

Who Is Jesus? Leader Guide Session 3: King or Pawn?

I can't imagine a worse scenario than Jesus, God in human flesh, being tag-teamed by power plays until he's crushed to death on a Roman cross. Was he king of the Jews? Or a pawn in the cosmic chess game of history?

Watch

Play the video for session three. As you watch, use the following outline to record any key points that stand out to you.

Notes

The Bible reveals that God, over all ages, has raised up people of power to accomplish his purpose in time and in eternity.

Jesus was surrounded by power. He was first arrested by the Sanhedrin – the chief priest, elders, the teachers of the law – who had their own guards.

Jesus answered the question of Annas and Caiaphas, the “inside power,” in a way that enraged them. So they decided they needed “outside power,” or Rome, to terminate his life.

The outside power- Pilate and Herod- couldn't find any reason to crucify Jesus. However, the inside power – the Jewish rulers- were relentless.

In that moment, every person was asking the same question of Jesus: *Are you a King? Or are you just a pawn in the hands of power?*

History shows us that Jesus was clearly not a pawn in these power struggles. Jesus was that king, and everybody else was a role player in God's purpose.

The story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego reveals that we are never a pawn in this life if we belong to the King. Even in a fiery furnace, we are in the hands of the King of kings.

If we don't like the inside or outside power in our lives, or our situation at the present, we need to just focus on our hearts and allow God to be in charge of our stories.

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Discussion Questions:

Take a few minutes within your group to discuss what you just watched and explore these concepts in Scripture.

1. Have you ever been in a situation similar to Pilate's when you felt caught in the middle of other people's agendas? How did you handle it? How will you handle it next time?
2. Why do you think Jesus often responded to his captors with a question? Why did this method enrage the Jewish religious leaders?
3. Do you agree it's often easier to see God's purpose after the fact, historically, rather than in the moment? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think Pilate placed such an emphasis on defining terms such as king or truth in his conversation with Jesus? What was he trying to determine?
5. Think about what Jesus said and did during his trials before Annas, Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate. What can you learn from his example about dealing with those in power?
6. How would you respond if a friend asked if you believed in "absolute truth"? How would you support your answer using the Bible (see, for example, John 14:6, 16:13, and 17:17)? How would you support your answer using your own experiences?