

ELEVATE: The Return of the King

Session #2: The Rightful King

Session Objective: This session explores the need for leadership. Human beings need to be led, but human leadership is inherently flawed. The only leader who is could be the “Anointed one of God” is Jesus – the perfect leader. This session will explore the role of leadership, and the world’s need for a new kind of leader.

Minimum Prep:

- Read through the entire session outline.
- While it is not essential, you will need to change some of the questions if you do not choose or are not able to use the following video clip.
 - Master and Commander. Clip: Chapter 23; 1:17:00 – 1:18:48. In this scene, Captain Jack Aubrey and his physician are having an argument about leadership. At one point, Captain Aubrey exclaims, “men must be governed” later he concludes: “you’ve come to the wrong shop for anarchy.” You could end the clip at the end of the exchange, or if you carry it on for a few more seconds the whipping adds energy to this clip.

Extended Prep: If you have some extended prep time, try the following option as a Large group at the beginning of your meeting:

- Explain to your students that you need to have two leaders for the next activity. Have them nominate a number of people (3-4) to be team leaders.
- Pull the 3-4 leaders aside and explain the next step to them. Tell them that they need to give a 2-3 minute leadership speech. Why should the other students vote for them? What will they do as leader that the others won’t do? This will likely have some very funny moments in it. Try to keep the spirit fun, and don’t allow the atmosphere to grow acidic. While part of the fun might be “negative campaigning”, ensure that it is in a spirit of fun. Tell the 3-4 candidates that they need to campaign fairly.
- Meanwhile have another leader explain to the students that there will now be campaign speeches, and it is their job to listen closely and choose the best leader for themselves.
- Take a vote. After the vote, have the winning candidate give a speech explaining why they believe they were chosen as the winner, and then ask the students to also share their reasons for voting for the person.

Session Outline

Start the Session with the extended prep leadership nomination, speeches and vote.

Leader Preamble:

Last week we explored some of the rumours of the coming of the Messiah. Jesus came into a world that already had established authority and power. There were already plenty of leaders. Caesar in Rome was in charge. Herod was a greedy, evil man who acted as King of the Jewish province, under authority from Rome. Even the Jewish people had leaders, the Pharisees and Sadducees, who formed a group called The Sanhedrin – a religious ruling council that made laws and led the people of Israel from a spiritual point of view.

All of these leaders were in place, and yet a prior promise had been made – that a King would come, out of the people of Israel who would bring freedom, and peace, and rule the world. This King was to come from the line of David, who had been King of Israel two thousand years before.

The idea of King is actually a very worldly idea. At the beginning of the history of Israel, the Jewish people did not have a king. They had spiritual leaders who guided them under direction of God. But the nations surrounding Israel had a King, and so the people of God asked for a human leader – a king like the nations surrounding them. But leadership comes at a price.

Show video clip at this point:

Small Group Questions:

- 1. Do you agree with Captain Aubrey's statement: "men must be governed"? Why or why not? Do you think human nature disqualifies us from life without leadership?**
- 2. If you believe (as most do) that leadership is an essential component of life on earth (and this concept is endorsed in scripture), why do we have such a hard time with our experiences with leaders?**

Leader's Note: *The answers to this question should include both the failings of leaders as well as followers. Human leadership, even at its best is flawed, and human followership leaves much to be desired as well.*

- 3. When you get involved in a team – maybe in sports or recreation, maybe as part of your job, in school politics, even as a part of a family – what do you look for in a leader?**

Read Romans 13:1-2

4. As Christians we understand that all humanity is flawed, and this includes our leaders. Is it really necessary for us to be in submission, even to flawed leaders?

Leader's Note: *Yes. Scripture makes it very clear that God has instituted the authority of leadership, and that one sign of spirituality is our submission to leaders, even failed leaders.*

Read 1st Samuel 8:4 - 22

5. In 1st Samuel 8:4-5 the nation of Israel asked for a king. Why do you think it was so important for the people of Israel to have a king?

5. Following Israel's request for a king, God grants them their wish. The next three books of the Bible tells the story that every king that Israel had failed to varying degrees to rule with justice and integrity. In II Samuel 7:11b-16 God makes David a promise that his family will be the royal family, and that his throne would be established forever. This is an early promise that David would be the ancestor to the Messiah – Jesus. How is Jesus a different kind of leader from every other leader the world has ever experienced?

Leader Note: *Bring the students to Mark 10:45. Here we discover that the mission of Jesus is different than that of human leadership. Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve...and in fact to give his life as a ransom. He came to provide payment that no other human could make for our sinfulness and failings.*

6. Read Mark 10:45 together. Why is it that you can trust Jesus to be a leader you can follow?

Leader's note: *He has our best interests in mind. He knows the beginning and the end...He is God. He is a servant. He is loving and kind, and powerful.*

7. We live in a “not yet” world. We await the return of the king. When Jesus returns, following our leader will be an easy thing! In the meantime:
a. How do we follow Jesus from a distance?
b. How do we follow our human leaders even though they are not perfect?

Conclude this session by saying something like this:

“God had established David as the origin of the line of Kings of Israel. David was a man who loved God deeply, but he was still a man, and the power of being king corrupted him. We know that as king he took another man's wife and killed the man. We know that he was a poor father figure, and that he didn't always manage his kingdom well.

The story of David is a strong illustration that we need more than even the best of men. Human leaders will always let us down. This doesn't mean we are to ignore them or not respect them, but it does mean that only in the fulfillment of God's promise that out of the city of David (Bethlehem) and out of David's line would come a person who would be the Messiah – the Anointed One of God - Israel's salvation!

The entire story of the Old Testament, after David, is the story of a people waiting for the Messiah. The kings of Israel didn't follow after God. But God was weaving a story through them – the story of our need as humans for more than the best of human leaders. We need GOD! And Jesus was God in the flesh. Christmas is the celebration of the arrival on earth of God's Son Jesus – God in the flesh.

Leader Note: Contact Rob McAlpine at compass@baptist.ca or author Darren DeGraaf – Darren@baptist.ca with any thoughts, questions or suggestions.

Comments and Feedback:

Leader Note: This is your place each week to record significant sharing or growth in the lives of your students for subsequent follow up. You can also use this space to provide feedback on the material. All suggestions are welcome.

Please see the following handout. You have permission to reproduce these handouts for your group.