



Why Jesus? Part 3

April 21, 2024

“Why Jesus?” - A series about sharing our faith stories about why we follow Jesus and the difference he makes in our lives.

Why Jesus? Jesus and the Kingdom

We are familiar with how the nations and the kingdoms of this world operate. They seek to absorb wealth, power, and influence often to the detriment of the very people they claim to serve. But during his ministry, Jesus began talking about the Kingdom of Heaven, God’s Kingdom, that operated completely differently from the governments of this world. He encouraged his followers to seek this “kingdom” above all else. And when they found it, he knew they would appear crazy as they gave up the things the world cared about to pursue the things God cared about.

Seek the Kingdom - Matthew 6:33

33 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

The Crazy Pursuit of the Kingdom of Heaven - Matthew 13:44-46

44 “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field. **45** “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant on the lookout for choice pearls. **46** When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it!

What does Jesus mean by the “Kingdom of Heaven”?

10 May your kingdom come.
 May your will be done
 on earth as it is in heaven.

Heaven

Heaven is not just a place that we go to when we die. Heaven also exists wherever God's will is done. Heaven isn't paradise because of angels, clouds, or harps. Heaven is paradise because it is where God's will is lived out. Where we experience God's will lived out, we experience Heaven.

The First Followers Find the Kingdom of Heaven - Acts 4:32-35, 6:1-7

As the first people answered the question "Why Jesus?", they had a radical reorientation of their lives. They were no longer interested in acquiring wealth, power, property, or status and they were challenged in their habits of favoring people of their same ethnicity. They saw the way Jesus put people first and in response, they began to value community, unity, and sharing of their possessions in a radically different way.

Why Jesus?

1. Jesus shows us the Kingdom of Heaven where God's will is lived out.
2. Jesus leads us to heaven in this life and the next.

REFLECTIONS

1. What kinds of frustrations do you have with the kingdoms of this world?
2. When you think of heaven, what do you think of? Does it change your perception of heaven to think of it as the place where God's will is lived out?
3. When you hear stories of the first followers of Jesus, what about the way they lived inspires you?
4. Where might God be trying to reorient your heart that may call you to live life differently?
5. Are you willing to risk looking crazy to pursue the kingdom of heaven in your own life? What things might you need to give up to pursue God's will?