



WAKE-UP CALL

# ALL THE THINGS

*Everyday Ministry  
in the Power of the Spirit*

DAN WILT

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PREVIEW COPY





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# AN INVITATION TO AWAKENING

This resource comes with an invitation.

The invitation is as simple as it is comprehensive. It is not an invitation to commit your life to this or that cause or to join an organization or to purchase another book. The invitation is this: to wake up to the life you always hoped was possible and the reason you were put on planet Earth. It begins with following Jesus Christ.

In case you are unaware, Jesus was born in the first century BCE into a poor family from Nazareth, a small village located in what is modern-day Israel. While his birth was associated with extraordinary phenomena, we know little about his childhood. At approximately thirty years of age, Jesus began a public mission of preaching, teaching, and healing throughout the region known as Galilee. His mission was characterized by miraculous signs and wonders; extravagant care of the poor and marginalized; and multiple unconventional claims about his own identity and purpose. In short, he claimed to be the incarnate Son of God with the mission and power to save people from sin, deliver them from death, and bring them into the now-and-eternal kingdom of God—“on earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10).

In the spring of his thirty-third year, during the Jewish Passover celebration, Jesus was arrested by the religious authorities, put on trial in the middle of the night, and at their urging, sentenced to death by a Roman governor. On the day known to history as

Good Friday, Jesus was crucified on a Roman cross and then was buried in a borrowed tomb. On the following Sunday, according to multiple eyewitness accounts, he was physically raised from the dead. He appeared to hundreds of people, taught his disciples, and prepared for what was to come.

Forty days after the resurrection, Jesus ascended bodily into the heavens where, according to the Bible, he sits at the right hand of God as the Lord of heaven and earth. Ten days after his ascension, in a gathering of 120 people on the day of Pentecost, a Jewish day of celebration, something truly extraordinary happened. A loud and powerful wind swept over the people gathered. Pillars of what appeared to be fire descended upon the followers of Jesus. The Holy Spirit, the presence and power of God, filled the people, and the church was born. After this, the followers of Jesus went forth and began to do the very things Jesus did—preaching, teaching, and healing—and planting churches and making disciples all over the world. Today, more than two thousand years later, the movement has reached us. This is the Great Awakening, and it has never stopped.

Yes, two thousand years hence and more than two billion followers of Jesus later, this awakening movement of Jesus Christ and his church stands stronger than ever. Billions of ordinary people the world over have discovered in Jesus Christ an awakened life they never imagined possible. They have overcome challenges, defeated addictions, endured untenable hardships and suffering with unexplainable joy, and stared death in the face with the joyful confidence of eternal life. They have healed the sick, gathered the outcasts, embraced the oppressed, loved the poor, contended for justice, labored for peace, cared for the dying, and, yes, even raised the dead.

We all face many challenges and problems. They are deeply personal, yet when joined together, they create enormous and complex chaos in the world, from our hearts to our homes to our churches and our cities. All of this chaos traces to two originating problems: sin and death. Sin, far beyond mere moral failure, describes the fundamental broken condition of every human being. Sin separates us from God and others, distorts and destroys our deepest identity as the image-bearers of God, and poses a fatal

problem from which we cannot save ourselves. It results in an ever-diminishing quality of life and ultimately ends in eternal death. Because Jesus lived a life of sinless perfection, he is able to save us from sin and restore us to a right relationship with God, others, and ourselves. He did this through his sacrificial death on the cross on our behalf. Because Jesus rose from the dead, he is able to deliver us from death and bring us into a quality of life both eternal and unending.

This is the gospel of Jesus Christ: pardon from the penalty of sin, freedom from the power of sin, deliverance from the grip of death, and awakening to the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit to live powerfully for the good of others and the glory of God. Jesus asks only that we acknowledge our broken selves as failed sinners, trust him as our Savior, and follow him as our Lord. Following Jesus does not mean an easy life; however, it does lead to a life of power and purpose, joy in the face of suffering, and profound, even world-changing, love for God and people.

All of this is admittedly a lot to take in. Remember, this is an invitation. Will you follow Jesus? Don't let the failings of his followers deter you. Come and see for yourself.

Here's a prayer to get you started:

Our Father in heaven, it's me (say your name). I want to know you. I want to live an awakened life. I confess I am a sinner. I have failed myself, others, and you in many ways. I know you made me for a purpose, and I want to fulfill that purpose with my one life. I want to follow Jesus Christ. Jesus, thank you for the gift of your life, death, resurrection, and ascension on my behalf. I want to walk in relationship with you as Savior and Lord. Would you lead me into the fullness and newness of life I was made for? I am ready to follow you. Come, Holy Spirit, and fill me with the love, power, and purposes of God. I pray these things by faith in the name of Jesus, amen.

It would be our privilege to help you get started and grow deeper in this awakened life of following Jesus. For some next steps and encouragements, visit [seedbed.com/awaken](http://seedbed.com/awaken).



# INTRODUCTION

There is no story in the world greater than the story of Jesus, entering our world as Emmanuel—God with us.

There also may be no greater story in the heart of God than you and I entering a normal day, like today, as those who live with God *within* us!

In *All the Things*, we are beginning a journey of several weeks that, I pray, will culminate in you believing—perhaps more than ever before—that you are to become an apprentice of Jesus.

The title of this series comes from Acts 1:1-2, which says:

In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about *all that Jesus began to do and to teach* until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. (emphasis mine)

And in one translation, it says:

In the first account I composed, O Theophilus, concerning *all the things* that Jesus began both to do and to teach . . .  
(v. 1, BLB, emphasis mine)

*All the Things*, a commonly used phrase, felt like just the right title for us to explore all the things that Jesus did and taught—and all the things he does through us in the lives of others.

Over the course of many decades, I've had the privilege of serving as a pastor, teacher, and worship leader in many different

contexts. But none of those ministry roles will ever compare to the privilege I have had of seeing Jesus do what only he can do: transform someone's life through a moment when his kingdom breaks in.

In most cases, I've seen those transformations happen because an ordinary Christian, like you or me, chose to risk in faith rather than walk away from someone's great need. The result? I've seen the joy in someone's eyes that has been sparked by a miracle of healing—healing of a broken spirit, healing of the body, healing of the mind, or healing of the emotions.

The words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:4-6 are so relevant for us in a time when the world has more words on the internet than it can possibly handle:

My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

This is a word for our time, and the church is the vehicle through which the Spirit demonstrates the saving power of Jesus. If we want to see the gospel reach our generation, in union with Jesus and by his power, we must become people who are willing to be vessels through whom he demonstrates that power.

The writers of the Gospels and the New Testament bring to light this one vital truth that is the foundation for the adventure on which we are embarking.

We must become apprentices of Jesus, doing all the things that Jesus wants to do through us.

Jesus was not only interested in doing the ministry of the kingdom of God *himself*. Jesus was interested in training his disciples to be witnesses of his works *so they could in turn do those works themselves in his name*.

He was interested in training *apprentices*—disciples who watch him, behold his works, learn from him, and become witnesses to the world that he sets captives free.

When friend and brother J. D. Walt encouraged me to write this series, he said, "Sit around a campfire and tell stories." Going to Scripture and mining the Word to guide us in that journey into

apprenticeship to Christ, I searched my own life and the lives of others for stories that help illustrate what Jesus wants to do through his disciples today.

In light of this, I've chosen to follow a particular path in this writing for the *Wake-Up Call*.

First, we'll pray our Prayer of Consecration each day.

Then we'll read a passage that speaks of "all the things" that Jesus did and taught. As we have limited time, that list of passages will be far from exhaustive. As John 21:25 reminds us, "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written."

Most entries will begin with a personal story. I believe it's important that I integrate my own experience seeking to be an apprentice of Jesus—with all the fumbling and stumbling along the way—into our learning. It is my intent that the only person you would be impressed by, in each story, is Jesus. It is also my intent that each story inspires you as you follow Jesus and encourages you that God can use anyone—introverts, extroverts, and ambiverts—willing to step through our fears to trust and obey.

We'll then reflect on the day's scripture, and I'll share a prayer and some journal prompts.

Finally, for fun, I've added a section at the bottom of each entry called "Activate," which will provide a next step, a quick idea for applying what we are learning together in our own real time and real place—with real people.

I would encourage you to use the journaling space provided, to begin to document what the Lord is about to do through you as you take him at his word to follow him.

When Jesus said, "Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father," I believe he meant it (John 14:12).

I invite you to join me in this great adventure of doing *all the things* Jesus wants to do through you in the weeks and years to come.

Let's begin!





When ordinary believers combine all the things that Jesus did and said with obedience and discernment, we are able to move in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*things* that Jesus began both to do and to teach . . .” (BLB, emphasis mine).

*All the things.* In the context of the life of a follower of Jesus, “all the things” is about all the things that Jesus did, that Jesus does, and that Jesus taught us to do with him. These are the things that you and I are called to be about every single day as apprentices of Jesus.

These are troubled and troubling times. When the proclamation of the gospel through words can’t be heard through the din of the internet and the news noise that surrounds us every day, a passage like 1 Corinthians 2:4-6 becomes more relevant, more vital, for the body of Christ to embrace than ever:

My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.

*A demonstration of the Spirit’s power.* Yes, our words matter. But friends, without a demonstration of the Spirit’s power moving through a loving person willing to step beyond their fears to partner with the Father in undoing the works of the evil one, we simply won’t see much spiritual progress in this generation.

When ordinary believers combine all the things that Jesus did and said with obedience and discernment, we are able to move in the power of the Holy Spirit—a power that breaks down strongholds and opens hearts to the Savior.

So, what are all the things that Jesus did and taught that we’ll explore? Jesus preached the kingdom of God. Then he backed up his message with a *ministry*: He healed the sick, raised the dead, delivered the demonized, loved the unlovely, and touched lives in myriad, dramatic ways.

Then *Jesus invited, called, and commissioned his disciples to do all the same things with him.*

Let’s imagine that we are taking a long daily walk together, over forty-five days, considering all the things Jesus did and all the things that you and I are commissioned to do with him.

Each day we'll consider passages that reveal something about what Jesus began to do and teach and that speak to the ministry he has passed on to us.

Most days I'll share a short story at the beginning of the entry that highlights something Jesus actually did in someone's life through an ordinary Christian who was willing to be obedient to God's voice. Most stories will be from my own experience, but I'll also include the stories of others.

Then, we'll look at how we can partner with the Holy Spirit in doing what Jesus did and does. We will learn how to see what the Father is doing (John 5:19-20) and then do it with him. We'll learn about the kingdom of God, about being apprentices of Jesus, and about getting out of our own way so we can get into God's way.

At the conclusion of each entry, along with our prayer and journaling prompt, will be an "Activate" section. This is a what-you-can-do-next step to help you translate what we're learning together into simple real-world action.

If someone asks you what you're doing today, for the next several weeks let's share the same answer, wherever we are: "All the things. I'm doing all the things."

**PRAYER**

*Lord Jesus, I am awakening! I am awakening to the reality that the words on the pages of the Gospels and the New Testament have something to do with me—something to do with how you want to love others through me. Show me the role I am to play in the lives of the people I meet today. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.*

**JOURNAL PROMPTS**

- Have you believed that you have a part to play in what Jesus is doing today?
- Do you believe that with a mustard seed of faith, guided by the Holy Spirit, you can do what Jesus did, with him?

**ACTIVATION**

Today, begin to ask the Lord to send you people over the next six weeks, people he is already at work within. Notice whom he sends your way, and begin an *All the Things* journal to document what God begins to do in your life and theirs.

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*all around him if he could pray for them. He didn't think about doing it—he just did it, and lives were changed.<sup>1</sup>*

When I think of all the things that Jesus did and taught, everything that Luke must have been thinking about when he wrote Acts 1:1-2, I am reminded of a famous anecdote about John Wimber, who was a mentor to me near the end of his life.<sup>2</sup>

When John first became a follower of Jesus and began reading his Bible, after coming off drugs and dropping out of the music industry scene, he took in all the stories of miracles performed by Jesus and his disciples. To John, miracles and spiritual gifts seemed to be very normal parts of the Christian life for the early church.

Each of those gifts, and the miraculous experiences connected to them, seemed to reveal God's love to a person—leading them to follow Jesus (often along with family and friends).

To John, the New Testament and early Christians seemed to believe that spiritual gifts were not *optional*—they were *normal*, *essential*, and *necessary* to awaken the heart to Jesus. They made living witnesses out of ordinary disciples. They confirmed the good news of Jesus was true—through and through.

So, after reading the Gospels and the New Testament and experiencing the dryness of a particular church service, John Wimber had one singular, pressing question: “*When do we get to do the stuff?*”

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1. John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (Gospel Light, 2009), 206-7.

2. For more than thirty-five years I have been a part of the Vineyard movement of churches. Much of what I will share in this series I learned and experienced in that stream of the body of Christ. For that reason, you will note that I often quote John Wimber, the late founder of the Vineyard movement, as he was one of my primary mentors in learning how to do kingdom ministry. I'll also share many stories from my lived experience that I believe can help us learn to live a “naturally supernatural” life as kingdom people.

John was trying to bridge the gap between what he saw in the New Testament and what he saw in current church life. He believed that Jesus was training apprentices, not spectators.

And what was the “stuff” John wanted to do? John was talking about “all the things” of Acts 1:1 (BLB). He was talking about life-to-life kingdom ministry in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. John would go on to lead a global movement (the Vineyard movement, a substantial part of my church background) that seeks to embody a Jesus-like, Word-centered, Spirit-filled, heaven-meets-earth, love-motivated, power-activated, naturally supernatural approach to living.

If you are asking, like John did, “When do we get to do the stuff?” my answer is “Today! We can do the stuff *today!*”

Jesus commissioned his first disciples, his apprentices, to go out into the world to do two things simultaneously. They would *preach* the good news of the kingdom of God, and they would *demonstrate* that news through signs and wonders that led back to the love of God.

Here is a gospel truth to set us free today: *All the things that Jesus did, you and I are invited, commissioned, and empowered to do with him.*

Today, we get to *do the stuff* of kingdom ministry.

Today, you and I get to partner with the Father in healing hearts, minds, and bodies—by the power of the Spirit living within us.

**PRAYER**

*Lord Jesus, I want to “do the stuff” of the kingdom of God. I want to join you in your work in my neighborhood, in my workplace, and in my home. Give me the desire, and the boldness, to move into a fresh season of learning to minister to others with you. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.*

**JOURNAL PROMPTS**

- What have you done in your life that Jesus did?

Today, you and I get to partner with the Father in healing hearts, minds, and bodies—by the power of the Spirit living within us.

- Have you primarily sought to imitate his character, ethics, and ways of treating people, or have you also practiced participating in ministry with the Holy Spirit through spiritual gifts?

**ACTIVATION**

Today, notice whom God is bringing across your path. Ask the Lord to begin to give you discernment as to what he is doing in their lives so that you can begin to join him.

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*with my friends, classmates, family members, waiters and waitresses, and people I met throughout the day. To my surprise, I began to sense the Holy Spirit moving in those simple prayers. Often, I would see pictures while I prayed. Sometimes, a person would be visibly touched. Once, someone was physically healed—on the spot!*

Have you ever had one of those moments when you realized that a pebble was starting an avalanche in your life? My friend's introduction of the question "May I pray for you?" was that pebble for me. The simplicity of the question seemed to open doors with people from all walks of life, showing that I was truly concerned about their well-being and creating an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to touch the person's heart.

When I look at all that Jesus did and taught, I can often feel like I lack the boldness to just speak with authority to someone's body and see it healed or to sense God's leading in my spirit to speak to someone and then deliver the message without fear.

But when I learned to ask the Kingdom Question, "May I pray for you?" it became a pathway, a tool, for me to partner with what the Holy Spirit was already about in the person's life.

After a person said yes, which was often, I would ask if I could lay my hand on their shoulder. If they said yes, I would pause, before offering all the heartfelt prayers that came to my mind, to listen to the Holy Spirit. We began praying with their need and the Spirit's guidance in focus, rather than with my empathy or spiritual well-wishes.

It was in those moments of pause (I usually said something like, "Let's take a moment to wait on the Lord before I pray") that I began to get *impressions* about what to pray for and how. I began to have scriptures emerge in my mind. I began to see pictures, images, in my imagination. I began to sense God's direction for my prayers, even at times leading me to pray for something completely different from what the person originally wanted me to pray for!

It was then I began to experience what John Wimber, the founder of the Vineyard movement, called “power ministry.” But let’s put a pin in that for now.

For today, let’s dub the phrase “May I pray for you?” our Kingdom Question. Over the weeks ahead, beginning today, I would encourage you to practice using it as you discern God’s leading with a person.<sup>3</sup>

John Wimber once said, “Faith is spelled R-I-S-K.” When we take small risks of faith, even practicing with people who know us and love us, we begin to see that God does not use the “anointed,” but rather the obedient. His anointing meets us in the moment of obedience.

Stories of what God is doing through you are just ahead; get your journal ready to document them. And the Holy Spirit amusement park ride will commence . . . now.

With our Kingdom Question, “May I pray for you?” in our hearts and mouths, let’s begin to do the stuff—with Jesus.

**PRAYER**

*Lord Jesus, I know that the next steps in my relationship with you, as an apprentice, will take some risk. But the risk will be worth the reward! Give me peace and courage as I ask people, “May I pray for you?” In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.*

3. While I’ll share more about this later, here are a few prayer tips to get you started. Always approach people with gentleness and humility and in a way that acknowledges their dignity. Express kindness in your demeanor and represent Christ to them.

When you pray for someone, you can ask them if they mind if you put your hand on their shoulder as you pray (though you don’t have to touch them for the prayer to be effective). Often gently and appropriately laying hands on someone—a biblical idea from Mark 16:18—supports an attitude of prayerful attention in both of you.

If it’s a woman I’m praying for, I like to have another woman present to lay hands on her shoulder with me. As you start to pray for someone in this all-the-things season, first wait on the Lord for guidance as to how he wants you to pray. Listen with your heart; then pray for what comes to you.

Finally, when you finish, leave the person with a word of encouragement and a blessing; be the love of God to them. Ready, steady . . . go!

“Faith is spelled R-I-S-K.”

**JOURNAL PROMPTS**

- What is your level of peace about asking a few people each week, “May I pray for you?”
- What do you think would happen if you practiced asking a few safe people within your friend network this question?

**ACTIVATION**

Today, make a choice that you will be open to opportunities to ask others, “May I pray for you?” in the days ahead. Go with your discernment, your personality, and your sense of peace and timing. Begin with friends and fellow believers.

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The *kingdom of God* is the central, unifying theme running through all that Jesus did and taught.

*A sentence popped into my mind: Ask him who Rebecca is and what her place is in his life.*

*I swallowed hard, took a risk, and whispered the question. "I believe God speaks to us: Who is Rebecca, and what place does she have in your life?" Stunned, he fell silent. His eyes welled up with tears. Rebecca was his girlfriend who had been begging him to go back to church. God had spoken. This broken man opened up to Jesus. The kingdom of God broke in on that flight.*

The *kingdom of God* is the central, unifying theme running through all that Jesus did and taught. Let's invest some extra time today learning what the kingdom of God meant to Jesus.

In Mark 1:14-15, we see Jesus use a phrase that he will use in different ways throughout his ministry. The phrase "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven" appears roughly eighty to eighty-five times in the Gospels. In all those cases, Jesus is the one using the phrase in his teaching. (John the Baptist uses the phrase once in Matthew and once in Mark.) What does that phrase mean, and why did Jesus say it with such familiarity and frequency? Why did he assume his listeners understood what it was?

The concept of the kingdom of God is a golden key to unlocking the full meaning of the gospel that Jesus preached and demonstrated.

A king/queen has a kingdom, or a specific realm of *authority*. A king's kingdom is the *dynamic, authoritative reign or rulership* of that king. It is the area over which that regent has dominion, including people, land, and resources.

The people of God, the Jews, had a particular understanding and expectation related to what they came to call the "kingdom of God" in their history.

Before Saul, their first human king, they understood God to be their only King—the King of the universe. All the earth—and the universe—belonged to King Yahweh, the Creator! The Israelites were invited to be in covenant with their King and to carry his message of love and reconciliation to the world as a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:5-6). But they sinned

and disobeyed. They experienced slavery in Egypt and deliverance in the exodus from the hand of Pharaoh. They entered the promised land and saw the rise of the great kingdom of David, a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14). Then, in the Babylonian exile, they lost that physical kingdom and were transplanted to a foreign land among foreign gods.

Now that's a kingdom roller-coaster ride!

The Jews believed that when the Anointed One from the line of David came, the Christ (the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *Messiah*), Israel would finally be delivered from its long bondage. The Jewish people would enter into the fullness of life once again, living in covenant loyalty with their Creator. The *shalom* of God—God's permeating peace, wholeness, love, goodness, and justice—would be established on earth. God's dynamic reign through his human regent would ensure that mercy and love would be over all and through all. Eden in its fullness and beauty would be restored. Every tear would be wiped away (Rev. 21:4).

Then Jesus arrived on the scene. He was a simple carpenter's son from a small town called Nazareth. He was nothing like the messiah they had thought God was sending their way. He looked people in the eyes, knew them by name, and ministered to them as a king whose reign was not over a physical territory, but rather over the *heart*. His table was always full with those who needed his compassion and ministry most.

Through his message, and his ministry, Jesus went beyond words; he demonstrated that the kingdom of God was among them through signs and wonders.

What happened to the man on the airplane in the story? As we deplaned together, he looked at me with eyes softened by tears. "I'm going to give God a chance," he whispered as we walked down the aisle. The kingdom of God had broken into his life, and his heart was changed. I expect I played just one role in what God was about to do in his life.

## PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, show me what the kingdom of God is truly all about. Give me eyes to see your dynamic rule and reign in my*

Through his message, and his ministry, Jesus went beyond words; he demonstrated that the kingdom of God was among them through signs and wonders.

*own life, then show me how I can participate in your kingdom coming in the lives of those around me. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.*

**JOURNAL PROMPTS**

- What have you understood the kingdom of God to be?
- How is that understanding beginning to change for you?

**ACTIVATION**

Today, find one person in your life you believe has not invited God’s dynamic rule and reign into their life. Begin to pray for them, whether they’re a prodigal child, an estranged sibling, or a quirky neighbor. Pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done,” in their life. Then watch and listen closely for cues to what the Father may be doing. And don’t forget: “May I pray for you?” is the Kingdom Question we carry in our heart pocket, ready to use at any moment.

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*anointed ruler is close, preparing to usher in the messianic reign? We are about to be freed from Roman tyranny? Our long exile is at last finished, and the world will come to be as it was meant to be once again? Yahweh's shalom will be over all and through all? The new creation of God is about to come, and our millennia-old hopes are about to be fulfilled—in our lifetime? Isaiah 40-55 is lifting off the scrolls and materializing in flesh and blood—before our eyes? . . . Are you serious right now?*

When the kingdom came, the world would be put to rights as N. T. Wright framed it. The world would be, as a friend says, *as it should be*—with the love and will of God permeating every aspect of society. That is awakening at its fullest and best.

So what, or who, was coming near? The Hebrew prophets Isaiah and Daniel spoke of one who was to come who would be God's anointed, who would *inaugurate* God's kingdom on earth.

As King of kings, the royal leader of humanity, the government would rest on this Anointed One's shoulders (Isa. 9:6-7). As the Great High Priest, a mediator between God and humanity, this Anointed One would be a suffering servant, bearing sacrificial wounds for the healing of all (Isa. 53). The Messiah was coming near, and the kingdom rule and reign of that Messiah, that "Anointed One," was about to be realized and materialized before their very eyes.

But as Jesus spoke about the kingdom of God, his language and parables were mysterious. He made it sound as if the kingdom of God was here, yet not fully. He spoke of the kingdom of God being now, but also not yet. Jesus said that the kingdom of God was among them, but not quite in its completeness. What was he talking about?

And what were they to do with his parables, those mysterious and sometimes bewildering approaches to the kingdom of God that formed the lion's share of his teaching?

Just like we need a key to crack a code, there was a key to understanding the kingdom message Jesus was bringing.

The key was and is this: *The kingdom of God for Jesus is a kingdom of the heart.*

He was after the dynamic, active rule and reign of God happening in every single person’s life, and in the corporate life of his people, Israel. The kingdom of God, as Jesus would declare, would be wherever God’s covenant with human beings was accepted and obeyed, wherever his rule and reign was appropriated and applied.

The kingdom of God is a revolution of the heart—every heart—coming into allegiance to God’s anointed. Those hearts would then spread his kingdom, as the Lord’s Prayer says, “on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10).

Changed hearts, loyal to the King of kings, become a royal priesthood—a mediating people of heaven and earth—to the world God loves (1 Peter 2:9; John 3:16).

For Jesus, inaugurating the kingdom of God meant an entire “royal priesthood” would exist in the world (1 Peter 2:9), helping everyone encounter him for themselves, up close and personal, for all of history to come.

**PRAYER**

*Lord Jesus, let the revolution of your kingdom begin again in my heart today. I want my heart, and the hearts of those you put in my life and path, to become wholly yours. Let me be the kind of person who helps people believe your kingdom is near. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.*

**JOURNAL PROMPTS**

- What does it mean for you for Jesus to rule and reign in your heart?
- As you think about an earthly kingdom with a regent lovingly overseeing all aspects of that kingdom, what analogies can you draw that relate to what God is doing in your life right now?

**ACTIVATION**

Today, the kingdom of the heart is our point of focus. Who do you know who is choosing their own rule over their own heart rather than Jesus’s?

The key was and is this: *The kingdom of God for Jesus is a kingdom of the heart.*

Write a one-paragraph prayer for them on a small note card, and place it somewhere that will remind you to pray for them each day. (And just maybe the Lord will nudge you to ask them, at some point this week or month, “May I pray for you?”)

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD HAS BEEN INAUGURATED BY JESUS

## CONSECRATION

*Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. (Eph. 5:14)*

Jesus, I belong to you. I lift up my heart to you. I set my mind on you. I fix my eyes on you.

I offer my body to you as a living sacrifice. Jesus, we belong to you.

Praying in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, amen.

## THE WORD OF THE LORD

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

—LUKE 4:14-21

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**CONSIDER THIS**

Today's story is about a Luke 4:14-21 moment I shared with my children many years ago. It illustrates how even little ones can participate in kingdom ministry.

*Good news came to their doorstep on a Sunday morning. The woman stood there, with her children sitting at the kitchen table, as my children and I stood in the doorway with boxes of bread, canned goods, and other food staples.*

*Our congregation was bringing church to her neighborhood that day, and many of us were knocking on doors and ringing doorbells to see if anyone needed some supplies.*

*Her lips trembled as she asked us to place the groceries on the table. As always, we asked, "Can we pray for you and your children?" before we left. She smiled and said, "Please. Please do."*

*We found out that she was a single parent and unemployed and that she barely had any money for food. She wasn't sure how she was going to feed her family that week. My children and I prayed for her and her children. The kitchen was sweet with the aroma of Jesus as we left.*

In Luke 4:14-21, Jesus has just come on the scene—a carpenter's son of no reputation. He is welcomed to do the reading on the Sabbath day, in the synagogue in his hometown. Jesus is handed the scroll of Isaiah and begins. Like a well-timed orchestral hit (when the sound of an entire orchestra is synthesized and strikes a chord for a moment), he finds Isaiah 61, the Jubilee proclamation of the anointed king to come, and begins to read.

**Orchestral Hit #1:** *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me . . ."*  
*Bah bahm!*

*This is an image of the anointing, blessing, and authority of Yahweh. The Spirit, the ruach wind of God, the energizing breath of God, is on his life.*

**Orchestral Hit #2:** “. . . because he has anointed me . . .”

*Bah bahm!*

*This is the expressed anointing of God, his favor resting on the one who will be his holy regent sitting on the throne of his father David—ushering in the messianic age.*

**Orchestral Hit #3:** “. . . to proclaim . . .” *Bah bahm!*

*This is a declaration that the kingdom of God is coming and an illustration of what the dynamic rule and reign of God will look like, sound like, and feel like as it comes.*

*As he reads on, the full orchestra begins to play the music of the kingdom Jesus is carrying within him.*

He will proclaim good news to the poor. He will declare freedom for the prisoners. He will bring recovery of sight to the blind. He will set captives free from their bondage. He will proclaim the year of Jubilee, the year of God’s great favor, the year of their deliverance from the shackles of sin and death.

With the eyes of everyone “fastened on him,” he says the words that inaugurate the kingdom-of-God ministry that he is about to teach, embody, enact, and model for his *talmidim*—his apprentices, his disciples:

*“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*

Jesus is declaring himself to be the long-awaited Anointed One, the King, the Messiah, the great Emmanuel of God! The dynamic rule and reign of God will be present wherever he goes. With his deeds and his practices, he will demonstrate the kingdom is here through miracles, wonders, and remarkable signs—signs that signal that the glorious age to come is breaking into the present.

He will proclaim good news to the poor, all the poor within and beyond the borders of ancient Israel for millennia to come. He will bring freedom to prisoners of the heart and body through all time and places, liberating

The dynamic rule and reign of God will be present wherever he goes.

them to obey the first and greatest commandment—to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength”—and, from this posture of heart, to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:30-31).

He will do all of this because he is the one spoken of by the prophet Isaiah. He is the King for whom they have been waiting. He is the anointed Messiah, the Christ his people have been anticipating for generations.

And he invites his disciples to enter his Isaiah 61 Jubilee ministry with him—to be people of the Great Jubilee, people who set captives free, people of the kingdom of God.

### PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, I am a captive who was set free by your love and grace. Give me eyes to see those around me who are in chains, poverty, and bondages of all kinds from which you alone can free them. Show me how you want me to partner with you in the next step you have for each one. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.*

### JOURNAL PROMPTS

- Write down three things from which Jesus has set you free. After you’ve written them down, take a few moments to thank him for each deliverance, and ask him to give you eyes of compassion to see others trapped in similar bondages.





# THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOW AND NOT YET

## CONSECRATION

*Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. (Eph. 5:14)*

Jesus, I belong to you. I lift up my heart to you. I set my mind on you. I fix my eyes on you.

I offer my body to you as a living sacrifice. Jesus, we belong to you.

Praying in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, amen.

## THE WORD OF THE LORD

Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.”

—LUKE 17:20-21

## CONSIDER THIS

As we reflect on what the kingdom of God is all about, it’s important we begin to consider the mystery that comes along with kingdom ministry.

*The small group of family and friends mourned around the bedside of their sister in Christ. She was succumbing, after a long and courageous battle, to cancer. As she breathed her last breaths, with worship music softly sung by this circle of companions, there was a clear sense that she was soon to see Jesus face-to-face. This group, who had seen God do miracles in their lives and in the lives of others, realized that the miraculous healing she needed would be in the presence of Jesus*

***on the other side of a victorious death. The kingdom of God was now—yet still to come in its fullness.***

If we want to do all the things Jesus did, then we need to be aware of a big idea about the kingdom that explains why some miracles happen immediately and others don't.

In Luke 17:21, Jesus says that the kingdom of God is “in your midst.” Or, as it can be interpreted, the kingdom of God is *within your (and our) reach*.

Wait. People can reach out and touch it—by touching *him*? The kingdom of God is here? In other words, the kingdom of God is happening? The kingdom of God is as within our reach as Jesus himself?

But why are things not fixed then, Jesus? Why are the Romans still here? Why is my mother-in-law still sick, my finances in such a mess, and my child still such a prodigal?

It gets even more confusing. Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God as being *here and now* but also *yet to come at a later time*, as being *near* and *among them* but also *coming to fulfillment in the future!* Meaning, the kingdom is here, but not in its full maturity.

The kingdom of God is, in other words, both *now* and *not yet*.<sup>4</sup>

The kingdom is *now* in the sense that the messianic age of the future is coming to fulfillment in the now! The signs of God's shalom and the coming new creation—physical healings, deliverances of the heart and mind, forgiveness, compassionate love, revelations that lead to transformation (the woman at the well in John 4:1-42, Nathanael under the fig tree in John 1:47-50), miracles and words of knowledge, and gifts that could only be given by the Spirit—are everywhere.

But the kingdom is also *not yet*. According to Jesus, the kingdom is here, but also yet to come in its fullness. A dear

4. This concept, derived from an original idea of Geerhardus Vos, was popularized by New Testament scholar George Eldon Ladd. The idea of the “already and not yet” was integrated into Vineyard theology by John Wimber.

The kingdom of  
God is both *now*  
and *not yet*.

friend says that the kingdom of God is the “world as it was meant to be.” But the world is still not as it was meant to be.

The world is still in pain. I am still in pain. We still have trouble. It is not only the will of God that is being done. The will of individuals is also being done, leading to divorce, family strife, war, murder, hatred, and brokenness, even as God’s will is being done by individuals and communities devoted to him. Marriages fail after long struggles. Mental and emotional health issues distress even longtime and devoted followers of Jesus. Terrorist acts leave families devastated and the innocent taken too soon from this life. I pray for someone, and they are not healed. In fact, they die.

The world as it should be is yet to be.

Why is the world in such rough shape if the kingdom of God is “among us”? John Wimber had this to say about what the kingdom being among us means: “When [Jesus] said that the kingdom of God had come *in Him*, He claimed for Himself the position of a divine invader, coming to set everything straight: ‘The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work’ (1 John 3:8).”<sup>5</sup>

In the *now*, Jesus is the “divine invader,” and God’s kingdom is coming in this moment. And for those who follow him, we are looking for signs of his kingdom breaking in, where we can partner with him in bringing the future kingdom—yet to come in its fullness—into the now.

### PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, I feel the tension of living “between the times” in the now and the not yet of the kingdom of God. Give me grace, today, to see the now of your kingdom and patience to bear with the long hope in the kingdom yet to come. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.*

### JOURNAL PROMPTS

- In what ways are you seeing the kingdom “now” manifest in front of you?

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5. John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (Gospel Light, 2009), 30.

- In what ways are you seeing the kingdom “not yet” all around you?
- Write down a “now and not yet” prayer that emerges from your reflection.

**ACTIVATION**

Today, ask the Lord to show you how his kingdom is breaking in like a “divine invader” in the lives of those around you. When you see a glimmer of the work the Holy Spirit is doing, take a risk and tell the person you see God at work in their life.

Don’t be shy. You can text it, write a letter about it, or ask the person to lunch. People need to know God is at work in their lives!

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# THE PRAYER OF PREPARATION TO OPEN THE WORD

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Our Father,  
Your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

(PSALM 119:105)

Your word is sweeter than honey and more precious than gold.

(PSALM 19:10)

Your word goes out from your mouth and does not return to you empty  
but accomplishes all the purposes for which you send it.

(ISAIAH 55:11)


Your word is the sword of the Spirit,  
sharper than a double-edged knife,  
it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow;  
it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

(EPHESIANS 6:17; HEBREWS 4:12)

For we do not live by bread alone but by every word  
that comes from the mouth of God.

(MATTHEW 4:4)





Indeed, the grass withers and the flower fades  
but the Word of the Lord endures forever.

**(ISAIAH 40:8)**

Thank you for sending us your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ,  
who is the Word of God made flesh;  
the Way and the Truth and the Life,  
our Rabbi and Ruler.

**(JOHN 1:14; 14:6)**

Thank you for sending us the Holy Spirit,  
who inspired the Scriptures,  
who inspires us in their hearing and  
who indwells us with power to obey them.

**(2 PETER 1:21; 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14; GALATIANS 5:16)**

Teach us the Word of God, by the Spirit of God  
that it might become fulfilled in our lives  
together as your church—  
for our good, others' gain, and your glory.

**(JOHN 15:8)**

Speak now, Lord, for your servants,  
who are your sons and daughters, are listening.

**(1 SAMUEL 3:10)**

Praying in the name of the Father,  
and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



# Week 1 Conversation Guide

## #1-#7 • ACTS 1:1-2

Focus Entries: #3 & #4

Focus Verses: Acts 1:1-2; Mark 1:14-15

Theme Verse: *"In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen."*—Acts 1:1-2

WATCH DAN'S SUPPLEMENTAL WEEKLY VIDEO



READ FOCUS VERSES ALOUD

### DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever had a moment when you felt like God was using you in a unique and powerful way? Describe that moment. How did you know God was using you?
2. Have you ever asked someone if you could pray for them? If so, how did you feel as you asked the question, then prayed? How did the person respond?

### ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to you that the kingdom of God is always present, always within reach, in every situation? Does this encourage you to take a step of faith toward someone, knowing that the Father is already active in the person's life?
2. How would it change your way of thinking about being a follower of Jesus if you began to spell faith, R-I-S-K?
3. How do you respond to passages about how Jesus demonstrated the Kingdom of God was real through a sign or wonder? Do you distance yourself from the scene, feeling that such miraculous ministry was his alone? Or do you believe he wants to use you, and his whole church, in similar ways?
4. Imagine yourself in a person's shoes in the New Testament, someone who was experiencing the kindness of God through Jesus's ministry. What must it have felt like to receive a miracle through someone who so clearly loved you and cared about your wellbeing?

**READ THEME VERSE ALOUD AND CLOSE IN PRAYER**



WAKE-UP CALL

Ask anyone what they have to do today and you may get the answer, “All the things. I have to do all the things.” Acts 1:1-2 reminds us that “all the things” that Jesus did every day led to the sick being healed, the outcast being loved, and fearful souls feeling seen and touched by God.

The follower of Jesus is an apprentice—one who watches one’s master closely and then proceeds to both learn and do the same work as the master. When Jesus calls us to follow him, he doesn’t mean for us to spectate while spiritual professionals do the ministry. He invites us, as he did his first *talmidim*—his disciples—to learn how set captives free, heal the sick, and be good news wherever we are.

*All the Things* is a daily exploration—through stories, practical tips, and activations—of how to hear God’s voice when caring for family members, neighbors, co-workers, and strangers in Jesus’s name. With the goal of making Spirit-led ministry accessible to every follower of Jesus, this book will help readers take small steps that lead to big change in the lives around them.

CONTAINS

45 Daily Entries • Journal Prompts with Writing Space  
Group Discussion Guide • Preparatory Prayers

**Dan Wilt** is an author, communicator, pastor, and practitioner who writes on the topics of worship, the Holy Spirit, and following Jesus. With roots in the Vineyard stream of churches, Dan has served the development of disciples internationally through his speaking and resources. Dan is part of the Seedbed Farm Team and lives in Thompson’s Station, Tennessee.

The **Wake-Up Call** is a daily encouragement to shake off the slumber of our busy lives and turn our eyes toward Jesus. Each morning we gather around the Word of God—starting with consecration, moving to transformation, leading to demonstration of the love of Jesus. Join the community at [seedbed.com/wakeupcall](http://seedbed.com/wakeupcall).



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