

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Series: Christmas in Perspective

Title: New King on the Block

Text: Matthew 2:1-23

Speaker: Matt Ewert

Date: December 8, 2019



WARM-UP

Share one thing that stood out to you from this past weekend's worship service.

DISCUSSION

Read Matthew 2:1-23. Take note of how Matthew uses this account to make clear that Jesus comes as a "king," a role which elsewhere the New Testament refers to as "lord."

- Living in the year 2019, our understanding of a king is much more limited, and shaped by modern notions of kingship, than it would have been for people living in bible times.
- In what ways does thinking of Jesus as "king" help understand who He is, the role God has given Him, and how our relationship to Him should be shaped?
- Are there any ways in which the picture of "Jesus as King" is unhelpful, or brings with it baggage?

Christians refer to Jesus as "Lord and Savior."

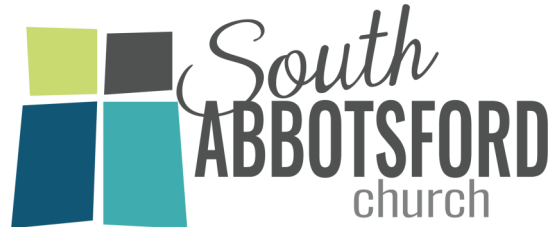
- Are these terms synonymous and interchangeable, or do they refer to different aspects of who Jesus is?
- Explain your answer.

On the second page of this "Life Challenge" there is a chart with a series of points that suggest some of the differences between seeing Jesus as Savior and Lord. (If possible, print copies of that page and hand them out to people, or refer to this document online when you get to this part of the discussion.)

- Read these points aloud.
- What stands out to you about the delineation between Jesus' role as "Lord" and "Savior"?
- What do you agree with, or disagree with, about these points?
- If you had to choose which title is more dominant in our Christian culture today, in terms of shaping our understanding of Jesus, which would you choose?
- Which picture is more dominant for you when it comes to your view of, or relationship to, Jesus?
- Are there any ways in which this discussion challenges you in the direction of new thoughts or actions?

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DISCUSSION

Jesus is Savior	Jesus is Lord
"Jesus is Savior" emphasizes sins forgiven.	"Jesus is Lord" emphasizes a reorientation in life, which includes sins forgiven. I'm no longer the king of my domain, Jesus is. This reorientation changes everything.
"Jesus is Savior" impacts me.	"Jesus is Lord" impacts me and everyone around me.
"Jesus is Savior" is often deeply personalistic and privatized.	"Jesus is Lord" retains the personal dynamic, but spreads out to impact everything and everyone around me. It is mission oriented (as sent ones) and seeks to reflect Jesus to others.
"Jesus is Savior" affects only the so-called spiritual aspects in life.	"Jesus is Lord" affects all of life; it is holistic and all-encompassing. It isn't limited to Sunday, or a mid-week program, or more generally to the religious side of life. Instead, it lays at the center of life and thereby orients, shapes, and informs everything else.