



Big Idea: Jesus gave His life so we can have life.

Scripture: Matthew 16:13-17 NIV, Mark 15:6-15 NLT, Romans 6:23 NLT, Isaiah 64:6a NLT, 1 Peter 3:18 NLT, Acts 2:38 NIV, John 8:36 NLT, 2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT, 2 Corinthians 3:17 NLT, Ephesians 2:10 NLT

INTRO

When I ask you the question, “Who is Jesus?” what comes to your mind? A good man, a prophet, a rabbi, a religious teacher, God? There is overwhelming evidence that Jesus existed, and that’s not just from the Bible. Most everyone agrees that He lived about 2000 years ago, but not everyone agrees on what He did and who He was.

While Jesus walked the Earth, He had a conversation with His disciples about what other people were saying about Him and what they believed about Him. You can see that interaction in Matthew 16.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. Matthew 16:13-17 NIV

TENSION

We also believe that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of the living God. We believe that Jesus is fully God, but He also came and lived on Earth fully as a man. For the next three weeks, we are going to talk about Jesus. We’re going to look through the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to learn what He did, how He lived, and what He taught.

TRUTH

When you read through the Gospels, you'll read account after account of miracles and healings. Jesus made the impossible happen; He turned water into wine, He took a small basket of fish and bread and fed thousands of people with it, and so much more. He also healed people who were sick, gave vision to those who were blind, and more.

I think the greatest thing He did was make a way for us to have a real relationship with God. You see, back in the beginning, we were separated from God. Adam and Eve did what God told them not to and sin entered the world. Because God is holy and perfect He can't be around sin. In fact, that is what separates us from God. Jesus came to Earth, because God loves us and doesn't want us separated from Him. When He came to Earth, Jesus lived a perfect life, so He could be the perfect sacrifice, making it possible for us to be close to God once again.

Tonight, I want to tell you about Jesus and a man named Barrabas.

We don't know a lot about him, but we do know the Romans considered him to be something like a terrorist. He had been arrested and was sentenced to death because of his crimes. We also know that Jesus was arrested while Barrabas was awaiting execution.

Now, Jesus hadn't done anything wrong. The Jewish leaders were envious of Him. They had seen the miracles and the healings but were too stuck in who they thought the Savior and Messiah would be. Instead of listening to Jesus' teachings they were too busy trying to get Him in trouble. They set Jesus up and had Him arrested.

Jesus went before Pilate, a Roman governor, where He was questioned because of His arrest. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, but he didn't want to offend the local political leaders. Because it was during the time of Passover, there was a custom that one prisoner could be set free. This is where Barrabas entered the story.

Pilate gave the Jewish crowds a choice between Barrabas and Jesus on who they wanted to free. He gave them a choice between a violent revolutionary and someone who had never participated in an uprising

against an authority or government.

He asked them to pick from someone who had murdered people and someone who had raised people from the dead. He figured this would be the easiest way to let Jesus go and not upset anyone. Barrabas was a zealot. He would have killed Romans in effort to free Jewish people. In fact, he did kill people.

Here's what happened.

⁶ Now it was the governor's custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner—anyone the people requested. ⁷ One of the prisoners at that time was Barabbas, a revolutionary who had committed murder in an uprising. ⁸ The crowd went to Pilate and asked him to release a prisoner as usual.

⁹ "Would you like me to release to you this 'King of the Jews'?" Pilate asked. ¹⁰ (For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.) ¹¹ But at this point the leading priests stirred up the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus. ¹² Pilate asked them, "Then what should I do with this man you call the king of the Jews?"

¹³ They shouted back, "Crucify him!"

¹⁴ "Why?" Pilate demanded. "What crime has he committed?"

But the mob roared even louder, "Crucify him!"

¹⁵ So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified." Mark 15:6-15 NLT

The crowd chose Barrabas. When the crowd was given a choice to choose between the two it's not surprising that they would choose Barrabas. It is surprising they chose him over Jesus. And Pilate gave in to pacifying the crowd to save his own reputation.



Big Idea: You are invited to not only experience the Kingdom in your own life, but to share it with others.

Scripture: Matthew 3:2 NLT, Matthew 4:17 NLT, Matthew 4:23 NLT, Matthew 10:7 NLT, Matthew 9:35 NLT, Acts 1:11 NLT, John 3:1-3 NLT, 2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT, Ephesians 4:22-24 NLT, Romans 8:14-17 NLT, Romans 8:15-17 MSG, 2 Kings 6:15-16 NLT, John 16:33 NLT, Matthew 4:17 ESV, Matthew 9:35-38 NLT, Matthew 28:18-20 NLT, Acts 1:8 NLT, 1 Corinthians 1:4 NLT

- When you were little and didn't feel good how did your parents or caregivers help you feel better?
- What do you think of when you hear people talk about the Kingdom?
- How would you explain the Kingdom to someone else?
- Have you ever experienced the Kingdom?
- Knowing that the Kingdom exists, why do you think we don't try include it in our lives all the time?
- What is something you can do this week to introduce the Kingdom to people around you?

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