

## CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY: “WHAT MATTERS MOST”

*Seek First: How the Kingdom of God Changes Everything*, by Jeremy Treat

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### THE ONE THING JESUS COULDN'T STOP TALKING ABOUT

- “The number one thing Jesus talked about was the kingdom of God” (p. 13).
- “Jesus gave his followers many commands, but there was only one thing he said to seek *first*. ‘Seek first the kingdom of God’ (Matt. 6:33). This is the one thing that changes everything. According to Jesus, what matters most in life is the kingdom of God” (pp. 13-14).

### IF THE KINGDOM MATTERS, EVERYTHING MATTERS

- “Jesus spent so much time talking about the kingdom of God because it is not just another thing the disciples needed to learn. The kingdom of God was the framework for everything they needed to learn. ‘Seek first the kingdom’ is a call to keep the main thing the main thing” (p. 14).
- “Only the kingdom of God is powerful enough to order and unite the various aspects of your life. That’s why seeking first the kingdom is about more than priorities; it’s the framework determining the priorities” (p. 15).

**WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?** *The kingdom is God's reign through God's people over God's place.*

#### 1. God's Reign

- “The kingdom is first and foremost a statement about God. God is king, and he is coming as king to set right what our sin made wrong. The phrase ‘kingdom of God’ could just as easily be translated ‘reign of God’ or ‘kingship of God.’ The message of the kingdom is about God’s royal power directed by his self-giving love” (p. 15).
- “The kingdom of God is the vision of the world reordered around the powerful love of God in Christ” (p. 17).
- “God is king, and he reigns over his creation. But in a world marred by sin, God’s kingship is resisted, and the peace of his kingdom has been shattered. After Adam and Eve’s rebellion, God’s reign is revealed as a redemptive reign. He is the king who is reclaiming his creation” (p. 17).

#### 2. God's People

- “God the Creator-King reigns *over* all his creatures, but he also reigns *through* his people. This was God’s design from the beginning. Adam and Eve were sent out from the garden as royal representatives of the king, called to steward his creation and spread the blessings of his reign throughout the earth. Instead they chose to seek their own path to power and glory, apart from God.... Ever since sin entered the world, God’s kingdom project has at its heart a rescue mission for rebellious sinners, drawing them into his work of renewing his creation as king” (p. 17).
- “To be saved into the kingdom of God is to have God’s comprehensive rule over every aspect of life. This is a far cry from merely ‘asking Jesus into my heart.’ It means a new life, a new identity, a new kingdom” (p. 18).

### 3. God's Place

- “The Bible is the story of God making his creation a glorious kingdom. It all started in the garden, where God commissioned his people to go to the ends of the earth to make the rest of the world like Eden. The garden kingdom was meant to become a global kingdom where people will rejoice and the world would flourish under God's reign” (p. 18).
- “After the fall, making the world God's glorious kingdom would require a reversal of the curse and a renewal by grace. And that's exactly what God set out to do. The Bible is a rescue story, not about God rescuing sinners from a broken creation but about him rescuing them for a new creation. God's reign begins in the human heart, but it will one day extend to the ends of the earth.... The message of the kingdom of God is not an escape from earth to heaven but God's reign coming from heaven to earth. The focus of God's reign is his people, but the scope of God's reign is all of creation” (p. 18).

### JESUS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

- “This understanding of the kingdom of God...would not have been surprising to the first century crowds listening to Jesus. Their collective hope was that God would come as king to redeem his people and restore his creation. What surprises them about Jesus' proclamation was not what the kingdom *is* but *who* would bring it and *how* he would do so. Jesus fulfills every kingdom promise, but he establishes the kingdom in a way that is different than they expected and yet more glorious than they could have imagined” (pp. 18-19).