

KINGDOM COME

PART TWO | GROWTH FROM THE INSIDE OUT



BEFORE THE VIDEO, DISCUSS THIS QUESTION:

1. If you are participating in the daily reading plan, what did you find most helpful?

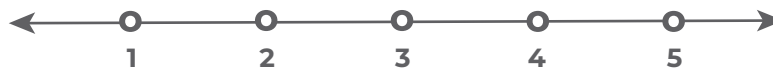


AFTER THE VIDEO, DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS:

1. From the story in the video, what similarities do you see between Laura's spiritual journey and your own?
2. The video mentions two ditches on the side of the road to spiritual growth. One is the "Magic Jesus Pill," where God does everything and you have no responsibility, and the other is "DIY Life Change," where you do everything and God has little to do with it. Marking your answer on the diagram below, which of these extremes have you found yourself closest to? Why do you think that is?

MAGIC JESUS PILL

DIY LIFE CHANGE



3. How does it make you feel to hear God described as a gardener? Is this different from how you've viewed his relationship with your growth?
4. True change moves from the inside out. Have you experienced this kind of change? If so, how? Have you ever felt the struggle of trying to change from the outside in?
5. What has been your experience with spiritual practices, or disciplines? Has engaging in spiritual practices been a catalyst for growth in your life? Share your experience with the group.

** We have provided a brief list of selected spiritual practices at the end of this discussion guide.*

6. How could you build a routine for consistent spiritual practices in your life?



MOVING FORWARD

Take some time to personally read through this list of selected spiritual practices. What is one practice that you could try to integrate into your life this week?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Here are a few selected spiritual practices that have been helpful to Jesus followers over the centuries. They are divided into two categories, practices of engagement and practices of restraint.

PRACTICES OF ENGAGEMENT

These practices help us by adding new rhythms of connection with God into our regular routines for the purpose of drawing closer to him.

Bible Reading: Spending time reading and reflecting on Scripture to allow God to speak, guide, and teach us. This includes various approaches to reading, studying, reflecting on, and even meditating on the words of Scripture.

Worship: Celebrating and expressing gratitude for who God is and what he has done. This can be done privately or corporately in worship services. Worship often includes, but is not limited to, musical expression.

Prayer: Talking with God about what we're experiencing. Prayer can include worship, as described above, intercession (praying for the needs of others), confession, and many other elements. There is no one way to pray, just as there is no one way to communicate with people we have relationships with. Prayer is ultimately about creating an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual connection with our heavenly Father so we can better know and trust his will.

Generosity: Our love for God is meant to overflow in love for others. One of the ways that we demonstrate that love is by being generous with our time, energy, and resources.

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PRACTICES OF RESTRAINT

These practices are ways of denying ourselves something we want or need in order to make space to focus on and connect with God. Essentially, they help us connect with God by subtracting things from our regular routines.

Solitude: Pulling away to be alone with God and focus on him and what he wants to say to us.

Fasting: Going for a set period without food, or some other desire or need, to better focus on prayer and connection to God.

Sabbath / Rest: To regularly set aside time when we will not work or focus on productivity so we may worship, rest, and recharge. God instituted Sabbath for Israel to be observed one full day each week, but the essence of Sabbath rest can be practiced for shorter periods as well.

** If you are interested in digging deeper into these and other spiritual practices, check out the "Connect with God" resource at <http://groupleaders.org/connectwithgod>*