

Kingdom of God | Understanding Christianity | Years 5 & 6 | Summer Term 2024-25

Key Question

What kind of King is Jesus?

Key Concepts

Parables of Jesus	Jesus told many parables about the Kingdom of God. These suggest that God's rule has begun through the life, teaching and example of Jesus, and subsequently through the lives of Christians who live in obedience to God.
The Kingdom of God	The Kingdom of God is, in essence, where God rules – not a geographical territory, but in human hearts and minds, lives and communities.
Who is included?	The Kingdom is compared to a feast where all are invited to join in; not everyone chooses to do so. God's extends a gracious welcome to all of humanity, but this is not always well received: selfishness or greed can get in the way of spiritual life and of the coming of God's Kingdom.
Christians today	Many Christians try to extend the Kingdom of God by challenging unjust social structures in their locality and in the world.

Key People

Jesus	God incarnate. Often referred to in the Gospel as 'Rabbi', meaning 'teacher.'
Matthew, Mark, Luke and John	Disciples of Jesus and authors of the Gospel. The Gospels are eye-witness accounts of the people who lived and spoke with Jesus.
Christians	A disciple or follower of Jesus.

Key Vocabulary

Parable	A simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson
Obedience	Compliance with an order, request or law; submitting to another's authority.
Heaven	A place regarded as the home of God and the angels and of the good after death.
Kingdom	The spiritual reign or authority of God.
Community	The condition of sharing or having certain attitudes and interests in common.
Significance	The meaning to be found in words or events.
Forgive	To stop feeling angry or resentful towards someone.

Key Bible Passages

Luke 14: 12 – 14	Parable of 'The Feast'. Jesus implies a welcome to anyone not too proud to join the feast of the Kingdom of God.
Matthew 21: 33 – 46	Parable of 'The Tenants in the Vineyard'. Suggests that God is patient in waiting for people to turn to him but that the opportunity will not last forever.
Matthew 18: 21 – 35	Parable of 'The Unforgiving Servant'. Those who have themselves been much forgiven by God should then become like God, willing to forgive others generously.

Key Learning: What kind of King is Jesus?

- 1 Did Jesus come to Earth to get people into Heaven, or to make the world more like Heaven?**
Consider those characteristics that apply to a 'good king', then those that apply to Jesus. Create two lists, 'A good king is...' and 'Jesus was...' Ask: do Christians think Jesus came to Earth to get people into Heaven, or to make the world more like Heaven? Explain Christians believe both. Read The Lord's Prayer together and discuss what children think each line means if they were to put it into simple language.
- 2 What is God's Kingdom like? (The Feast)**
Read Luke 14: 12-24. Respond with any comments, feelings, ideas and questions. Provide paper with image of 'The Feast' in the centre. Discuss as a whole class then respond individually by making own annotations around outside of their image.
- 3 What is God's Kingdom like? (The Tenants in the Vineyard)**
Read Matthew 21: 33-46, pointing out that Jesus had enemies: he is sometimes presented as a figure so innocuous that no-one would bother to crucify him. Explain that this story is a bit like a mystery story - we need to solve its hidden meaning. Elicit current understanding of a metaphor. Work in threes to solve the mystery: what does the story mean? In their groups, write a short paragraph to explain their idea of what the parable really means.
- 4 What is God's Kingdom like? (The Unforgiving Servant)**
Read Matthew 18: 21-35. Dramatise the emotions of different characters throughout using faces and body language. Explain the plain meaning of this story is that if you have been forgiven, then you should forgive others. Ask: But does this mean that Christians should always forgive? Not all Christians see this parable in exactly the same way. Provide set of statements and rate them as 'easy or hard' to forgive on a scale of 1 to 10. Discuss and consider whether Jesus would have forgiven all these things.
- 5 What kind of king did Jesus intend to be?**
Build a list of what the world is like today under two headings: Pros and Cons. What kind of things would Jesus want to change? Play two songs: 'Lord of the Dance' and 'Down to Earth'. Explain these are used to express the kind of kingdom Jesus wanted to set up. Provide copies of song lyrics and consider what each song says about the type of king Jesus intended to be, and what his kingdom would be like.
- 6 What if...?**
Imagine the local Christian communities – the churches in your area – are going to try to do more to make the world a better place, to follow 'King Jesus'. Consider and list some of the needs in our local area and community. What projects could be set up to help? In the light of learning about Christian ideas, write own poem, manifesto or speech: If I were queen/king of the world, then I would...