



# YOU ASKED FOR IT!

## Kingdoms in Conflict

#npyouasked

Week 1  
1 of 4

July 2, 2017

**Bottom Line:** Christ-followers respond with grace, even in the face of controversy.

**Icebreaker:** Who is the first U.S. President you remember? What election was the first in which you voted?

**Key Verse:** *"Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God."* Matthew 22:21

Jesus was forever talking about the kingdom—HIS kingdom. Though He was careful to say it was a kingdom not of this world (John 18:36), it didn't stop the disciples from assuming and hoping He would instigate a takeover here, nor His enemies from trying to get Him to say something that would get Him in trouble with the authorities. The Pharisees hoped He would get arrested by the Romans. One day after He had finished teaching on the kingdom by telling a story, they came to Jesus carrying a coin and asked Him as a honest man what He thought about paying taxes to Caesar. They knew that Jews hated the heavy tax system and would dislike an answer that favored the Roman government. On the other hand, if He said not to pay the taxes, He would be in direct disobedience to the government. It looked like a no win.

But Jesus took the opportunity to nail down a lesson: He and all Christ-followers are part of two kingdoms. We are part of an earthly kingdom/system, and part of a heavenly kingdom. We have responsibilities to both, responsibilities both spiritual and civic. So His answer hit them both and silenced His critics. "Give to God what belongs to God, and give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar."

Before and above everything else—our nationality, political preference, cultural identity—we are Christ-followers. We are to be FOR the world, not against it, and we do it from the power that comes from being citizens of another kingdom. God will help us find a way to remain true to our biblically based beliefs and convictions; genuinely love, listen to, and serve people who do not share our convictions, and do both, consistently, at the same time.

### THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most specifically from the weekend message?

Neither Jesus nor Paul positioned themselves against everything in culture, or even the Roman Empire. Their biggest conflict was with religious people who had high standards but no grace. Why is it important we become like Jesus and Paul?

*Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God (Romans 13:1).* How do you feel about this? Has any authority ever made you doubt this?

Why might God allow evil, inferior systems of government?

### LOOK IT OVER <<<

Discuss:

"Choose to make a difference, not a point."

"Have conversations full of grace. Lean relationally into those with whom you disagree."

"Some questions you should never answer." Why?

"Don't expect unbelievers to act like Christians."

"Don't be dragged into debates that detract from the primary issues." What are the primary issues?

What does it mean that we must change from the inside out?

## NEXT STEPS

This week consider taking some next steps together as a group:

- 1) What is a typically polarizing issue in our community about which we could pray together?
- 2) Ask for prayer in the areas that is most difficult for you.

## EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

**Bottom Line:** Christ-followers respond with grace, even in the face of controversy.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

## PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

## DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at [newpointe.org/daily](http://newpointe.org/daily):

Day 1: Luke 5:27-32

Day 2: Acts 17:16-17;32-34a

Day 3: Galatians 2:11-13

Day 4: Luke 20:3

Day 5: Matthew 5:14-16

***Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.***  
(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)