercy, and be satisfied by His pleasures forever. Pray that all who hear this text would be filled with longing for being in God's presence forever. Pray that those who have trusted in Christ would find joy in the midst of hardship and struggle. Pray that those who are still in rebellion against Christ would see Him as the greatest treasure they could ever obtain, and that they would turn from sin to worship and adore Him.
- *For Our City:* This week we are praying for the ministry of Widows First, which was started by one of our members, Mike Patterson. This ministry provides support and ministry to widows and widowers through housing repairs and other physical labor needs. We are also praying this week for First Baptist Pelham and Pastor Mike Shaw.
- *For Our World:* This week we are praying for long-term missionaries Ronnie and Joan Brock serving with their kids Lydia and Brandon in Quito, Ecuador. The Brocks moved to Ecuador last year and have been serving at an orphanage called the Davis Foundation, developing a camp and conference center for the orphanage and surrounding community. To learn more about their family and ministry visit littlehouseintheandes.wordpress.com. This week we are also praying for our short-term team serving in North Africa.

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 The Book of Revelation in the History of Redemption

	PEOPLE	PLACE	PURPOSE
CREATION (Genesis 1-2)	God's <u>Blessing</u> on His People	Perfect Fellowship	God's Glory <u>Multiplied</u> To All Peoples
FALL (Genesis 3-11)	God's Blessing and Judgment through... Adam & Eve	<u>Disrupted</u> Fellowship	God's Glory Marred In All Peoples
PATRIARCHS (Genesis 12-50)	God's Blessing and Judgment through... Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob	<u>Promised</u> Fellowship	God's Glory Made Known To All Peoples Through... His Faithfulness
EXODUS & CONQUEST (Exodus—1 Samuel 8)	God's Blessing and Judgment through... Moses, Joshua, Judges, Samuel	God with His people: <u>Tabernacle</u>	God's Glory Made Known To All Peoples Through... His Deliverance
UNITED MONARCHY (1 Sam. 9—1 Kgs. 11; 1 Chr.—2 Chr. 9)	God's Blessing and Judgment through... Saul, David, & Solomon	God with His people: <u>Temple</u>	God's Glory Made Known To All Peoples Through... His Anointing
DIVIDED MONARCHY (1 Kgs. 12—2 Kgs.; 2 Chr. 10—Esther)	God's Blessing and Judgment through... Prophets	God with His people: <u>Exile</u>	God's Glory Made Known To All Peoples Through... His Discipline
JESUS (Matthew—John)	God's Blessing and Judgment through... Christ	God among His people: <u>Incarnation</u>	God's Glory Made Known To All Peoples Through... His Salvation
PRESENT (Acts—Jude)	God's Blessing and Judgment through... His Church	God in His people: <u>Body</u>	God's Glory Proclaimed To All Peoples
NEW CREATION (Revelation)	God's <u>Final</u> Blessing and Judgment	<u>Eternal</u> Fellowship	God's Glory <u>Enjoyed</u> By All Peoples