

King of Humility (2nd Part Christmas Bible Study)

PART 2: Who is Your King?

FACILITATOR
GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

GOAL

The goal of this lesson is twofold:

1. *To help students understand and follow* the actions of Jesus in their own lives through Bible study, hard questions, activities, and specific life application.
2. *To make it easy for you* to facilitate and teach students. That is why the Facilitator Guide is packed with easy-to-use instructions, timeframes, and questions that promote thinking and draw out real responses.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Be sure to check out the Live It Out section ahead of time to prepare. You'll need:
 - *each person will need their cell phone (if they have one)*

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The Black Letters of Jesus: The wise men recognize Jesus as the King of Kings.

OVERVIEW

Christmas is a huge deal. It's when our king was born. And each year, it's easy to lose sight of that amid the celebrations and presents and snow and family traditions. It's the norm. But what if, once and for all, we blew the top off this endless cycle and radically changed the way we look at Christmas? This lesson is designed to help students see Christmas in a whole new light and understand Christ's significance and power in every single day, not just December 25.

OPENING QUESTIONS

- What is your most treasured possession?
- How do you care for it differently than your other things?

WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT

Remember back when you were little and the anticipation of Christmas morning made it almost impossible to sleep the night before? Or maybe you have a younger sibling, and you've already watched them make their list and start the countdown to December 25. Oddly enough, many people waited in anticipation for the first Christmas, too. In fact, the Israelites built their whole lives around the hope that one day they would wake up and it would be Christmas, the arrival of a great king. Only, baby Jesus in a manger was not really what they were expecting. They were hoping this king would come like a Seal Team Six rescue mission to immediately save them from abusive leaders and overthrow the enemies who were breathing down their necks. They were expecting a king who would save them and show the world how awesome God was—how would a tiny baby born to a lower-class family do that?

A baby in a manger doesn't seem like a force to be reckoned with. Think of all the nativities you've seen under trees—not very intimidating. But when we really learn who that baby is and how much the world would turn upside down because of him, we can see why King Herod (the powerful ruler of Israel) was freaked out. He was so terrified that Jesus would overthrow him as king that he ordered a mass murder of all the male babies in that region. He did everything in his power to make sure that Jesus would never be king.

You see, Herod understood something that we often forget. Jesus is King. He's not *a* king, a ruler of some country or a single group of people. He is *the* King, the ruler of the entire earth, the one who everyone will eventually answer to, God himself. Jesus—a man who taught peace instead of violence, forgiveness instead of vengeance, and love instead of hate. Jesus—who ultimately died a criminal's death under Roman hands instead of bringing an army or political force against them. Jesus—Son of God, King of the Jews, and King of the universe. Talk about defying expectations!



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Read: Matthew 2:1–18

Facilitator's Note: The Israelites had been expecting a king for a really long time. God had promised redemption to his chosen people way back in the time of Abraham. After over 400 years of slavery in Egypt (that's 200 years longer than the US has even been a country), God brought Moses to lead them out, and this "exodus" moment formed the backbone for the rest of Jewish history. Everything tied back to it, and a "new exodus" was their driving hope for the next 1,000 years. At this point, the Jews were in rough shape; for over 1,000 years, they suffered under bad leaders and foreign enemies, corruption and greed, illness and death. What they really wanted was for someone to lead them through it all and for God's promises to be fulfilled at last.

Discuss

- Why do you think Herod responded this way to the news of Jesus' birth? What was so dangerous for him about the birth of this new king?
- What does it mean to be a king? What are a king's responsibilities?
- What would/does it look like to make Jesus the King of your life?

A SECOND LOOK

Did you know that about one third of people with smart phones check their phones before they even get out of bed in the morning? It's literally the first thing they think about and do when they wake up. Teenagers are estimated to receive about 114 texts per day—not to mention that 64 percent of people have texted while driving and 40 percent of people with smartphones have even used them in the bathroom (gross).

It's probably safe to say that cell phones are ruling a lot of people's lives. They are dictating their thoughts, actions, and time. A lot of people can't imagine living a single week without a cell phone.

Even though we don't really have "kings" in the United States, we do have kings in our lives—things that are ruling us. Maybe it's the image we're trying to portray to the world, something we desperately want or want to be good at, or even someone we are trying to impress. The question is, who is your king? If you're unsure, ask yourself where you spend most of your time and money. What do you daydream about? What could you absolutely not live without? This is where the kings in our lives are often found.



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Discuss

- Who or what are some “kings” that you follow?
- How does it get to a point where a single thing is governing everything we do?
- How are the kingdoms of this world different from Jesus’ kingdom?

LIVE IT OUT: Text Review

What you will need: Each person will need their cell phone (if they have one).

Instructions: Have students pull out their cell phones. Tell students that they have three minutes to go through the text message conversations they’ve sent and received over the past week and to write down the gist of each one (just one or two words describing what it was about). Their goal is to go through as many as possible and make as long a list as they can. (If students don’t have a cell phone, they can think about all of their conversations with their friends at school—the lunch table, after school activities, hallway conversations—for the past week and write down one or two words for each conversation they can remember.)

Start the timer and have students stop after three minutes to look back over what they’ve written down.

Discuss

- If a stranger were to look at the topics of your conversations over the past week, what would they conclude you put the most value in? Who would they think is your king?
- How could you tell if someone treats Jesus as their king?
- How would the conversations be different for someone who treats Jesus as their king?

APPLY IT

Think about one change you can make this week to better acknowledge that Jesus is King in your life.

Be specific:

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

THINK ABOUT IT

“Where Christ does not rule, sin does.” – J.I. Packer, *God’s Words* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998).



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Illustration:* Another way to identify some of the “kings” in our lives is to take inventory of how we spend our time and how we spend our money. Consider making a group list of the last 10 things people spent money on or how the last 24 hours were spent. Ask students what an outsider might say our values or “kings” are? Note: There are many activities we take part in and things spend money on that aren’t inherently spiritual or seemingly holy but are just normal, everyday things (like driving or bus time). Yet running through these lists can uncover some uncomfortable truths about the students’ values and even challenge their thinking on how to change perspective (or maybe their attitude and motives) on the things that do take a lot of their time.

MEMORY VERSE

“Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.’”
John 18:36 (ESV)

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ recognize Jesus is King of their lives.

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