



Summary:

In order for us to have a healthy, growing relationship with Jesus, we must have an understanding of who Jesus is and who we are in our relationship with Him. Jesus is a King, not one of us.

Supplies:

- Bible
- “Where Are You?” handouts
- “This Is Me” handouts
- Pens

Getting Started:

Since there can only be one King of the world, we must identify who that King is. Before we start studying who Jesus is, let’s take a moment to talk about where we are currently in our relationship with Christ.

[Pass out the “Where Are You?” handouts (in “Handout” folder).

Have each student look at the “Where Are You?” handouts. Give them plenty of time to think about which person on the drawing best describes how they feel about their relationship with Christ right now. Don’t be overly demanding, but make sure everyone answers this question. Don’t judge their answer, and make sure they are respected when they answer.

Close this time with prayer, asking God to guide their hearts throughout this weekend.

Pass out the “This is Me” sheets, and have the students write at least eight words on the paper that describe them. These words can be “sister,” “brother,” “volleyball player,” etc. Let them be creative with their words. Have EVERY student say out loud the words they have written down. Make sure to do one yourself as the leader.]

Examine:

Our task is huge, yet very simple. Jesus is the King. A minute ago, you took a sheet of paper and wrote down words that describe you. These words are

what make *you* uniquely *you*. Yes, you may have some things in common with other people in the room, but other words may only apply to you. This is what makes you important—there is only one you.

Did any of you write down the word “king” to describe yourself? The reason you didn’t is because you are not a king, much less *the* King. There can only be one true King. Just like the words that you used uniquely describe you, the word “King” is used to describe Jesus, and Jesus alone.

Questions:

- Would you want to be King of the world? Take your time before you answer. Everyone in the world would rely and call on you.
- What does it mean for Jesus to be King?
- Why is it hard to allow Jesus to be the King of our lives?
- Why is it easy to ignore Jesus as the King?

Read John 18:28–40 (NIV)

²⁸ Then the Jewish leaders took Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness they did not enter the palace, because they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate came out to them and asked, “What charges are you bringing against this man?”

³⁰ “If he were not a criminal,” they replied, “we would not have handed him over to you.”

³¹ Pilate said, “Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.” “But we have no right to execute anyone,” they objected. ³² This took place to fulfill what Jesus had said about the kind of death he was going to die.

³³ Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

³⁴ “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”

³⁵ “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”

³⁶ Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

³⁷ “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

³⁸ “What is truth?” retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him. ³⁹ But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release ‘the king of the Jews’?”

⁴⁰ They shouted back, “No, not him! Give us Barabbas!” Now Barabbas had taken part in an uprising.

Jesus had been arrested and is making his way to the cross for His sacrificial death, but He first must be questioned before the final decision for His life is decided. In this passage, Jesus is standing in front of Pilate.

Pilate was the governor of Judea, which means that he was the emperor-appointed leader of a certain area. Emperors would appoint certain men to lead in the divided regions of their kingdoms, since they could not be there all the time. Pilate was a man of power, and his power and title came with the authority to sentence someone to death. So the Jews brought Jesus to him to continue their plan to have Him killed.

But to sentence someone to death, you must have probable cause; you must have a reason for giving permission for it to happen. When you have to make an important decision, you need to make sure you have all the facts. So Pilate asks some questions, like:

“What charges are you bringing against this man?”

To Jesus: “Are you the King of the Jews?”

To Jesus: “What is it you have done?”

Read verses 36 & 37 again.

36 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

37 “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

In verse 36, Jesus says, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

Pilate then responds by declaring that Jesus is a king based on His answers. Then, Jesus responds with a identity-defining phrase: “You are right in saying I am a king.”

Questions:

- Why are questions important in our world? What would life be like if you couldn't ask any questions?
- What do you think the Jews were thinking when Jesus was standing in front of Pilate talking? What about when He went inside with Pilate to talk further?
- What kind of kingdom was Jesus talking about in verse 36? How can you be a part of that kingdom, and where is it?

Jesus goes on to say He has brought truth into the world; in fact, it's the reason He was born. When we celebrate Christmas, we are not only declaring that Christ, our Savior has been born—we are declaring that our King has come.

After Pilate completes his time of questioning, he makes a bold statement concerning Jesus. He says, “I find no basis for a charge against this man.” With that, Pilate reminds the people who are listening that it is customary to release one prisoner every year at the time of the Passover celebration. He gives them the option of releasing Jesus or Barabbas, a notorious prisoner who had been arrested for robbery, treachery, and murder. The people choose to release Barabbas over Jesus.