



# KINGDOM CULTURE VIDEO TRANSCRIPT WEEK ONE

Life Group Leaders,

The following pages are a written transcript of Pastor Clark's weekly video teaching. Please do not distribute. These are shared to help you refer to his content and give context to the questions as you move throughout the study. Keep in mind these are not verbatim.

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## Teaching Video Transcript | Week 1: Kingdom Culture is Counter-Cultural

Have you ever met a queen or a king or some other member of a royal family? Though the United States was created in direct opposition to being ruled by the kings and queens of England, recently there seems to be a fascination with royalty, particularly British royalty. It would seem that the interest in royalty really began to interest the world with the courtship, wedding and lives of Prince Charles and Princess Diana. And it has continued with the weddings of their two sons, Prince William to Kate Middleton in 2011, and Prince Harry to Megan Markle in 2018. In recent years movies and mini-series about British royalty have fed people's interest in kings and queens.

While the Queen of England is by-far the most well-known monarch, you may be surprised to know that today there are 28 other kings or queens and other monarchs ruling in some fashion in 43 countries in the world today.<sup>1</sup> But still, the overwhelming number of people in the world have never met a king or queen.

But what about those of us who follow Christ? Yes, he is our Lord and Savior, but he's also our King who invites us to be a part of his kingdom, the Kingdom of God. When Jesus began his ministry he preached: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." (Matthew 4:17, NIV)

By the way I should point out that Matthew uses the phrase Kingdom of Heaven instead of Kingdom of God but it means the same thing.<sup>2</sup> Jesus spoke of and taught about the Kingdom of God a great deal. Of the 37 parables Jesus told, 15 of them were parables about the Kingdom of God.

Jesus understood that he was The King but not of an earthly kingdom, rather of a heavenly kingdom. When Pontius Pilate asked him if he was the King of the Jews, Jesus replied: "My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36, NLT)

Jesus is clearly saying he is the king in the kingdom he's been proclaiming. And we hear him say that his kingdom is not of this world. We also hear him say he has followers who are part of his kingdom, but how does one enter into this Kingdom Culture and what is it?

One night, under the cover of darkness, one of the religious leaders of Jerusalem named Nicodemus came to Jesus and told Jesus that he recognized that he was a teacher sent from God.<sup>3</sup> Seeing that this man believed in him and his teaching; Jesus responded by telling the man how he could join his kingdom work. He said: "...truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. (John 3:3, NIV) Nicodemus finds the idea of being born again confusing and so he questions Jesus on how can that happen. Jesus clarifies by saying ...no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. (John 3:5, NIV) What Jesus is getting at is that to be a part of the kingdom of God you must have a change of heart about what you believe, a conversion, a rebirth to a new way of living by your faith in Jesus. Jesus knows when that when a person truly believes in Jesus they will be filled with the Spirit of God and they will follow his teaching on such things as baptism. (John 3:5)

In other places Jesus talks about how people enter the kingdom of God saying we need to become like a child. (Matthew 18:1-3) What are children like? They are trusting, responsive and faithful to do what God asks of them. This sounds exactly how Jesus said we can enter the Kingdom of God. One time he said: Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 7:21, NIV)

The kingdom that Jesus is king over, and the kingdom that we are called to be a part of, is a kingdom that is not like the kingdoms of the world. It is the kingdom of God and those who are part of the kingdom of God are called to make seeking God's kingdom and his righteousness our primary duty. (Matthew 6:33) Anyone who reads the teachings of Jesus will quickly assess that what he taught was counter-cultural and thus we can see that his kingdom of God is also counter-cultural. The kingdom of God is counter-cultural because it is not based on the values of prevailing societal norms of the culture of the world, it's based on God's values. In fact the kingdom of God has its own culture, and it's not at all like what we see in the culture of the world we live in. The culture of the kingdom of God is counter-cultural to the values of the world we live in, from now on we will refer to it as the Kingdom Culture.

Look up the definition of the word culture in any dictionary; while there will be small variations you will find a common idea that the word culture refers to a way of life.<sup>4</sup> So Kingdom Culture is the way of life of the Kingdom of God, it's doing the will of God.

Years ago there was a boy named Saul who was raised in a devout Jewish culture that had the appearance of being very religious. While the foundations of this culture were based in scripture, non-biblical teachings and traditions had crept into this culture. And the leaders of this society became dogmatic demanding perfection in keeping their teachings and traditions. Never knowing any different young Saul became a zealous student of their teachings and he sought to keep them perfectly. Eventually his passion for this way of life was noticed and he was invited to become a leader. And when he did become a leader in this culture he sought to be the best of the best and to make sure others were as good as he was. In his perfectionistic drive he became feared as he persecuted anyone who didn't follow the teachings and traditions the way he did. When he heard about the followers of Jesus he thought were taking people away from his way of life so he sought to destroy them. And then one day he had a divine encounter with Jesus that changed his life. Everything he believed in and stood for was brought into question as he realized Jesus was real and his teachings were true. His heart and mind were changed and he saw the mistakes about his former way of life. This led to his conversion to believing in and becoming a follower of the way of Jesus as he referred to it. (Acts 22:4) Maybe as a way to symbolize his rebirth he changed his name from Saul to Paul. After this Paul became a passionate missionary for Jesus writing much of the New Testament. In it he wrote what embracing the Kingdom Culture consists of saying: Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:2, NLT)

The Kingdom Culture is counter-cultural because God calls us to follow him and not the ways of the world.

*Valley Brook Community Church All Church Study: Video Transcript Week One*

<sup>1</sup><http://www.royaltymonarchy.com/sovereigns/0000world.html>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.gotquestions.org/kingdom-heaven-God.html>

<sup>3</sup>John 3:1-14

<sup>4</sup><https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture>

