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FOR THE KINGDOM

FOLLOWING THE KING: *Kingdom Formation*

Kensington Temple London City Church

Energise Conference (Night 2) 20 October 2026

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THE CENTRAL INVITATION

Believe the King. Follow the King. Become like the King.

Kingdom formation is the lifelong work of the Holy Spirit, forming the life of Jesus in the people of Jesus, for the purposes of Jesus, in the world Jesus loves.

Four Gospel Windows on Discipleship

MARK 8:34–38 **THE CROSS**	**Will I surrender self-rule?** Denying self is not self-hatred. It is refusing to make the self our god. Holiness brings every sphere of life under the gracious government of Jesus.
MATTHEW 10:34–40 **ALLEGIANCE**	**Whom do I love most?** Jesus does not endorse violence; his "sword" names the division created by ultimate allegiance to him. The passage moves towards welcome: receiving Christ in his people.
LUKE 10:25–33 **NEIGHBOUR-LOVE**	**Will my faith cross the road?** The expert knows the command but seeks a boundary. The Samaritan comes near. Kingdom holiness makes us more, not less, available to a wounded world.
JOHN 6:66–71 **REMAINING**	**Will I stay when faith is costly?** Jesus allows many disciples to leave and asks the Twelve for a truthful response. Peter confesses; Judas will betray. Intimate community matters, but it is never perfect.

One King, One Formed People

The passages are distinct, but together they describe one kingdom life: cross-bearing surrender, reordered allegiance, boundary-crossing compassion and faithful remaining.

- Discipleship: I follow Jesus. • Holiness: my whole life belongs to Jesus.
- Obedience: I do what Jesus says. • Community: I follow with others. • Mission: together, we embody his life in the world.

FORMATION HAPPENS IN COMMUNITY

Biblical discipleship is personal, but never private. Jesus calls individuals into a body, a family and a community where grace and truth become visible practices.

Why We Need One Another

TO DISCERN	Left alone, we can baptise preference as obedience, rename fear "wisdom", ambition "vision", avoidance "peace" and stubbornness "conviction".
TO SPEAK TRUTH	Healthy accountability is not surveillance or control. It is truth spoken in love for the sake of Christlike formation.
TO CARRY THE CROSS	We need people who pray, listen, challenge, encourage and help us take the next concrete step of obedience.
TO PRACTISE RECONCILIATION	A hyper-diverse church becomes a sign of the kingdom when we listen across difference, forgive across offence and remain present through misunderstanding.
TO BE SENT	Small groups are not inward-looking religious clubs. They form us to love God, one another and our neighbours in every sphere of society.

The Twelve: Chosen, Significant and Imperfect

John 6 refuses to romanticise discipleship. Peter offers a faithful confession: "Lord, to whom can we go?" Yet Jesus knows Judas will betray him. The community closest to Jesus contains faith, incomprehension, ambition, doubt and hidden betrayal.

DO NOT LOOK FOR A PERFECT GROUP

Look for a community committed to Jesus, repentance, forgiveness, wisdom and truth. Mistakes will be made, but accountable community is a journey into greater and greater depth. We never graduate from formation.

Grace and Truth: Marks of a Life-Giving Group

KNOWN We move beyond attendance and anonymity.	**HONEST** We name temptation, doubt, wounds and contradiction without pretence.
BIBLICAL Scripture corrects our preferences and directs our practice.	**MUTUAL** No one is above accountability; leadership is transparent and responsible.
SAFE Accountability never excuses manipulation, coercion, abuse or unsafe leadership.	**MISSIONAL** Formation turns outward in compassion, vocation, witness and the common good.

GOING DEEPER TOGETHER

Use these questions in a small group, leadership team or discipleship partnership. Share honestly, listen without rushing to fix, and finish with one accountable step of obedience.

1

THE CROSS

Where is Jesus asking you to surrender self-rule and take a concrete step of obedience? What makes that surrender difficult, and how can this community support you?

Notes:

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2

ALLEGIANCE

Which loyalty, relationship, ambition or inherited identity is most likely to compete with your allegiance to Jesus? What would it mean to submit it to the King without dishonouring God's good gifts?

Notes:

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NEIGHBOUR-LOVE

Who is the wounded or overlooked neighbour you are tempted to pass by? What would "coming near" look like this week in your home, workplace, community or public life?

Notes:

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REMAINING TOGETHER

When teaching is difficult, relationships disappoint or the crowd turns away, what helps you remain with Jesus? What truth do you need to receive from, or speak to, this group?

Notes:

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A Simple Rule for Accountable Discipleship

- Tell the truth about where you are.
- Listen for what Jesus is saying through Scripture and community.
- Name one specific act of obedience.
- Invite someone to ask you about it.
- Return, reflect, repent and continue.

Prayer of Commitment

King Jesus, you are Lord and you have the words of eternal life. Where we have wanted the benefits of your kingdom without the obedience of discipleship, forgive us. Reorder our loves, teach us to carry the cross, and make us neighbours who come near. When your word is difficult, teach us to remain. Deliver us from shallow community, the fear of being known, and the pride that corrects others while refusing correction. Form among us communities of grace and truth, holiness and healing, courage and compassion. Give us humility to receive truth, gentleness to speak it, and faith to obey it. Holy Spirit, form Jesus in our homes, friendships, small groups, workplaces, leadership and church. We will follow the King, and we will not walk alone. For your glory, for the good of the world, and for the kingdom. In the strong and saving name of Jesus. Amen.

READ BEFORE THE GROUP: Mark 8:34–38 • Matthew 10:34–40 • Luke 10:25–33 • John 6:66–71 (NRSVA)