

A stylized, high-contrast illustration of a king's face and upper torso. The king has a white beard and mustache, and wears a white crown with five points. A yellow halo surrounds the crown. The king's face is white, and his eyes are closed. He is wearing a teal-colored garment. The background is a solid blue color. The title 'The Promise & the Kingdom' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

The Promise & the Kingdom

**The Story of the Bible
Presented in 31 Questions & Answers**



The Promise

& the Kingdom

What is a Catechism?

The word “catechism” comes from the Greek word “katecheo” which means “to instruct by word of mouth.” A catechism is a teaching tool that is spoken aloud and is often repeated so that the hearer may commit the information to memory.

Throughout our entire history, catechisms have been used by Christians as helpful tools to raise each new generation in the faith. The Bible calls us to pass down trustworthy teaching to each generation (2 Timothy 2:1-2, Titus 2:1-8, Proverbs 4:1-27, Psalm 78, etc.), so we should take up this calling with great care and zeal.

Many catechisms use a question-and-answer format to simplify each point and encourage memorization. *The Promise and the Kingdom* likewise consists of 31 questions and answers which are designed to declare the overarching story of the Bible in a way that anyone of any age can understand.



Why make a new Catechism?

The Kingdom and the Promise was written with the following goals in mind:

- We wanted to write something that would meet the needs of our particular congregation and its ministry programs.
- We wanted to create a catechism with theological depth while striving to keep it as simple as possible.
- We wanted to design a catechism with two parts – one focused on the Old Testament and the other focused on the New Testament.
- We wanted to create a catechism with a biblical theology approach as opposed to a systematic theology approach.

The Needs of our Congregation

When approaching this catechism, we knew that many of our congregants would be unfamiliar with catechisms or only associate catechisms with one particular Christian tradition. With this thought in mind, we wanted our catechism to be easily accessible and understandable by our congregation.

Theological Depth While Maintaining Simplicity

What we believe about God matters. Our theology serves as the foundation for how we choose to live our lives. Whether we realize it or not, every Christian is a theologian. We must strive to discover the rich and deep truths of the Bible while also being able to state those truths in clarity.

The question-and-answer format of *The Promise and the Kingdom* gives clear and simple answers to deep theological questions. While there are 31 questions and answers, *The Promise and the Kingdom* will not answer every question about the story of the Bible. This catechism was designed to serve as a foundation of theology and showcase the overarching story of the Bible which is centered upon Jesus.

A Catechism in Two Parts

Our Student Ministry has developed an annual pattern of studying Old Testament passages each fall and New Testament passages each spring. Since we initially planned on using this catechism for our Student Ministry program, we thought it would be fitting for the catechism itself to follow this pattern. While “The Promise” section is focused on the Old Testament

and “The Kingdom” is focused on the New Testament, you will find that every question-and-answer in each section has a related Old Testament passage and a New Testament passage to dwell on.

These related passages should not be seen as prooftexts. Rather, they should be seen as examples of how the Bible establishes a theme and gradually develops it throughout. Many, if not all, of the questions and answers in *The Promise and the Kingdom* are the result of a plethora of passages throughout the whole Bible, not just two. The goal in presenting two example passages is to help the reader develop the habit of looking for connections between different parts of the Bible.



Biblical Theology

There are several different types of theological approaches. The most common theological approach is “Systematic Theology” which organizes Christian doctrine into various categories and topics. If you have ever had a question about a particular subject such as, “What is the Trinity?” or “What is the Christian stance on government?” you have asked a systematic theology question. The majority of catechisms throughout Christian history are based on systematic theology because it lends itself well to teaching and answering questions.

Biblical theology has a different approach. Instead of being topic or question driven, biblical theology is story and theme driven. Biblical theology focuses on the metanarrative of the Bible and looks to see how themes develop throughout the Scriptures. If systematic theology is like reading a research paper about a particular topic, biblical theology is like watching a movie and paying attention to its themes and character arcs.

Both systematic theology and biblical theology are important to the growth and maturity of the Christian. One is not necessarily better than the other – they are just different approaches. In creating *The Promise and the Kingdom* we have blended a biblical theology approach with a systematic theology teaching tool.

How to use the Catechism

The Promise and the Kingdom was designed with 31 questions and answers so that a person could dwell on a different question and answer each day for a single month. We wrote this catechism with the hope that families or individuals would commit themselves to making a habit of experiencing the story of the Bible each month. To get the most out of a catechism, the catechism must be repeated.

Catechisms are not solely designed to convey information. The repetitive nature is intended to develop a spiritual habit of dwelling on the story of the Bible. *The Promise and the Kingdom* is an invitation to regularly meditate on Scripture and remember God's continual presence.



Quick tips:

- Read aloud one question and answer in order each day.
- Repeat the question and answer to help commit them to memory.
- Take time to dwell on one or both of the related Scriptures.
- If done with more than one person, spend time discussing the question, answer, related passages and dwelling point. You may ask:
 - How does this truth impact my life?
 - Are there other passages in the Bible related to this question and answer?
 - How does this question and answer connect the previous questions and answers?
- Feel free to use the written prayers as a guide to embrace the nearness of God. You can read them aloud verbatim, read them silently and reflect on their meanings, or use them as a guide for your own freeform prayer. If reading with a group of people, feel free to replace all "I" for "We" and "Me" for "Us."
- During months with only 30 days, combine the final two questions and answers of *The Kingdom*. (During February combine the first two of *The Promise*, the last two of *The Promise*, and the last two of *The Kingdom*.)



01

Who is God?

Answer:

God is the creator and sustainer of everything in the universe.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 1:1-5

NT: Colossians 1:15-20



Dwelling Point

How does God create?



Prayer

“Lord, thank you for your gift of creation. You are a wonderful designer and magnificent artist. Your majesty is made apparent by the beauty of the world you made.”



02

**Can anything exist
apart from God?**

Answer:

No; God is the source of all life. Nothing was made without God's creative work.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 1:27-2:3

NT: John 1:1-5



Dwelling Point

How is Jesus the Word and the bringer of light?



Prayer

“Lord, help me to daily remember that every good thing is from you. Help me to live a life filled with thanksgiving and contentment. I need not worry about what I have or do not have, because you are my provider.”



03

Why did God create us?

Answer:

God created us in His image that we would love Him and share His love for creation.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 1:26-27

NT: Matthew 22:36-40



Dwelling Point

How is our purpose found in the love of God?



Prayer

“Lord, help me to love you above all other things. You have loved me far more than I could ever express in words. Show me how to love you with all my heart and soul and strength. Show me how to love others as myself.”



04

**Do we perfectly love
God and His creation?**

Answer:

No; ever since the fall, no human being has been able to perfectly love God and His creation.



Scripture Reference

OT: Psalm 14:1-7

NT: Romans 3:10-18, 23



Dwelling Point

How does our failure to love God and His creation negatively impact the world?



Prayer

“Lord, I often fail to even realize how great my sin is and how disastrous its consequences are. Forgive me of my sins and help me to forgive others who have sinned against me. Let Your grace be abundant in my life.”



05

How did humanity reject God?

Answer:

The first humans, Adam and Eve, listened to the lies of Satan and disobeyed God's command to not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 3:1-7

NT: Revelation 12:9-12



Dwelling Point

How do we redefine good and evil for our own desires?



Prayer

"Lord, I often attempt to take control away from You and others. Either out of fear or to fulfill my own desires, I deny your sovereign Lordship. Thank you for your Son who leads me in perfect righteousness; He is a gentle shepherd for my rebellious soul."



06

**What happened as a
result of humanity's
rebellion?**

Answer:

Humanity and the rest of creation were removed from the garden of Eden, the tree of life, and God's presence.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 3:20-24

NT: Romans 5:12-15



Dwelling Point

Why was it necessary for Adam and Eve to be removed from the garden?



Prayer

“Lord, despite my sin, you have come close to me in the person of Jesus and the gift of your Holy Spirit. Despite my uncleanness, you have come near to me to make me clean. Your mercy is great, and your grace is abundant! In you I have life forevermore.”



07

**Can anything survive
apart from God?**

Answer:

No; without God we will surely meet death.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 3:16-19

NT: 1 Corinthians 15:20-23



Dwelling Point

If God is the giver of life, why do we run from him?



Prayer

“Lord, you are my only hope in life and in death. At the end of my days, I will not rely on my accomplishments or achievements. I cannot depend on my morality or my relationships. In the end my one and only hope will be in the goodness and the mercy of your Son Jesus Christ.”



08

**Is there any hope
for us?**

Answer:

Yes; God promised that a man would come who would defeat Satan, defeat death, and restore our relationship with God so that we may live.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 3:14-15

NT: Romans 6:3-14



Dwelling Point

How would this man defeat death?



Prayer

“Lord, you are faithful through every generation. Let me cling to your promises and the hope that in your mercy you will breathe new life into this world. Let me grow in patience, hope, and endurance so that I would not forget your promises, but instead, joyfully look towards the dawn of new creation.”



09

**Where would this
savior come from?**

Answer:

The promised savior would come from the people of Israel.



Scripture Reference

OT: Isaiah 9:2-7

NT: Matthew 1:1-17



Dwelling Point

How remarkable is it that God would choose to work with sinful people to accomplish his promise of redemption?



Prayer

“Lord, your ways are not my ways. Your thoughts are not my thoughts. Help me to trust in your ways even when I cannot see the full picture. Help me to cling to your promises even when I do not fully understand.”



10

**Who are the
people of Israel?**

Answer:

The Israelites are God's chosen people who were brought forth by God through a man named Abraham.



Scripture Reference

OT: Genesis 12:1-6

NT: Romans 9:1-9



Dwelling Point

How do the Israelites owe their existence and survival to the miraculous work of God?



Prayer

"Lord, everything I have and everything I am has come from the work of your wondrous hand. Help me to resist the lie that my life is the result of my hard work and talents. Lord, my ability to work is a gift from you! Every talent I possess is from you! Teach me to be thankful for all the days of my life."



11

**Why did God create
the people of Israel?**

Answer:

God made the people of Israel to be a Kingdom of Priests so that people from all nations could be reconnected with God.



Scripture Reference

OT: Exodus 19:1-6

NT: Hebrews 4:14-5:5



Dwelling Point

How were the people of Israel supposed to display God's character to the rest of the world?



Prayer

"Lord, as a citizen in your kingdom I am also your representative. Guide me day after day so that I would show the people around me who you are. Let your goodness flow through me. Let your grace be easily seen in my life. May the fruit of your Spirit be evident in all that I do."



12

**Who were the
kings of Israel?**

Answer:

God gave the Israelites a king after they rejected Him as their sole leader. The Kings were supposed to lead Israel in their love for God, but they often led Israel to worship other gods.



Scripture Reference

OT: 1 Samuel 8:1-9

NT: Matthew 27:11-24



Dwelling Point

How do people in positions of power and leadership lead whole communities toward God or away from Him?



Prayer

“Lord, help me to be increasingly aware of my influence on others. My actions are not performed in isolation; they have an impact on all that are around me. Give my eyes to see the weight of my decisions and the potency of my words. I long to be a mediator who points others to Your goodness, not a distraction that draws people away from Your mercy.



13

**Who were the
prophets?**

Answer:

The prophets were messengers sent by God to reveal Israel's sin and remind them of their coming savior.



Scripture Reference

OT: Isaiah 6:1-13

NT: Luke 1:67-80



Dwelling Point

What themes and messages are commonly repeated throughout the prophets?



Prayer

"Lord, do not let me dismiss Your Word like so many others before me. Give me eyes to see and ears to hear Your message of conviction and mercy. Your Word is active and alive. It is a two-edged sword. Let it pierce my heart so that my soul may sing Your praises!"



14

**How would the savior
save His people?**

Answer:

God promised that the savior would lay down his life to serve as a sacrifice to atone for His people's sin.



Scripture Reference

OT: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

NT: Matthew 27:45-56



Dwelling Point

Why would the savior need to be a sacrifice?



Prayer

"Lord, I am free! Your Son has brought salvation. Christ has brought forgiveness. The Messiah has brought healing. My hope and joy is in Christ Jesus who made a sacrifice once and for all to cover my sin and bring me life for all eternity."



15

**Would the savior
remain dead?**

Answer:

No; God's promised savior rose from the dead to give life eternal to all who believe in Him.



Scripture Reference

OT: Psalm 16:1-11

NT: Matthew 28:1-10



Dwelling Point

How do we receive this resurrection life?



Prayer

"Lord, You are victorious! The grave cannot contain Your glory. The earth cannot bind your majesty. Death fades away in the light of Your splendor. Let me walk in the way of Your life for all my days."



16

**Who is the
promised savior?**

Answer:

**Jesus of Nazareth,
conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary
who married Joseph a
descendant of David.**



Scripture Reference

NT: Luke 2:1-7

OT: Genesis 3:14-15



Dwelling Point

How would Jesus become the “snake crusher” described in Genesis?



Prayer

“Lord, all honor and glory belong to you, for you have brought your presence in the midst of your people. You stepped into the chaos of this sinful world to be near to the sinners which you would save. You are faithful in all your promises to us. You have proven your faithfulness time and time again. Cultivate within me a patience and a peace to joyfully wait in your salvation.”



17

**Why was Jesus
conceived by the
Holy Spirit?**

Answer:

To establish Jesus as both fully God and fully man.



Scripture Reference

NT: Luke 1:26-38

OT: Genesis 1:2-5



Dwelling Point

Why would the savior need to be fully God and fully man?



Prayer

“Lord, I cannot comprehend your greatness. Your complexity is beyond my understanding. I am limited in every way, yet your limitlessness speaks to my heart in a way that seems so familiar and yet so strange. I was made to know you, yet my limitations keep me from knowing you fully. It is by your grace and your mercy that you have made yourself known to me in the person of Jesus. Allow me to grow in the understanding of my savior and allow my awe to expand before your eternal glory.”



18

**Why was Jesus
born of a virgin?**

Answer:

So that he would be a new Adam, free from the sinful nature of our forefather. Instead, he would fulfill our purpose of being the image of God in perfect love.



Scripture Reference

NT: 1 Corinthians 15:45-53

OT: Isaiah 7:10-16



Dwelling Point

How did Jesus live a life free from sin?



Prayer

“Lord you are perfect in all your ways. There is no fault within you. There is no error in your actions. You are love, and by knowing you I may know how to love as you do. Help me to daily depend on the righteousness of Christ, knowing that I am saved by your grace through faith in your sinless Son.”



19

**Why was Jesus an
earthly son of Joseph?**

Answer:

So that Jesus would belong to the family of King David and claim kingship over God's people.



Scripture Reference

NT: Matthew 1:1-17

OT: Psalm 110



Dwelling Point

Why do we need Jesus to be our king?



Prayer

“Lord, throughout the generations You have been calling people into Your family. The Scriptures speak of Your mercy, Your love, and Your faithfulness to Your people, even when Your people have at times been utterly faithless. Lord help me to remember that You will not abandon Your people, and that You are faithful through every generation.”



20

Why was Jesus baptized?

Answer:

To symbolize Jesus' future death and resurrection and to mark the beginning of His ministry.



Scripture Reference

NT: Matthew 3:11-17

OT: Exodus 14:5-31



Dwelling Point

Why should we follow Jesus in being baptized?



Prayer

"Lord, Jesus displayed supreme humility in his baptism. Help me to follow His example, knowing that I am in great need of cleansing. Wash me clean Lord, day after day. Wash me clean so that I would be free of sin and be able to embrace Your true life."



21

Why was Jesus tempted?

Answer:

To prove His innocence and ability to resist Satan's deceit.



Scripture Reference

NT: Matthew 4:1-11

OT: Leviticus 19:1-2



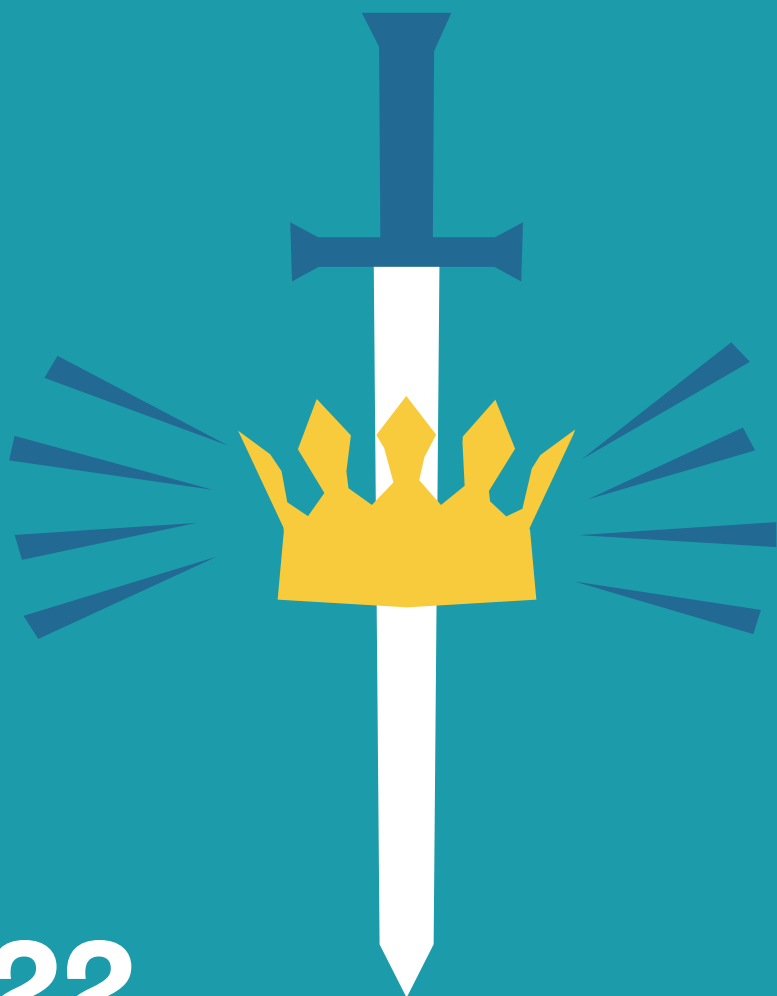
Dwelling Point

How does Jesus resist the enemy's temptation?



Prayer

"Lord, You have never once fallen into the enemy's trap of deceit. We so easily believe the lies and temptations from the enemy, yet You have always stood firm against the evil one. Let me look to You for all my days, knowing that You are perfectly righteous in every way. Thank You for Your gracious gift of righteousness that I have received through the person of Christ."



22

**What was Jesus'
good news?**

Answer:

Jesus declared that the Kingdom of God is near, and He called everyone to repent and believe.



Scripture Reference

NT: Mark 1:9-15

OT: Genesis 12:1-3



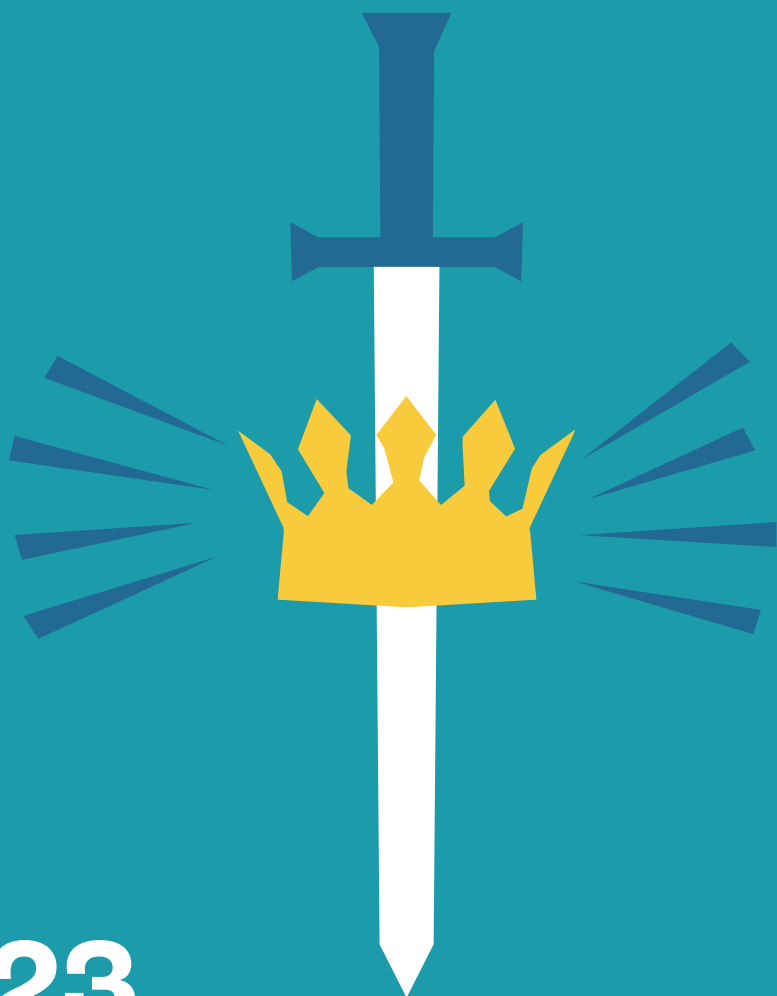
Dwelling Point

How is the arrival of God's Kingdom good news to us?



Prayer

"Lord You are near. Do not let me forget Your presence. Do not let me be dismissive of Your nearness. As I go throughout my days, help me to see that You are with me. You are my shepherd who guides me and comforts me through every circumstance. Your Spirit has been given to me, so do not allow me to so easily dismiss it as I often do."



23

What is the Kingdom of God?

Answer:

The Kingdom of God refers to God's reign, God's people, and God's mission of redemption.



Scripture Reference

NT: Mark 3:31-4:20

OT: Zechariah 9:9-17



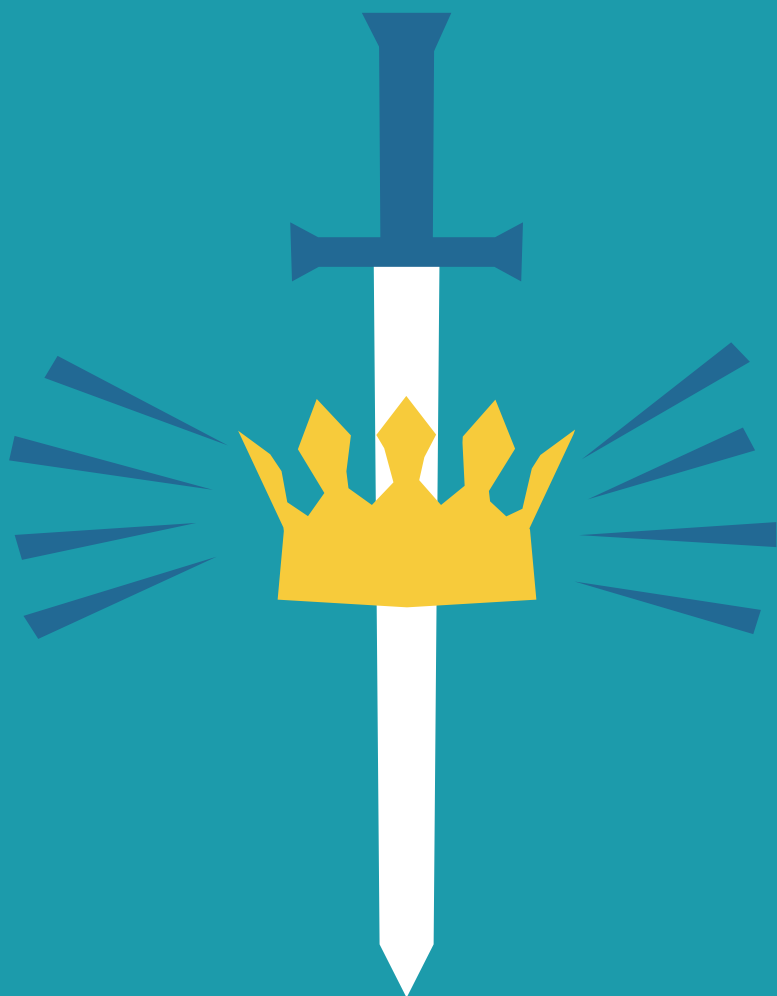
Dwelling Point

Who is the king of the Kingdom of God?



Prayer

"Lord You reign and rule over all creation. You have made a people for Yourself and claimed them as Your own. In the person of Jesus, You have invaded the darkness to bring light to those You are calling to Yourself. Let me rejoice in the Kingdom of God forever and ever!"



24

What is repentance?

Answer:

Repentance is turning away from sin and the ways of this world and turning towards Jesus and the ways of His Kingdom.



Scripture Reference

NT: Luke 3:1-18

OT: 2 Chronicles 7:11-22



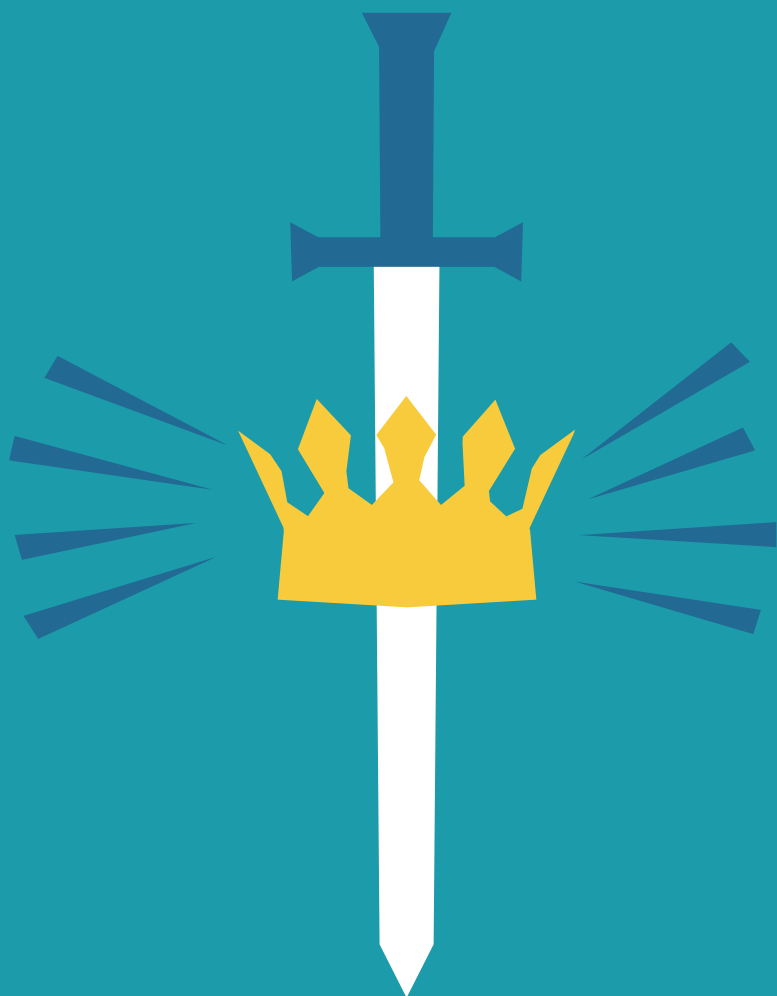
Dwelling Point

What does it look like to turn toward Jesus?



Prayer

“Lord help me to daily turn away from all that might distract me from Your grace. Help me to fix my eyes firmly upon the person of Jesus who is the author and perfecter of my faith. Even when I look away, I know You are calling to me to turn back to You. I can always return to You, because Your love, Your mercy, and Your faithfulness are greater than I could ever imagine.”



25

What is belief?

Answer:

Belief is holding onto the hope that Jesus is our savior-king and trusting in the promises of God.



Scripture Reference

NT: Mark 9:14-29

OT: Genesis 22:1-14



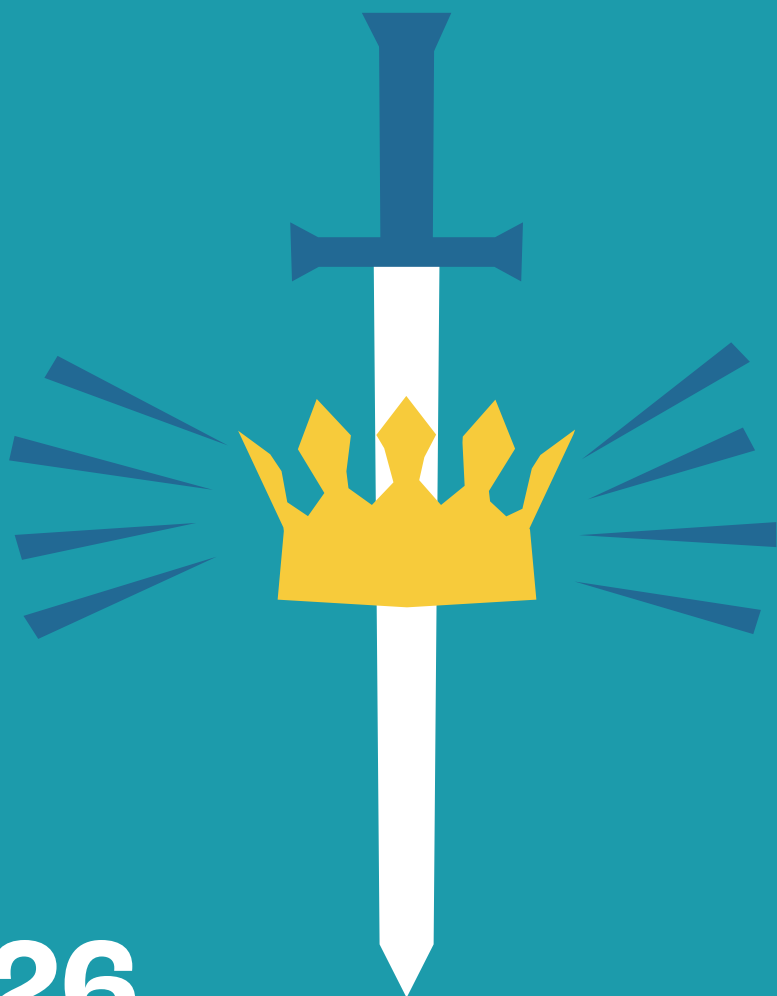
Dwelling Point

How do we depend on Jesus to help us believe?



Prayer

“Lord I believe but help my unbelief. Christ is my only hope. Christ is my only source of true joy. There is none higher, none greater, than You O Lord. Even though the enemy wages war against me, and my doubts surround my mind, I will believe. Even if my faith is minimal, as small as a mustard seed, I will believe. And I will depend on Christ through all my unbelief.”



26

**How did Jesus
proclaim kingship?**

Answer:

Jesus demonstrated His kingship through teaching, healing, miracles, and casting out demons.



Scripture Reference

NT: Mark 4:35-41

OT: Isaiah 11:1-12



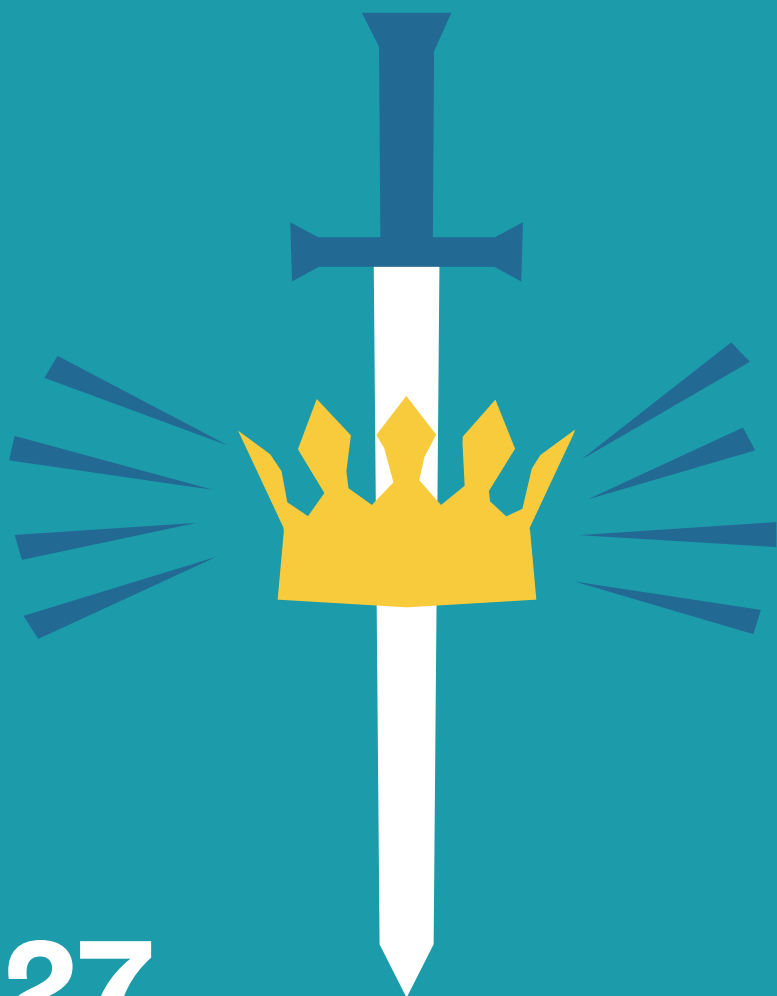
Dwelling Point

How is Jesus unlike any other person who has ever lived?



Prayer

“Lord, You have proven Yourself time and time again. Christ is my king. Christ is my Lord. Jesus has demonstrated His power and rule, for even the wind and the waves obey Him! The demons are powerless against Him! All sickness and disease flees His presence, for Christ is the king of life!”



27

**How did Jesus save
us from our sin?**

Answer:

Jesus' death served as a sacrifice which atoned for our sin.



Scripture Reference

NT: Matthew 27:45-56

OT: Leviticus 16:3-10



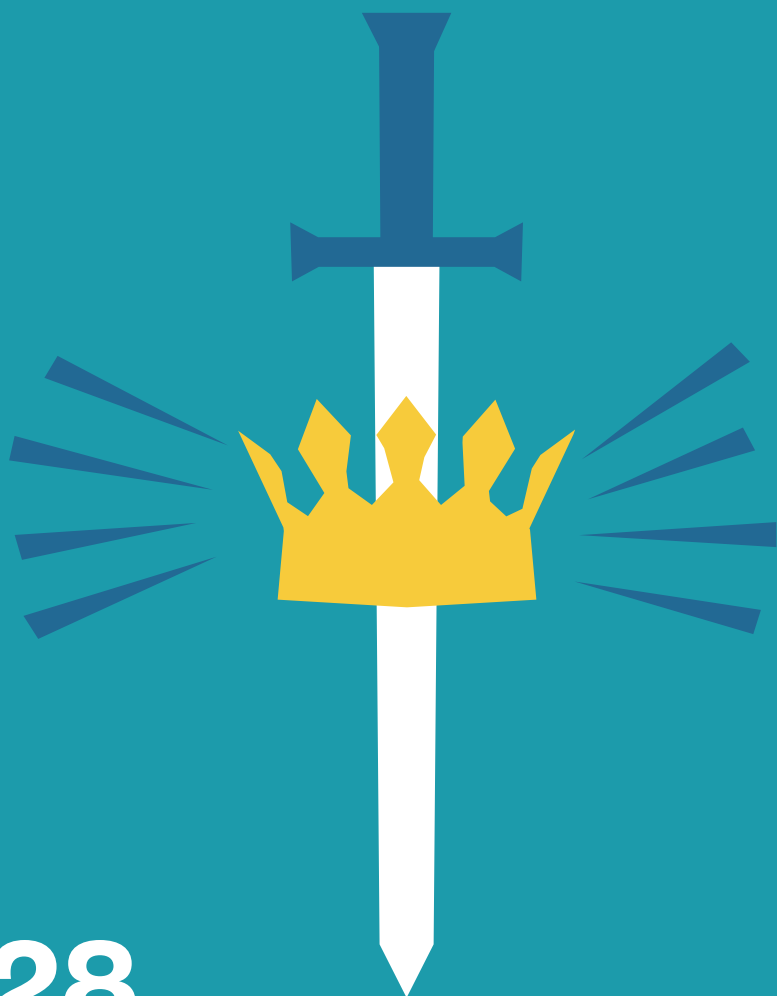
Dwelling Point

Why was it necessary for Jesus to die in order for us to be forgiven?



Prayer

"Lord, Your plan of salvation was to offer a sacrifice. I could not make the sacrifice myself, for I am the one who has sinned against You! No, You offered a pure and blameless sacrifice for my sin, and I will be forever grateful for what You have done."



28

**How did Jesus
defeat death?**

Answer:

**Jesus rose from the grave
free from all sin and shame.**



Scripture Reference

NT: Matthew 28:1-10

OT: Psalm 49:1-20



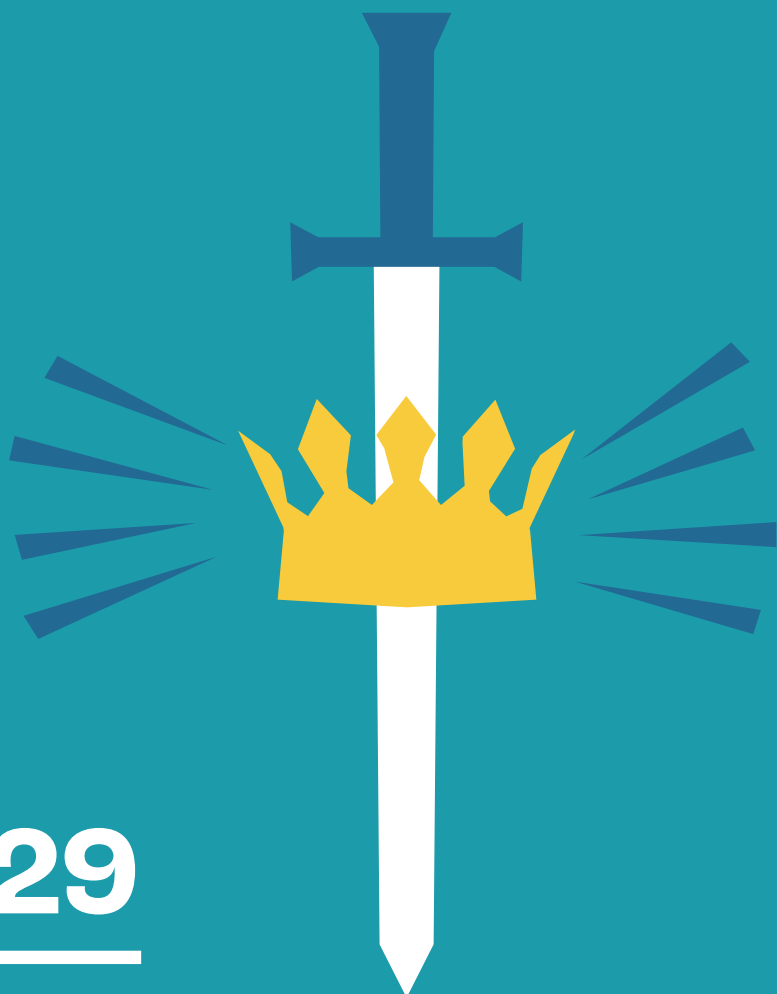
Dwelling Point

How does Jesus' resurrection give us hope for our own resurrection?



Prayer

"Death where is your sting? Hell where is your victory? Lord, You have proven Your power over the grave. Just as Christ arose from the waters of baptism, He arose the waters of death. And since I am called a friend by the one who defeated death, I know He will carry me through those waters as well."



29

**How should we
remember Jesus'
death & resurrection?**

Answer:

By celebrating the Lord's Supper in taking the bread and wine as Jesus instructed his disciples.



Scripture Reference

NT: Matthew 26:17-30

OT: Exodus 12:1-24



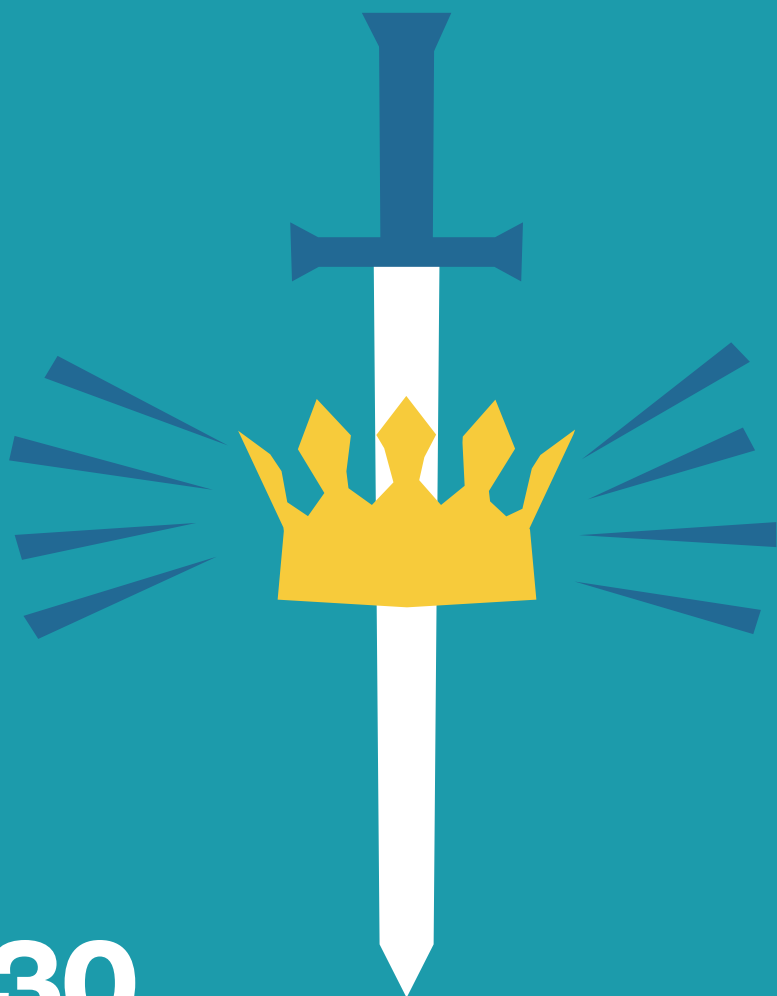
Dwelling Point

Why is it crucial to regularly remember Jesus' death and resurrection?



Prayer

"Lord, Jesus offered a meal to His disciples as a regular reminder of His life, death, resurrection, and return. Thousands of years later, His disciples still gather to take this meal. Fill us with hope and firm belief that Jesus will return to us again."



30

What is the Great Commission?

Answer:

To go out into the whole world and proclaim the good news that Jesus defeated death and is establishing his Kingdom across the world.



Scripture Reference

NT: Matthew 28:16-20

OT: Genesis 12:1-3



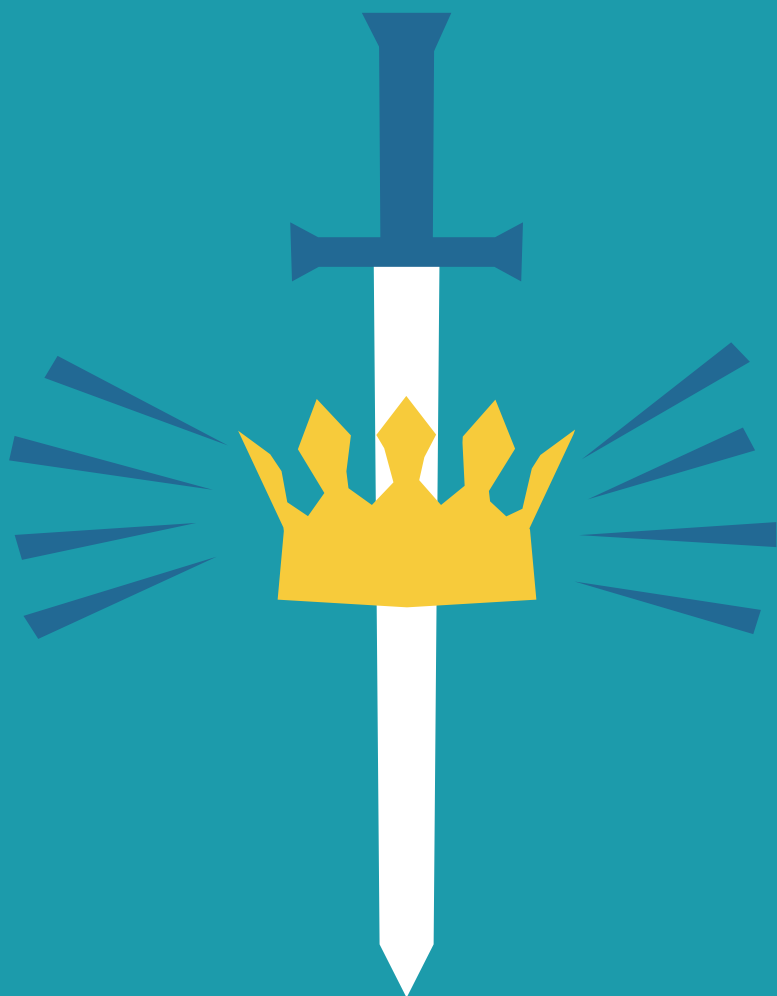
Dwelling Point

How can we fulfill the Great Commission in our city?



Prayer

“Lord You have no need for anyone or anything other than Yourself. Yet despite Your lack of need, You invite me to be a messenger of Your good news to the rest of the world. Help me to understand that the Great Commission is a gift, not a burden. Help me to fulfill it wherever I go for all my days, until Christ returns.”



31

Will Jesus return?

Answer:

Yes, Jesus will return to put an end to the enemy and all sin and all death and establish his Kingdom for all eternity.



Scripture Reference

NT: Revelation 19:11-21

OT: Psalm 145:1-21



Dwelling Point

How do we cling to the hope that we will live in God's Kingdom for all eternity?



Prayer

"Lord You are the everlasting one. Death has no power over You. You will have no end. I look forward to spending an eternity in the presence of my Creator."

