

# Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

## SSBC Luke Bible Study #64

*Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.*

Passage: Luke 17:20-21

Sermon Date: Dec 17, 2006

## The Kingdom of God

What is a kingdom? The word has somewhat of a fairy tale connotation in my mind. It's where people live happily ever after, right? Do we have kingdoms today? Is our country one? While we're considered a "world power" we don't have a king – we're technically a "republic." So where are the kingdoms? Dictatorships are closer. And Luke 11:18 tells us that even Satan has a kingdom! But how about God? Does He really have a kingdom?

Yes! Earlier in Luke's gospel we learned that there is a kingdom of God. Like a mustard seed, it starts small, grows slowly, and absolutely prevails. Now, in this week's passage, we see Jesus confronted by some Pharisees about when God's kingdom would come. His response no doubt left them a bit confounded, and it provides us today with a bit of a puzzle as well. As you start your study, begin with a familiar prayer. Linger on the thought of your Father's kingdom. Ask God to open your eyes and your heart to see and understand his kingdom afresh.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
**your kingdom come**, your will be done ... (Mt 6:9-10)

*These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon as inserts in the church bulletin and posting at [www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/](http://www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/). Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website. Have feedback or questions? Contact [studieditor@southshorebaptist.com](mailto:studieditor@southshorebaptist.com)*

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**Bible Study:**

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the chart below to note your observations and any questions you have.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NIV</b> New International Version (Dynamic Equivalent Translation)</p> <p><sup>20</sup> Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, <sup>21</sup> nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."</p>	

2. Now read the same passage in two other translations. Note the differences and similarities.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NASB</b> New American Standard Bible (More Literal Translation)</p> <p><sup>20</sup> Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; <sup>21</sup> nor will they say, 'Look, here <i>it is!</i>' or, 'There <i>it is!</i>' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NLT</b> New Living Translation (Paraphrase Translation)</p> <p><sup>20</sup> One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, "When will the Kingdom of God come?" Jesus replied, "The Kingdom of God isn't ushered in with visible signs. <sup>21</sup> You won't be able to say, 'Here it is!' or 'It's over there!' For the Kingdom of God is among you."</p>	

Ask **Questions: Who? What? Why? Where? When? How?**

3. **What** expectations did people in Jesus' day have about the kingdom of God? What were they anticipating? (consider Daniel 2:44, Mark 15:43, Luke 19:11)

4. **Who** was Jesus speaking to in Luke 17:20-21? How does that affect the meaning of what he said?

5. **What** is a kingdom? What is the kingdom of God? (consider Luke 14:15, 1 Cor 4:20, Php 2:10-11, Rev 11:15, 12:10)

6. **When** is/was/will be the kingdom of God? (consider the following sets of verses)

a. Mark 1:15, 9:1, Luke 9:27, 10:9-11, 21:31

b. Matt 12:28, Luke 11:20

c. Matt 24:23-36, 44, Mark 13:21-27, Acts 1:6-7, Rev 12:10

d. Based on the above, which one (or more) of the following statements do you agree with, and why?

The kingdom of God has already come.

The kingdom of God is coming now.

The kingdom of God will come in the future.

7. **Who** will not enter the kingdom of God? (consider 1 Cor 6:9-10, 15:50, Gal 5:19-21, Eph 5:5)

8. **How** does one enter the kingdom of God? (consider Mt 21:33-44, Mk 1:15, 10:13-16, 10:17-31)

9. **Where** is God's kingdom? There's debate among Bible scholars on how to translate the Greek word 'entos' at the end of Luke 17:21b, but we can gain much helpful insight by looking at all three versions.

a. The NASB translation is "For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst." In what sense was the kingdom of God **in the midst** of those Jesus was speaking to? In what sense is it in our midst today?

b. The NIV translation is "because the kingdom of God is within you." In what sense was the kingdom of God **within** those Jesus was speaking to? In what sense is it within us today? (consider Romans 14:17-18)

c. The NLT translation is "For the kingdom of God is among you." In what sense was the kingdom of God **among** those Jesus was speaking to? In what sense is it among us today? (consider Jn 1:26)

10. **Why** did Jesus come? What was his mission? How did his mission relate to the kingdom of God? (consider Luke 4:43, 8:1, 1 Peter 3:18)

11. What did the early Christians **Believe** and **Do** regarding the kingdom of God? (consider Acts 8:12, 14:22, 19:8, 28:23, 28:31)

12. What are we supposed to **Do** regarding the kingdom of God? (consider Matt 6:25-33, Luke 9:57-62, Acts 28:31, 2 Thess 1:5)

13. In conclusion, what main point is Jesus making in Luke 17:20-21?

14. How can you apply this main point, or perhaps another aspect of this study, in your life?