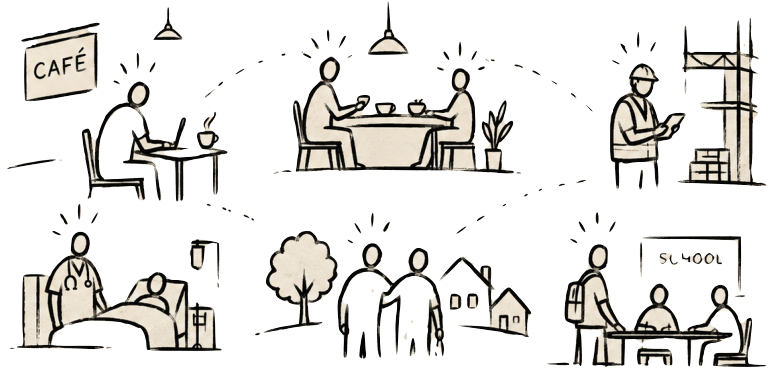


WHAT IS A KINGDOM EXPRESSION?

It's probably not what you think, and far more than you can imagine/

When we think about the Church taking shape somewhere new, we often begin with a form. Start a church. Launch a ministry. Create a program. Organize a gathering. Find a location. Establish a meeting time. Invite people to come. Before long, we have decided what we are building before we have spent much time with the people who live there.



Harvest Forward begins somewhere else: ***Start with the harvest.***

Enter a particular place. Become curious about the people already there. Listen to their stories. Express value. Form trust. Pay attention to where Jesus might already be at work. Then see what begins to emerge.

That is where Kingdom Expressions begin.

What Is a Kingdom Expression?

A Kingdom Expression is a person or group of people through whom the reality of Jesus and His Kingdom becomes visible in a particular place.

That place might be a workplace, neighborhood, school, hospital, coffee shop, apartment building, dinner table, retirement community, or countless other places where everyday life happens.

A Kingdom Expression does not begin with a particular size or structure. It can be one person, two friends, a dinner table filled with people, or a community of people following Jesus together. What makes something a Kingdom Expression is not its size, structure, schedule, or name. It is what is being expressed: Jesus and His Kingdom.

What a Kingdom Expression Isn't

A Kingdom Expression is not another name for a church plant.

Church planting is often entrusted to people with particular gifts, training, leadership capacity, and a calling to establish that kind of ministry. A Kingdom Expression requires none of those things. Anyone who follows Jesus can become a Kingdom Expression.

You don't need to be a pastor, missionary, church planter, ministry leader, or theologian. You don't need permission, credentials, funding, or a platform. You simply begin following Jesus among the people already around you and allow His Kingdom to become visible through the way you live, love, listen, serve, and relate.

That means Kingdom Expressions are possible everywhere followers of Jesus already are: workplaces, classrooms, neighborhoods, hospitals, restaurants, construction sites, retirement communities, soccer fields, and dinner tables. The Church doesn't have to figure out how to get into all of those places. The Church is already there.

A Kingdom Expression is also not a ministry program, outreach event, small group strategy, or smaller version of a worship service. It does not require a building, budget, staff, name, logo, sermon, worship set, or weekly gathering. And it is not something we manufacture somewhere else and then bring into the harvest.

When we begin with a predetermined form, we immediately start looking for people to participate in what we have created. A Kingdom Expression moves in the opposite direction. We enter the harvest first. We discover the people. We learn the place. We form relationships. We notice what Jesus is doing. Then we allow the expression to emerge from there.

A Kingdom Expression isn't something we build for the harvest. It is something that emerges within the harvest.

What Might a Kingdom Expression Look Like?

Imagine a nurse who begins seeing her hospital floor differently. She becomes curious about the people she works beside every day. She listens to their stories, notices when someone is struggling, celebrates with them, and grieves with them. Over time, coworkers begin trusting her with parts of their lives they rarely share with anyone. Jesus becomes visible through the way she lives and relates to them.

That is a Kingdom Expression.

Imagine three international students who regularly eat together. One follows Jesus. As their friendship deepens, questions about faith begin appearing naturally in their conversations. Eventually they begin reading stories about Jesus together. Nobody launches a Bible study, creates a ministry, or develops a strategy. Jesus simply becomes part of their relationship.

That is a Kingdom Expression.

Imagine several neighbors who begin sharing meals. They help one another when someone gets sick, celebrate birthdays, watch one another's children, and grieve losses together. Eventually

they begin talking about Jesus and praying for one another. Something deeper begins forming among them.

That is a Kingdom Expression.

Over time, those relationships might develop rhythms of gathering, Scripture, prayer, communion, generosity, leadership, and sending others into the harvest. Someone looking at it might eventually call it a church.

That can be a Kingdom Expression too.

Kingdom Expression describes what is being expressed, not the size or structure of the expression.

Where Do I Start?

The temptation is to immediately ask, How do I start a Kingdom Expression? There is a better question: Where is the Kingdom already being expressed through my life?

Look at the people already around you. Think about your coworkers, neighbors, classmates, friends, the parents sitting beside you at soccer practice, the people you see at the same coffee shop every morning, the people you eat lunch with, and the people whose stories you already know.

Then begin there.

Become curious. Listen. Express value. Form trust. Share life. Pay attention to the conversations that keep happening, the questions people are asking, the relationships that are deepening, and the places where Jesus seems to be opening doors.

You don't need a launch plan. You don't need to decide what it should become. You don't even need to give it a name.

Simply begin expressing the Kingdom where you already are and remain attentive to what Jesus does next.

You May Already Be One

There may already be a Kingdom Expression emerging around you. In fact, you might already be one.

There may already be something happening around your dinner table. There may already be coworkers who trust you with their stories. Someone may keep asking you questions about Jesus. A friendship may already be becoming sacred territory.

Don't rush to name it, organize it, or turn it into a program. Notice it. Nurture it. Follow Jesus into it.

Because you don't have to start a Kingdom Expression.

Start expressing the Kingdom, and pay attention to what Jesus does next.