

THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR STUDENTS  
 DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE | FALL 2020  
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**PRODUCTION AND MINISTRY TEAM**

FOUNDING EDITOR: Ed Stetzer  
 GENERAL EDITOR: Trevin Wax  
 MANAGING EDITOR: Brian Dembowczyk  
 DIRECTOR, STUDENT MINISTRY: Ben Trueblood  
 MANAGER, STUDENT MINISTRY PUBLISHING:  
 John Paul Basham  
 CONTENT EDITOR: Andy McLean  
 PRODUCTION EDITOR: Amanda Mejias  
 GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Matt Atkinson

**SEND QUESTIONS/COMMENTS TO:**

Andy McLean  
*The Gospel Project: Daily Discipleship Guide*,  
 One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0102;  
 or make comments on the Web at [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com).

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# Our Mission

Intended for group and/or personal use, the **Our Mission** section is designed to show how the biblical passage for that day challenges the way we think, feel, and live from that day forward. It is intended to show that every session goes beyond merely learning new facts about the Bible's big stories and characters. In fact, God's intention in the pages of Scripture is to make us more like His Son, Jesus. And one of the ways in which that happens is by constantly looking to Jesus in the pages of the Bible.

**Our Mission**

**Head**

Which of the three parables discussed stands out to you most? Why?

How does the parable of the hidden treasure and pearl of great price challenge us to think differently about where true and ultimate satisfaction and joy are found?

**Heart**

How does the parable of the four soils challenge us on a personal level?

What are some ways we can cultivate our hearts in hopes that God's Word would fall on good soil when we hear it?

**Hands**

How does the parable of the four soils offer encouragement to us even when we may not see the kingdom growing at a rate we would like?

What part do we play in God's plan of growing the kingdom? How can we be more active in that role this week?

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# Daily Devotions

**Daily Devotions**

**Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23**

As you read this right now, there are cues and "words" to you that are personally and your joy in Christ. If felt not submitted to His care. You may not even be going through anything especially difficult, anything "big," but the danger to get off mission is always there. In fact, it may be during times of relative ease that we are most in danger since our efforts and hard work typically have a way of pushing us closer to God in faith.

So think of your day, your week, and your upcoming plans or obligations. They could feel perfectly routine or ordinary. But in your participation and planning, are you forgetting to submit to God's Word, to your loyalty to Him, and to apply His Word to your life?

One day, these kingdom promises help us do in our everyday life with spiritual momentum. Things in the news or in the neighborhood may look bleak, but Christ is upholding the universe. His plan will be fulfilled. The proliferation of evil seems insurmountable, but Christ's church is continuing and will continue to bear fruit.

**What daily steps do you take to make sure the promises of daily life do not choke out the seed of the kingdom in your life?**

**Day 1**

**Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23**

It was an odd thing to say about these stories, isn't it? Jesus said that He used parables just as much for obscuring as for revealing, as much for concealing as for revealing.

This is a remarkable line of all that truly seeing the kingdom of God (the what it is) depends upon God revealing some. Think of Paul's enlightening work in Romans 8:7.

Second, however, these words are another reminder of just how preparing the ground and work of Christ is today. To explain who when you share the gospel with one friend, be it the least to know more, and when you share with another, be it the business unaccountable or offended. The message is the same, but the way is "tailor" on people can be different.

This is a reminder to even believers that when our minds are so consistently on the care of the world—on politics, on accumulation, on popularity or reputation—we can miss the work of the kingdom in our midst.

**How can you be more mindful of the reality of the kingdom in your everyday life?**

**Day 2**

**Matthew 13:10-17**

It seems counterintuitive to keep the two main thoughts of these two kingdom parables together, but doing so can be an immense encouragement to us. First, the parable about the wheat and the tares is a caution to the church that just because someone identifies as a Christian or with the Christian religion doesn't mean he or she has become a genuinely converted believer in Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself seems to have allowed that unbelievers will be participating in believers' activities and that their spiritual state due to their affiliation—until the end of the age.

You would think, then, that any growth of the church should result in an expansion. If the wheat and tares grow side-by-side until the end, the number of the "wheat" must end up depressing lower than expected. For the second parable tells us that the kingdom will continue to grow and flourish. At the end of days, there will be an insurmountable number of genuine believers eager to worship Christ for all eternity (Rev. 7:9).

**What does the parable of the wheat and the tares mean for your understanding of the church and your expectations for its future?**

In addition to the group portions of this study, the **Daily Discipleship Guide** also includes five days of devotions following each session. As you journey through the storyline of Scripture over the course of three years, you won't have time to cover some sections of the Bible. These devotions will help with that, filling in the gaps in the biblical storyline and allowing more opportunities to cover biblical themes and insights not discussed during group time. These devotions are also aimed at equipping you to know how to read and interpret the Bible for yourself by providing simple techniques to studying the Bible. The *Seven Arrows* reading method has been provided at the beginning of each week's devotions as a reminder of common questions to ask about Scripture as you read each day.

Timeline

# Jesus the Savior



**25.1**

**Jesus Tells the Kingdom Parables**



**25.4**

**Jesus Raises Lazarus**



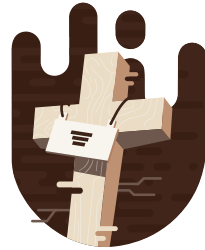
**26.1**

**Jesus Enters Jerusalem**



**26.4**

**Jesus Is Arrested**



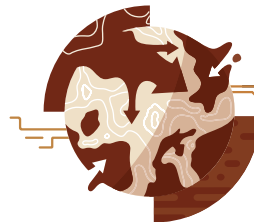
**26.5**

**Jesus Is Crucified**



**27.3**

**Jesus Prepares His Disciples**



**27.4**

**Jesus Commissions His Disciples**



**25.2**

**Jesus Tells  
the Parable of  
the Sons**



**25.3**

**Jesus Teaches  
Difficult Truths**



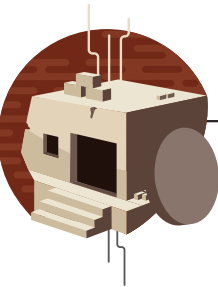
**26.2**

**Jesus Is  
Questioned**



**26.3**

**Jesus Shares  
the Lord's  
Supper**



**27.1**

**Jesus Is  
Resurrected**



**27.2**

**Jesus Encounters  
Two Disciples**

*Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.*

**Luke 24:27**

# About the Authors



**Eric Geiger** (unit 26, sessions 1,3) is the Senior Pastor of Mariners Church in Irvine, California. Previously, Eric served as senior vice-president for LifeWay Christian Resources. Eric received his doctorate in leadership and church ministry from Southern Seminary. He has authored or coauthored several books, including *Simple Church*. Eric is married to Kaye, and they have two daughters, Eden and Evie.



**Daniel Im** (unit 27, session 4) serves as the Senior Associate Pastor at Beulah Alliance Church in Edmonton, Canada. His latest book is *You Are What You Do: And Six Other Lies About Work, Life, and Love*. He and his wife, Christina, have three children, and they cohost the IMbetween Podcast—a podcast on marriage and parenting. For more information, visit [danielim.com](http://danielim.com) and follow him on social media @danielsangi.



**Chris Poblete** (unit 26, sessions 2,4,5) serves as Lead Pastor at King's Cross Church in Rancho Santa Margarita, California. He earned an MDiv from Gateway Seminary. He is the author of *The Two Fears: Tremble Before God Alone*. Chris and his wife, Alyssa, have three children, Geneva, Haddon, and Judson.



**Mary Wiley** (unit 27, sessions 1-3) is the author of *Everyday Theology*, a Bible study exploring essential doctrines and why they matter in everyday life. She holds an MA in theological studies from Southern Seminary. She and her husband, John, have two children and live in the Nashville area. She works in Christian publishing and hosts the Questions Kids Ask podcast. Connect with her at [marycwiley.com](http://marycwiley.com) or @marycwiley.



**Jared Wilson** (unit 25, sessions 1-4) is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry at Spurgeon College, Author in Residence at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Director of the Pastoral Training Center at Liberty Baptist Church, all in Kansas City, Missouri. He is the author of nearly twenty books, including *The Gospel According to Satan*. Jared is married to Becky, and they have two teenage daughters, Macy and Grace.



## Unit .25

### Session .01

# Jesus Tells the Kingdom Parables

## Scripture



## Matthew 13:1-9, 31-33,44-46

**1** That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. **2** And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. **3** And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. **4** And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. **5** Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, **6** but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. **7** Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. **8** Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. **9** He who has ears, let him hear.”... **31** He put another

parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. **32** It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” **33** He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.” ... **44** “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. **45** “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, **46** who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

What are some characteristics of a heart receptive to the good news of the gospel? How would you characterize the other types of soil Jesus describes in the parable?



Which of the three soils described in this parable have you experienced when sharing the gospel? Explain.

## 99 Essential Doctrines

### Church and Kingdom

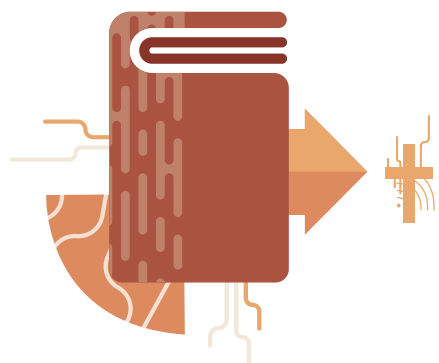
The church and the kingdom of God are closely related, though not identical. When the Bible speaks of the kingdom of God, it is referring to the reign of God in the world. The church is the people of God who live under His loving rule now, anticipating the full manifestation of God's kingdom in the future. The church's mission is to witness to God's kingdom, proclaiming God's message of salvation through Christ and demonstrating the power of the gospel through good works so that others may be brought to live under God's reign.

What are some other biblical stories you can think of where God took something (or someone) little and turned it (or the person) into a testimony of His own greatness?

What are some temporary joys we try to find lasting satisfaction in today? Why is Jesus better than these?

## His Story

**What rivals Christ for the number one place in your heart? How can you place Him first in every area of your life?**



## Christ Connection

Jesus used parables to describe the nature of God's kingdom on earth. Word of the kingdom is sown broadly and will be received differently based on the condition of one's heart. For those with hearts of fertile soil, the word yields extraordinary fruitfulness causing the kingdom to grow and extend into all of the world. When Jesus returns, we will experience the full manifestation of God's kingdom.

## Our Mission



### Head

**Which of the three parables discussed stands out to you most? Why?**

**How does the parable of the hidden treasure and pearl of great price challenge us to think differently about where true and ultimate satisfaction and joy are found?**



### Heart

**How does the parable of the four soils challenge us on a personal level?**

**What are some ways we can cultivate our hearts in hopes that God's Word would fall on good soil when we hear it?**



### Hands

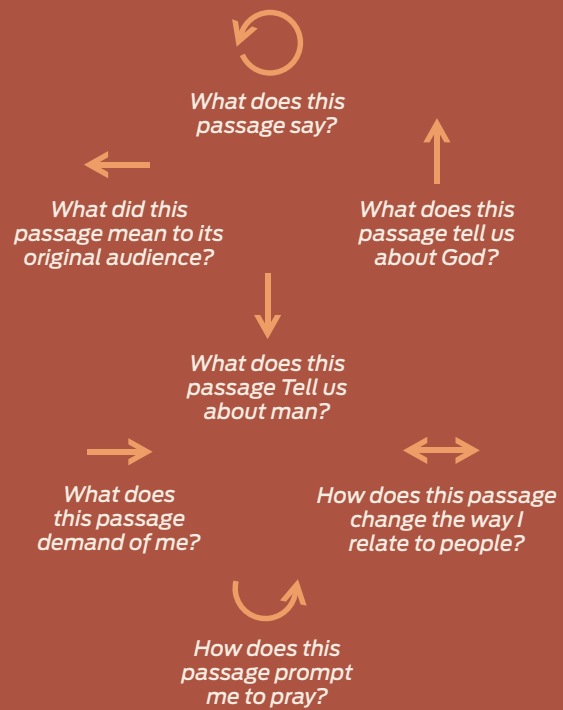
**How does the parable of the four soils offer encouragement to us even when we may not see the kingdom growing at a rate we would like?**

**What part do we play in God's plan of growing the kingdom? How can we be more active in that role this week?**

# Daily Devotions



## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



### Day 1

## Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Life is full of cares and worries that can potentially steal your joy in Christ, if left unsubmitted to His care. You may not even be going through anything especially difficult, anything “big,” but the danger to get off mission is always there. In fact, it may be during times of relative ease that we are most in danger since suffering and hardship typically have a way of pushing us closer to God in faith.

So think of your day, your week, and your upcoming plans or obligations. They could feel perfectly routine or ordinary. But in your preoccupation and planning, are you forgetting to meditate on God’s Word, to pray honestly to Him, and to apply His Word to your life?

One thing these kingdom parables help us do is see everyday life with spiritual resonance. Things in the news or in the neighborhood may look bleak, but Christ upholds the universe. His plan will be fulfilled. The proliferation of evil seems inevitable, but Christ’s church is continuing and will continue to bear fruit.

**What daily steps do you take to make sure the thorns of daily life do not choke out the seed of the kingdom in your life?**

### Day 2

## Matthew 13:10-17

It was an odd thing to say about these stories, wasn’t it? Jesus said that He used parables just as much for obscuring as for unveiling, as much for concealing as for revealing.

This is a reminder, first of all, that truly seeing the kingdom of God depends upon God’s revealing power. Think of Paul’s enlightening words in Romans 8:7.

Second, however, these words are another reminder of just how polarizing the person and work of Christ is today. It explains why when you share the gospel with one friend, he or she leans in to know more, and when you share with another, he or she becomes uncomfortable or offended. The message is the same, but the way it “lands” on people can be different.

This is a reminder to even believers that when our minds are set constantly on the cares of the world—on pleasure, on accumulation, on popularity or reputation—we can miss the work of the kingdom in our midst.

**How can you be more mindful of the reality of the kingdom in your everyday life?**

### Day 3

## Matthew 13:24-33

It seems counterintuitive to keep the two main thoughts of these two kingdom parables together, but doing so can be an immense encouragement to us. First, the parable about the wheat and the tares is a caution to the church that just because someone identifies as a Christian or with the Christian religion doesn’t mean he or she has become a converted believer in Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself affirmed that unbelievers will be masquerading as believers—often self-deceived about their spiritual state due to their affiliation—until the end of the age.

You would think, then, that any growth of the church should strike us as suspicious. If the wheat and tares grow side by side until the end, the number of the “wheat” must end up depressingly lower than expected. Yet the second parable tells us that the kingdom will continue to grow and flourish. At the end of days, there will be an innumerable count of genuine believers eager to worship Christ for all eternity (Rev. 7:9).

**What does the parable of the wheat and the tares mean for your understanding of the church and your expectations for its purity?**

# Matthew 13:34-43

It is not popular these days to speak of hell. Certainly in the wider culture the very assumptions that give rise to religious perspectives on afterlife have long since fallen out of favor. Hell in America is more of a curse word than a real danger that has faced every person who ever lived.

In Matthew 13:34-43, Jesus points to a stark truth that every person must reckon with: there is such a thing as “evil” and such a thing as “lawlessness,” and the end result for both is a place of eternal conscious torment. Hell is real, and it will be a place of unending and excruciating judgment, the unending experience of God’s wrath.

In the light of this important truth, the last line of Jesus’ exposition of the parable is gripping: “Let anyone who has ears listen.”

**How often do you think of hell?  
How does knowing hell awaits every  
unrepentant sinner motivate you in  
prayer and evangelism?**

# Matthew 13:44-58

In this passage, we see just how polarizing the gospel of Jesus is. We who believe in Jesus know the gospel truly is good news! It announces our only hope of forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and the gift of eternal life. Who wouldn’t want that?

Well, it turns out that plenty of people want nothing to do with the kingdom and all the blessings that come with it. At the end of Matthew 13, just as Jesus had been foretelling or saying through His parables, the people in His very hometown rejected Him. They were offended by Him.

One reason for their rejection was their inability to fathom how anything mighty of God could come from their own surroundings. They knew Jesus’ family. They knew His earthly father’s trade. They could not see how any of that could amount to anything glorious.

The truth for today is that Christ plans to redeem everything we see. He can (and will) take what is ordinary and use it for His own glory. Just as He Himself came in a poor, ordinary family—born even in a feeding stall—Jesus is still using ordinary, unassuming people to spread His kingdom throughout the world.

**What do the circumstances of Jesus’  
birth and upbringing say about God’s  
plans and priorities?**