

THE CONQUERING KING



+ SESSION OUTLINE

1. Jesus is the eternal King, ruling the cosmos (Heb. 1:5-9).
2. Jesus is the resurrected King, directing the church (Col. 1:18-20).
3. Jesus is the returning King, rewarding the faithful (Rev. 22:12-13).

Background Passages: Colossians 1; Hebrews 1; Revelation 22

+ WHAT WILL MY GROUP LEARN?

Jesus fulfills the office of king, ruling over all of creation and guiding and directing His people, the church.

+ HOW WILL MY GROUP SEE CHRIST?

In the Old Testament, when God's people demanded a king like the nations around them, God warned them but gave into their demands. All of the kings of Israel failed to lead the people as they needed. Jesus is the King of kings, the One who rules perfectly over His people. One day King Jesus is returning for His church and to establish His perfect, eternal kingdom.

+ HOW SHOULD MY GROUP RESPOND?

Because Jesus is our King, we seek to submit to His perfect leadership in all areas of our lives, knowing all He does is for God's glory and our good.

GROUP TIME

Group content found in the Daily Discipleship Guide is included in the shaded areas throughout the session.



SCRIPTURE HANDOUT

Scan this QR code for a reproducible handout of this session's Scripture passages.

INTRODUCTION

ASK: As participants arrive, ask: **How do you feel when someone you don't like tells you what to do, and is it different when it's someone you do like?** (unsolicited advice and authoritarian commands are not typically taken well; it is hard to obey bad leaders; a trustworthy, beloved boss, however, is easy to follow; a caring friend's advice is easier to follow; sometimes it's difficult to do what people tell us even if we like the person)

SUMMARIZE: Help your group understand the **setting** for this session.

- We have been looking the last few weeks at Jesus as King, accused, crucified, and risen. And to sum up, He is the conquering King. He oversees the universe, guides the church, and rewards the faithful when He returns. He is sovereign over all and sovereign over us. As King, He is victorious over all. Therefore, Christians should respond to His mighty sovereignty and majestic grace through faith-filled obedience.

TRANSITION: The more clearly we see Jesus, the more easily we can trust in His work and His ways. He is better than anything we can imagine. He is worthy of our allegiance, love, and obedience. Not only is He powerful and good, righteous and holy, He is the supreme Sovereign. He is the glorious King of kings whom we can follow with complete confidence, knowing He is working all things for our good and His glory.



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POINT 1

JESUS IS THE ETERNAL KING, RULING THE COSMOS (HEB. 1:5-9).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Hebrews 1:5-9** from his or her own Bible.

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? **6** And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” **7** Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.” **8** But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. **9** You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

EXPLAIN: Using the content below, explain from **verses 5-6** (DDG p. 126):

Jesus is the Son of God, the firstborn of all, who was given a supreme status that all would worship Him, including the angels.

- The author of Hebrews began his letter with a four-verse thesis, a stunning look at the character of Christ. The bottom line of Hebrews is this: Jesus is supreme. He is better. He is worth it. Keep following Him in faith.
- Verse 5 kickstarts a section that uses citations as well as allusions from the Old Testament to point to Christ. In these two short verses, there are four different Old Testament quotes of God speaking. The writer of Hebrews brought God’s authority in the Old Testament into the present.
- In verse 5, it seems odd for God to say, “Today I have begotten you,” but this is a quote from Psalm 2:7. This doesn’t mean that God the Son was a created being, for just a few verses earlier, the author of Hebrews stated that the Son is the exact expression of the nature of the Father, which would include being immortal and infinite, with no beginning or end (Heb. 1:1-3).
- Psalm 2:7 is also quoted later in Hebrews 5:5, where the author teaches about Jesus being exalted to become a high priest through the appointing of the Father. In a similar use, Luke quotes Psalm 2:7 in Acts 13:33 to explain a change of status for Jesus regarding His resurrection. Within all three usages, the statement that God has become the Father of Jesus is about a shift in position. This is ascension talk.¹ Through the resurrection, Jesus was given a new place of prominence. Paul put it this way: “He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name” (Phil. 2:8-9).
- The Hebrews writer shows how and when God officially presented His Son and bestowed on Jesus a kingly title and royal honor. Verse 6 connects the dots: Jesus is the begotten Son of God, the firstborn of all humankind. When this supreme status was bestowed on Him, the Father declared that all the angels should worship Jesus.

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

The book of Hebrews is a thoroughly Jewish book, likely written by a Hebrew to second-generation Christians with a Hebrew background. Though we don’t know who penned this letter, the heart of the work is pastoral. It often reads like a sermon, filled with many theological teachings about Jesus. This theology, though, is meant to shape how we put our faith into action.

ASK: Given Jesus's supreme status, angels worship Him, and so should we. Ask (DDG p. 126):

What are some ways we should worship Jesus? (with praise and song; with our lives; with our resources, finances, skills, time; with our service)

HIGHLIGHT: Using the content below, explain from **verses 7-9** (DDG p. 126):

Key Doctrine #54: Christ as King: God has always been King over His creation, whether in heaven or on earth. Yet some of His creatures in both realms have rebelled against Him, leaving destruction in their wake. To restore His broken world, God promised a King who would deliver His people and restore all of creation. The promise of a coming King finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ and looks forward to its perfection when Jesus returns for His bride, the church.

- Next the author provides a contrast of roles between Jesus and the angels. In verse 6, the Father declared Jesus's royal status and commanded the angels to worship Him. Through the quote in verse 7 (taken from Psalm 104, highlighting God's creative acts), the place of the angels is made clear: they are created beings. The Son, however, is King—the angels are His servants.²
- Next, quoting from Psalm 45—a song of praise to the King of kings—the author emphasized Jesus's royal dominion. Throne and scepter each denote the ruling power of a king. The throne of Jesus is an eternal one, and His ruling scepter is that of perfect justice. The angels are to bow to the throne of "God" the Son and follow His rule because Jesus is divine.
- Jesus's just rule is consistent with His righteous character as God. Because of the everlasting and righteous rule of Jesus, God anointed Him. God's anointing of Jesus is one of exceeding joy.

DISCUSS: Call attention to **PACK ITEM 11: CHRIST AS KING (POSTER)** and pass out copies of **PACK ITEM 12: CHRIST AS KING (HANDOUT)** for the group to review. Then ask your group (DDG p. 126):

What characteristics make Jesus the greatest King? (He is the God-man; He taught with authority; He sacrificed Himself for His people; He is holy, good, and blameless; He is righteous, just, and merciful; He is loving, faithful, and eternal)

TRANSITION: Jesus is better than any being that exists, whether human or angelic. He not only rules the cosmos, but with truth and all wisdom, He leads the church, God's people.



ANOINTING

Anointing in the Old Testament was used as a sign of divine favor and subsequent consecration, such as for a priest (like the anointing of Aaron) or a king (like the anointing of David), or a prophet (like the anointing of Elisha). Oil was usually used in anointing.

POINT 2

JESUS IS THE RESURRECTED KING, DIRECTING THE CHURCH (COL. 1:18-20).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Colossians 1:18-20** from his or her Bible.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

ILLUSTRATE: On a board or large sheet of paper, draw a body and label it “The Church.” Then summarize the following as you draw a head for the body and label it “Jesus Christ”:

- Christians are both individual and corporate. We each have unique and specific qualities and gifts by our creation and from the Holy Spirit, but these are to be used along with the rest of the members of the body. One believer cannot do or be everything the church is to be or do. Together, we make up one unified body to love, support, and encourage one another. But just as a body cannot exist without a head, neither can the body of the church live and thrive without its head—Jesus.

EXPLAIN: Say the statement below (DDG p. 126), and then explain the theology of the phrases in **verse 18**.

Jesus is the head of the church and first place in everything.

- Not only was the Son—the Word—in the beginning (John 1:1), He is the new “beginning.” Through His death and resurrection, Jesus inaugurated a new age of redemption. All of history revolves around that moment. Thus, Jesus is the commencement of this new era as well as the source of salvation.
- Jesus is “the firstborn from the dead.” Throughout antiquity, the firstborn received unique obligations, rights, and authority within the family. In the case of Christ, this is a title given to the God-man who was raised from the dead to a new life. Taken in tandem with the earlier point, Jesus is the firstborn of the new age that He installed through His resurrection.
- All of this culminates in the last phrase: Jesus is “preeminent” in everything. He is preeminent over all. There is none greater than Jesus (Ps. 89:27).

ASK: (DDG p. 126)

If Jesus is the head of the church and first place in everything, how should we submit our lives to Him? (asking Jesus for guidance and instruction; doing what He tells us; filtering all things by His Word and character)

LOCAL VERSUS UNIVERSAL CHURCH

There are two senses of “church”: local and universal. The local body of Christ is the specific gathering of a defined group of Christians who live in the same geographic vicinity during the same time in history. The universal church is that of the entire corpus of Christ followers throughout all the world and all of time.

VOICES from THE CHURCH

“The living Christ is the head of a living organism, and identifying Christ as the church’s head denotes that he has sovereign lordship and supreme authority over her.”³

—Dustin Bengé

REFLECT: Read the following summary on **verses 19-20** (DDG p. 126), and invite the group to share their thoughts and reflections to understand this idea. Use the content below to help guide the discussion as needed.

Jesus's blood shed for us brought peace and reconciled our relationship to the Father.

- Throughout the Old Testament, there is a theological thread about God's presence. In the garden of Eden, God dwelt with Adam and Eve. They experienced the fullness of God. However, their rebellion against God ended that access. From then on, the presence of God came and went, a pillar of fire, a burning bush. He came down on Mount Sinai and then dwelt in the tabernacle and subsequent temple. But in each, He was veiled and accessible only to a chosen one, the high priest.
- Then came Jesus, in whom the fullness of God dwells. Paul asserted this with a bit more detail later in his letter to the Colossian church: "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9). The word "dwell" is in the present tense, suggesting an ongoing residence of God.
- Not only was the Godhead pleased to dwell bodily in the person of Jesus, there was also a joy to accomplish the work of reconciliation through the Son. This reconciling work will be complete. Sin has stained everyone and everything, including all of creation (Rom. 8:22). The atoning work of God includes a restoration of God's creation.
- This work of reconciliation was accomplished through the blood Jesus shed as He was crucified. The purpose of these pains was to make peace. Through the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the fellowship between God and man that was marred in the garden has been restored. Our sin and offenses against the holy God have been atoned for in the sacrificial death of Jesus, the Son of God, on our behalf. By faith in Jesus, we are now reconciled to God: "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).

DISCUSS: Jesus is the head of the church and brings us peace. Ask (DDG p. 126):

Where in your life are you experiencing peace because of Jesus?
(wait for a volunteer to respond first; only share your response as a conclusion to the discussion)

TRANSITION: Though Jesus has already inaugurated the age of the new covenant, the work of bringing many sons to glory is ongoing. As the head of the church, Jesus leads the body of Christ in fulfilling the Great Commission. Until the day Christ appears again in His second coming, we must be good stewards of the glorious grace we've been given.

POINT 3

JESUS IS THE RETURNING KING, REWARDING THE FAITHFUL (REV. 22:12-13).

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Revelation 22:12-13** from his or her Bible.

12 “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. **13** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

GUIDE: Lead your group in seeing Jesus as the eternal King, the resurrected King, and the returning King. Using the content below, explain from **verse 12** (DDG p. 127):

Jesus is coming back soon, and when we face Him on His judgment seat, we will be evaluated according to the kingdom work we accomplished.

- Christ’s sacrifice paid the punishment for our sin, so when Jesus comes back, we will be allowed to stand before the great white throne, where we will wear the righteousness of Christ and be rewarded eternal life. For those who have not trusted in Jesus for the payment of their sins and the imputation of His perfection, God will judge their sins and pour out His wrath on them (John 3:36).
- Though God will save believers from the white throne judgment, there also will be another judgment for all of Christ’s followers to receive rewards due to them. In 2 Corinthians, Paul exhorted us to “make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil” (2 Cor. 5:9-10). This is the event Revelation 22:12 refers to, and it is different from that of the great white throne judgment discussed in Revelation 20.
- The Greek word Paul used for judgment in 2 Corinthians is *bēma*. In the famous Greek Olympic games, officials of the games would watch and evaluate the competitions from a *bēma*, a judgment seat. Paul and his contemporary audience would have understood this depiction to be an assessment of accolades, not condemnation. The judges in the *bēma* were the bestowers of rewards. Likewise, Jesus will grade our performance as stewards of God’s grace and reward us accordingly.⁴
- After Paul mentioned this judgment, he provided an application point: “Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others” (2 Cor. 5:11). We will be rewarded for the endeavors we carry out that are of eternal value. In Paul’s earlier letter to the Corinthian church, he taught that we are God’s coworkers, and we are to be busy with eternal employment because our efforts will be evaluated. “Each one’s work . . . will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward” (1 Cor. 3:13-14).

- In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus referred to this as storing up treasures in heaven. He also taught that we must be ready for His return. The grace God grants us in Christ is meant to be passed along to others through evangelism and discipleship. When we face Jesus on His judgment seat (*bēma*), He will evaluate us according to the kingdom tasks we completed. Then He will give out rewards for deeds that held eternal value, and we in turn will use them as part of our worship of the great God who saves (Rev. 4).

ASK: (DDG pp. 125,127)

From Day 5 in the DDG: **How do we live our lives knowing Jesus is returning soon and will reward those according to their work?** (with urgency in telling others the good news of Jesus; with serving others for kingdom purposes; with readiness to see Jesus)

EXPLAIN: Jesus is everything. Using the content below and **verse 13**, explain (DDG p. 127):

Jesus is the origin and sustainer of all things. He is supreme, finishing all that He started, including the good work in us.

- Through a threefold completion, Jesus declares Himself to be the be-all and end-all. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, representing the beginning and the end. We can look forward to a great reward because Jesus is the origin and sustainer of everything. From the first to the last, He is supreme. He is not only the beginning and end, being infinite, He begins all things and ends all things. He is in full control of everything, including us, His people. Therefore, like Paul, we can declare our confidence in Jesus: "I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

DISCUSS: To recap and review, ask your group (DDG p. 127):

How is Jesus the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end? (He is eternal; He has been there from the beginning and will be there at the end; He sustains all things; He holds all things together; He is our everything, our God, our Savior, our salvation, our purpose and meaning, our source of life and eternal life)

TRANSITION: This world is not our home. God has bestowed many blessings on us, yet these are not meant for us to stockpile but to share. This life is a layover. As we wait for our final flight, we get to steward the godly gifts of grace we possess to bring as many souls as possible with us to be with Jesus for eternity.



MY RESPONSE

PACK ITEM 14: LOVE CHRIST: Pass out copies of this bookmark to remind your group of the importance of Jesus's roles as Prophet, Priest, and King.

SAY: All the kings of Israel failed to lead the people as they needed. But Jesus is the King of kings, the One who rules perfectly over His people. One day King Jesus is returning for His church to establish His perfect, eternal kingdom. Because Jesus is our King, we seek to submit to His perfect leadership in all areas of our lives, knowing all He does is for God's glory and our good.

HEAD:

In a world filled with self-centered messages, it is easy to begin seeing ourselves as the ultimate ruler of our lives. Dependency is weakness. Submission is an abomination. But Jesus is King, whether we recognize it or not. When we live life remembering who is in charge and in control, it brings a peace no amount of self-love or self-sufficiency can provide.

How is Jesus King in various areas of your life?

HEART:

The affections of our heart can be easily swayed. There is much that vies for our attention, and with our devotion goes our dedication. We may state that Jesus is Lord and wherever He leads we'll go. But often we are driven by our feelings—fear, pleasure, anxiety—instead of our allegiance. So we forget the majesty of our Master and the urgent seriousness of our assignment. We drift from our mission to take the gospel message to the lost world we live in.

How can we stir up our affections for the urgency of spreading the good news?

HANDS:

God has supplied us with every spiritual blessing so that we can share those gifts of grace with others. As a part of the body of Christ, we get to bless our brothers and sisters in Christ with the gifts bestowed on us. As the bride of Christ, we are to partner with Jesus to be satellites of the glory of God. The world is filled with darkness, but we can bring the light of Jesus to the souls who still need saving, and as we do, we store up treasures in heaven—divine accolades that will be rewarded to each according to our deeds.

How can you bring light to a world filled with darkness?

PRAY: Jesus, You are King of kings, head of the church, the Alpha and Omega. We praise You and thank You that You rule the world and our lives. Amen.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"Heaven is more than a destination; it is a motivation. Knowing that we shall dwell in the heavenly city ought to make a difference in our lives here and now."⁵

—Warren Wiersbe
(1929–2019)

POINT 1: JESUS IS THE ETERNAL KING, RULING THE COSMOS (HEB. 1:5-9).

+ ILLUSTRATION

Dogs naturally gravitate toward positions in their pack. Even if there is only one dog in the family, they innately try to find their place in the home's hierarchy. Ideally, the human owner is in charge. He or she establishes the leadership of the lot. When more than one dog lives in the home, they can often become entangled in a power struggle. Aggressive sibling rivalry ensues if both dogs assert dominance. Left unchecked, this type of bickering will linger, causing issues for everyone. A good master understands that keeping the pecking order straight leads to peace.

As Christians, we all have the same pack leader: Jesus. He is the chief commander to whom we give our allegiance. As we keep Jesus in His right place and priority in our lives, we experience the blessed life He promises. Much of the church's in-fighting we see today is due to misplaced allegiance. Ultimately, it's not a pastor, deacon, or congregational body that is in charge. Jesus is the head of the body. He is our King. When Jesus is kept in His rightful place in our hearts, lives, and churches, we can live out our days in order, with purpose, and in peace.

POINT 2: JESUS IS THE RESURRECTED KING, DIRECTING THE CHURCH (COL. 1:18-20).

+ ILLUSTRATION

The central nervous system (CNS) affects every other system of the body. Without the CNS, there is no movement, no processes, no life. Therefore, a body cannot live without a head, in which the hub of the CNS—the brain—abides. Lose a finger? No problem. An arm, leg, appendix, or kidney? You can still survive. But no one can survive a decapitation. Thus, the picture of Christ being the head of the church is a powerful one. Without the brain, the individual parts of the body and the systems within are unable to function. A body without a head is dead. The body of Christ can only exist with Jesus as her head.

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4. Jeremiah K. Garrett, "Judgment Seat of Christ," ed. John D. Barry, *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).
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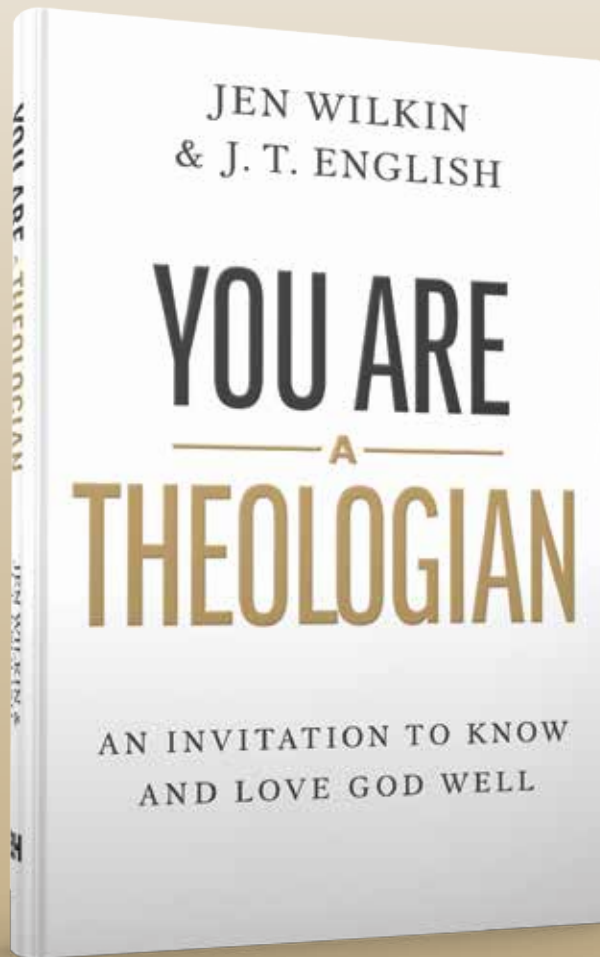
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FROM DEATH TO RESURRECTION

From before the beginning of the world, God planned to send the Son to take away the sins of the world, demonstrating His sovereign holiness, love, and grace. Jesus came to die in the place of sinners. But He also came to rise again for their salvation. In many ways, Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection is the focal point of the entire Old Testament. The Lord made covenants, a law, and a kingdom so that the Son would have a context in which to serve and be recognized. All those who come to Jesus in faith become His disciples, citizens of the kingdom of God that Jesus will teach, cleanse, and rule as the promised Prophet, Priest, and King.

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