

Small Group Discussion Guide: Behold Your King

Sermon Summary

The Christmas story presents us with two very different responses to Jesus. King Herod, threatened by the news of a newborn king, tried to eliminate Jesus to preserve his own power and control. The wise men, who traveled 800 miles from the East, fell down in worship—demonstrating complete dependence and submission to Jesus. The word "worship" (proskyneō) means expressing complete dependence on or submission to a high authority figure. Every person faces the same choice today: will you behold your King, or will you be your king? When you try to be your own king, you hold onto control—which is exhausting. When you behold Jesus as King, you simply hold onto Him.

Icebreaker Question

If you could have total control over one aspect of your life (weather, traffic, your schedule, other people's opinions, etc.), what would you choose and why?

Discussion Questions

1. King Herod's Response: Threatened by Jesus

Read [Matthew 2:1-8](#). King Herod was "troubled" when he heard about the birth of a new king. He felt threatened and tried to maintain control through deception and eventually violence. The sermon said, "King Herod wanted to BE the king... and so his response was to try and ELIMINATE Jesus." In what ways do we sometimes try to "eliminate" Jesus from certain areas of our lives because allowing Him to be King feels threatening? What parts of your life do you find hardest to surrender control over?

2. The Wise Men's Response: Compelled to Worship

Read [Matthew 2:9-11](#). The wise men traveled 800 miles to worship Jesus. They came because they knew "apart from the grace of THIS God, they wouldn't exist." The sermon defined worship as expressing "complete dependence on or submission to a high authority figure." How does this definition of worship challenge or expand your understanding of what it means to worship Jesus? What would it look like for you to live in a posture of "complete dependence and submission" to Jesus this particular week?

3. Two Options: Behold Your King or Be Your King

The message presented a clear choice: "You can BEHOLD your king... or you can BE your king." The difference is what you hold onto—control or Christ. The sermon said, "When you choose to BE your king... you HOLD onto control... trying to be your own king is exhausting

because everything is dependent upon your own judgment, power, strength." Can you share about a time when trying to be your own king left you exhausted? What areas of your life right now are you trying to control instead of surrendering to Jesus as King?

4. God in the Smallest Details

The sermon highlighted that "Bethlehem" means "house of bread" and Jesus said "I am the bread of life." The point was made: "God is in the smallest details... if He can orchestrate history to have the bread of life born in the house of bread... then there isn't ANYTHING too big or too small for Him." [Read Matthew 10:29-31](#). What "small detail" in your life right now do you need to trust God with? How does recognizing God's attention to detail in the Christmas story encourage you to trust Him with the details of your own story?

5. Holding Onto Jesus: A Call to Action

The sermon ended with the story of a woman who had never been to church but Googled "who baptizes people on Saturdays," showed up at Eastside, and was baptized—all because "she recognized Jesus IS the king of kings... and He is the ONLY one worth HOLDING onto." Her courage to publicly declare Jesus as Lord is inspiring. What's one specific way you can demonstrate this week that you're holding onto Jesus as King rather than trying to hold onto control? Is there a step of obedience (like baptism, serving, giving, reconciling a relationship) that you've been avoiding because it would require surrendering control?

Prayer Requests

As we close our time together, let's pray for one another in these areas:

- **For Surrender:** Pray for the courage to surrender control and crown Jesus as King in every area of life—finances, relationships, career, time, and future plans. Ask God to help us move from being our own king to beholding our King.
- **For Freedom from Fear:** Pray for freedom from the fear that keeps us gripping control so tightly. Ask God to replace our anxiety with trust, knowing that He orchestrates even the smallest details and nothing is too big or too small for Him.
- **For a Heart of Worship:** Pray for hearts that worship Jesus in "complete dependence and submission"—not just through songs on Sunday, but through daily choices that demonstrate He is Lord of our lives.
- **For Courage to Obey:** Pray for anyone considering baptism or another step of obedience. Pray also for the courage to invite others to our Christmas services. Ask God to give us the same courage the woman in the story had—to publicly declare that Jesus is King, regardless of what others might think or how uncomfortable it might feel.