

## CORE COMPETENCIES

### Core Beliefs

- Trinity
- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

### Core Practices

- Worship
- Prayer

**"I pray to God to know Him, to lay my requests before Him, and to find direction for my daily life."**

- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

### Core Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

I pray that you have benefited personally from your study of God's Word in this series. I also pray that your prayer life is being deepened and enhanced. More than ever, I sense God's invitation to know Him more deeply, to wrestle with Him more honestly and to find His will more clearly in prayer. I pray that resembles your journey as well.

In Him,

**Richard Gotthardt**, Pastor of Spiritual Formation

### Monday

Read Matthew 6:9-13. Reread verse 10 several times. Sit in silence for a few minutes contemplating the meaning of this verse.

Summarize the meaning of this verse in your own words.

The phrase "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven" is used over 100 times in the New Testament. This week we will take a deeper look at some of these passages to help us gain understanding as to the meaning and purpose of the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God does not just refer to the local/universal church or the Gospel. The Kingdom of God refers to a state or place in which God demonstrates His reign and sovereignty over *all* things.

God is sovereign. He has all power and ability to redeem all things today; however, He has also given us the ability to choose His will or our own, His presence or separation from Him. He has allowed Satan, for a predetermined time, to reign over this earth, but there will come a day when Jesus will return and God will exert His dominion over the earth bringing His kingdom fully.

Think about the world around you. What aspects of this world are clearly not God's will on earth and will not be part of His perfect completed Kingdom?

Spend a few moments praying for these things. End your time by praying verse ten with faith that God will bring about His will on earth just as it is in heaven.

### Tuesday

In Tempe 14.3% of the population are living below the federal poverty line; in Maricopa County 11.7%. Meeting the most basic needs of food and shelter are a considerable struggle for these families. Spend a few moments considering these statistics generated in a 2000 study.

Read Luke 6:17-21. Reread verses 20-21.

Blessed in these verses can be translated as happy or fortunate. What reason do these verses give for why the poor, hungry and broken can be happy or fortunate?

What role can we play in bringing God's kingdom to earth now for the poor, hungry and broken?

Besides prayer, what step might God prompt you towards in bringing His kingdom to the poor, hungry and broken in your community this week?

Sit in silence for a few moments. Visualize those in your community who are poor, hungry or broken. Close your time in prayer asking God to use you and our church to minister to their needs.

**Wednesday**

How have you been obedient in following God's promptings yesterday to minister to the poor, hungry and broken?

Pray Matthew 6:10 to begin your time this morning.

*Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

Read Matthew 18:1-4.

What did the disciples' question demonstrate about their hearts?

What characteristic does Jesus say will demonstrate greatness in the kingdom of heaven?

Why does Jesus choose a child to demonstrate one who will enter the kingdom of heaven?

The disciples question exposed sinful pride in their hearts. Jesus responded to this question by exposing their need for transformed hearts and minds.

Imagine yourself standing in Jesus' presence. What sins would He point out in your own life? Are there ways in which you have attempted to earn your place in God's kingdom?

In prayer, confess these to God and ask Him to transform your heart and mind.

Choose one area in which you sense a need for deep transformation in your life (i.e. pride, bitterness, unforgiveness, prejudice). What is a concrete step you can take to pursue transformation in this area?

Close your time in prayer, asking God to transform your heart and mind.

**Thursday**

Spend a few minutes making a list of all the people in your life who don't know Christ.

Read Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43.

To help understand the parable, fill out the following chart:

Object/Person:	sower	good seed/ wheat	field	bad seed/ weeds	enemy
Represents:					

This parable tells us that Jesus has sown or wants to sow good seed around the world through us. These seeds will grow and bear the fruit of people coming to know Christ. However, Satan also sows evil seeds among these good seeds.

Look back at the list of people you know who do not yet know Christ. Thank God for the seeds He has sown in their hearts. Spend a few moments in silence, how might God be asking you to nurture these seeds or sow more seeds among those who haven't heard?

Spend time interceding for these people. Ask for protection against Satan's schemes. Ask that the truth of Jesus would be made clear and that they would come to a point of decision.

**Friday**

Begin your time by again praying the words from Matthew 6:10—"Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Read Matthew 13:44-45.

Often the phrase, the kingdom of heaven, in these parables is understood as referring to the message of Christ: the redemption available in Him, the ability to trust in God's sovereignty, and the promise of heaven where God will reign in righteousness for eternity.

What was the man's response to finding the "kingdom of heaven"?

What was the merchant's response?

Both of these men viewed their material possessions as nothing compared to the kingdom of heaven. What does your stewardship of your time, material possessions, and abilities demonstrate about the value you place on the kingdom of heaven?

How might God be calling you through these parables to respond in great joy in releasing your possessions for the sake of His kingdom?

Close your time today by again praying Matthew 6:10.

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### **For Group Prayer**

#### ***ACTS***

##### **A Adoration**

**Leader:** O LORD, our Lord, the majesty of your name fills the earth! Your glory is higher than the heavens. When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers--the moon and the stars you have set in place--what are mortals that you should think of us, mere humans that you should care for us?

**People:** For you made us only a little lower than God, and you crowned us with glory and honor. You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things.

##### **C Confession**

**Leader:** Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin.

**People:** But you desire honesty from the heart, so you can teach me to be wise in my inmost being. Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

##### **T Thanksgiving**

**Leader:** Acknowledge that the LORD is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name.

**People:** He forgives all our sins and heals all our diseases. He ransoms us from death and surrounds us with love and tender mercies. He fills our lives with good things. Our youth is renewed like the eagle's!

##### **S Supplication**

**Leader:** Keep us safe, O God, for we have come to you for refuge. We say to the LORD, "You are our Master! All the good things we have are from you."

**People:** We are praying to you because we know you will answer, O God. Bend down and listen as we pray. Show us your unfailing love in wonderful ways. You save with your strength those who seek refuge from their enemies. Guard us as the apple of your eye. Hide us in the shadow of your wings.