

## “What’s going on?”

+ We're excited to announce that Rachel Plattner has accepted the position of our new LifePoint Kids Director! Rachel has been working as our Family Ministry Associate, and her time will now be 100% focused on LifePoint's children.

+Exciting news! We have hired our new Student Ministry Pastor, Eric Fournier! Eric has served for 8 years as a youth pastor in Indiana and will be joining our team in June. His education and experience, coupled with his love for students and families make him an incredible addition to LifePoint.

+ Don't forget to collect your change for CareNet's Baby Bottle Blitz. CareNet is a local Christian organization that provides compassionate support to women and men faced with difficult pregnancy decisions. Each year from Mother's Day to Father's Day we fill baby bottles with our loose change to help support CareNet's goal to save lives. Bottles can be picked up on May 12<sup>th</sup> and should be returned to church on Fathers Day, June 16<sup>th</sup>.

+ Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30-8:00 is our Women's Prayer & Praise Night. We hope that this would be an evening of encouragement and celebration, where we can build relationship with one another and with Christ. Childcare and light refreshments will be available.

+ On Sunday, June 2nd we will be celebrating Child Dedications! Contact Rachel Plattner (rplattner@lifepointqcy.org) for more information.

## MATTHEW 4:12 – 17

### ICE BREAKER

**Question:** You're stranded on a desert island, but food and clean water are readily available to you. What three things do you want with you while you're stranded?

**Question:** If you had to choose **one** food to eat for the rest of your life, what would it be?

### CENTERING FOCUS

Allow for 5-10 minutes of open prayer.

Someone open and close the time in prayer, but allow time and space for others to pray as they feel led. If it is quiet, that is okay. Just use this as a time for people to be able to lay their burdens/worries/distractions at the feet of their Father.

## LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Last week's challenge was to pray alone, in a solitary place.

**Question:** Did you practice this challenge? If so, would you be willing to share your experience?

## THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION

**Question:** Which of Jesus' teachings, in your opinion, is the most counter-cultural or contrary to our society? (Refer to Matthew 5-7 for help.)

## ENGAGING WITH SCRIPTURE

**Matthew 4:12-17** (ESV): *"Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: 'The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles - the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.'" From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*

**Question:** What is the main message of Jesus' ministry?

**Question:** What do you think it means when Jesus says "Repent"?

**Question:** Jesus uses the word kingdom, which is a foreign concept to us. What do you think of when you hear the word kingdom?

**Question:** Following up, therefore, what does kingdom of heaven/God mean? And, what does it mean when Jesus says the "kingdom of heaven is at hand"? (Look up Matthew 4:17 is a couple different translations to help answer.)

**1 John 2:15-17** (ESV): *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life - is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”*

**Question:** What are some “things in the world” that we love?

**Question:** Name some common desires of the world that are associated with –

+Flesh (body):

+Eyes:

+Pride:

(examples: laziness, gluttony, lust, arrogance, etc.)

**Question:** Which of these are hardest for you? Where do you struggle the most?

**John 17:14-19** (ESV): *“I have given them Your word and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil one.”*

**Question:** To whom is Jesus speaking in this passage? (Look up John 17:1 for help with this answer.)

**Question:** What is Jesus contrasting in this passage?

**Question:** There is a common phrase that says, “Christians are called to be in the world, but not of the world”? What do you think it means to be “in” but not “of” the world?

**Question:** What challenges have you faced while being “in” the world, but not “of” the world?

**John 14:15-17** (ESV) *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”*

**Question:** How does Jesus describe the Spirit? Where does the Spirit dwell?

**John 16:7-8** (ESV): *“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you. And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.”*

**Question:** How does the Holy Spirit help us to pursue the kingdom of heaven/God rather than the kingdom of this world?

**Question:** Have you experienced the conviction of the Spirit in your life? Would you be willing to share a time when God convicted you of “sin and righteousness?”

**Question:** What steps can we practically take to pursue the kingdom of God in our everyday lives this week?

## **NEW CHALLENGE**

There will be no new challenge this week.

Rather, reflect on the past several challenges, and practice the one that was the most difficult for you.

- + pray alone, in a solitary place
- + pray for one specific person all week
- + pray with one other person, out loud
- + pray by yourself, out loud
- + spend the first few minutes of each day in prayer