



# grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

January 25-31, 2021

Sermon by Lead Pastor Pete Moon

Week 3: Sermon Series from *Grace Still Works* by Pete Moon

Chapter 3

Sermon Title: "The Destiny of Grace"

<p>Notes from sermon on 01/24:</p>	<p>To pray for this week:</p>
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### Family Focus Question:

How would you explain the kingdom of God to someone?

### Questions for Small Groups

1. There are many different facets or lenses through which we describe the kingdom of God. Which one stands out for you?
2. If you are honest, when you picture the kingdom of God, is your image static or dynamic? How would you answer that same question with regard to your church?
3. What would kingdom multiplication look like for you or for your church?

### Monday, January 25: Read Mark 1:14-15

What is the kingdom of God, and when, where, and how will we find it? Jesus spends much of his ministry describing the kingdom of God, yet there is still so much confusion and disagreement among Christians today about what exactly it is and how we are to live in it. Is the kingdom of God just where we go when we get to Heaven, or is the kingdom of God also something we can experience now, through God's grace?

This week, as we read Chapter 3 of Pete Moon's book, *Grace Still Works*, entitled "Kingdom," we will seek to define the kingdom of God exploring some often-overlooked images, as well as some well-known parables. Throughout everything is God's grace, leading us to our ultimate destiny: to live in God's kingdom. We do not have to wait until everything is perfect...or we are perfect...to live in the kingdom; the kingdom of God actually works when so many entities of our life are dysfunctional. Notice the beginning of verse 14 in today's reading: "Now after John was arrested..." which immediately precedes Jesus's declaration, "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand." As we look around our dysfunctional lives and world, where can we see the kingdom of God at hand today, and how can we recognize it?

**Tuesday, January 26: Read Mark 4:1-9**

Jesus spoke in many parables to illustrate how the kingdom of God works. In today's familiar Parable of the Sower, we often miss a central message: one of multiplication. Notice that not only does the seed grow in good soil, it grows a hundredfold. In his book, Pete points out that images of multiplication are "abundant" in many of Jesus's descriptions of God's kingdom. So what does this mean to us? "When the church is at our best," Pete writes, "the church multiplies." This leaves us with two questions to prayerfully consider today. First, how can we be good soil able to receive the seeds of God's plan for our world? Second, are we receiving the seeds in joyful expectation of God's ability to multiply our efforts beyond imagination, and are we ready and willing for it?

**Wednesday, January 27: Read Matthew 25:14-30**

In times of uncertainty and unrest in our world, it's easy for the church to submit to a spirit of fear and a mentality of scarcity. Our first response may be to clutch tightly to what we already have, be it our existing members, our monetary resources, or our habits and traditions for fear of losing them. Today's parable sheds light on our behavior as that of the servant with one talent, who buried it in the ground. Instead, if we are living in the kingdom of God, we are to let God multiply our gifts and talents, but the only way we can do that is to use them – put them out there. This takes faith in our Master's grace – something the servant with one talent did not have. Where are we holding back as a church because of a scarcity mentality? Where do we need to have more faith in God's grace and ability to multiply our efforts, even (or especially) in times of trouble and uncertainty?

**Thursday, January 28: Read 2 Samuel 6:16-23**

In this week's chapter of Pete's book, Pete recounts the words of John Wesley, when on April 2, 1739, Wesley "submitted to be 'more vile'" like King David in today's scripture and preach outdoors to crowds of ordinary people – a practice that was probably looked down upon as much as David's wife Michel looked down on David for dancing with abandon in front of the Ark of the Covenant. These uninhibited acts of putting the work of God's kingdom ahead of the opinions of "polite society" are celebrated in retrospect but often derided by the very people who claim to be doing God's work: us. What would it look like if Reville agreed to become "more vile" for the sake of God's kingdom? In order to reach more people, are we willing to step away from certain traditions, step down from some pedestals, and tear down a few walls? Where should we start?

**Friday, January 29: Matthew 13:44-45**

We end our readings this week with two very short but powerful parables. "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure in a field..." "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls..." Where are these treasures, these pearls, in today's broken world? Pete quotes pastor and author Barbara Brown Taylor in her understanding of this treasure as being hidden in plain sight, like a "diamond necklace on the bureau with the rhinestones; the extraordinary hidden in the ordinary." (B.B. Taylor, *The Seeds of Heaven*, 2004). Could we as individuals and a church use this time when we have been forced to slow down and stay closer to home as a time when we can search for the treasures that have been hidden in plain sight around us? What riches of resources – human, natural, spiritual, and financial – should we be more greatly recognizing, appreciating, using, and serving?

**Saturday, January 30: Scripture Memorization: Mark 1:15**

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

**Sunday, January 31: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of Common Confession:** *Almighty God, we confess that we have thought too small of your kingdom. We have failed to see that it is right here in front of us, available to us. We have ignored your powerful movement within. We have not joined your movement of multiplying the seeds of your word. Forgive us for being so boring and stagnant in view of the wonder of your kingdom. Teach us to move with your movement, to multiply with your power. Refresh us through your grace and Holy Spirit for we ask it in the name of Jesus.*