

**Core 52-12 Messiah LIFE Group** Lesson planned for March 22

**Begin:** Share with each other what God is doing in your lives, where you need His help this week, and how you have recently seen Him answer your prayers. Today's lesson will remind us that Jesus, the Christ, is in control, even when the world around us seems in chaos. **Pray.**

**Discussion Starter:** Ask group members to share a time they were inducted or commissioned into an organization, or symbolically commemorated the completion or start of an event, perhaps while a student or as an adult. What made that moment in your life memorable? Did it include something that would normally embarrass you? (for example, Billy's oldest grandson was called to the front of his school assembly to receive an award – somewhat out of his usual comfort zone. How did you feel after going through a public ceremonial rite of passage? (Leader, see the end for some examples, if your group struggles to come up with examples.)

**Ask:** Have you ever seen a modern rite of passage that involves oil being poured on a person's head (anointing)? Is this strange to us? If so, is it any stranger than some of the modern rituals marking important accomplishments you mentioned above?

**Ask:** Do you know what the definition of the Hebrew word transliterated into English as "Messiah" is? What is the definition of the Greek word transliterated into English as "Christ?"

"The word *Christ* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew word, *Messiah*. These are foreign terms, so let's make sure we understand them. First, Christ is not Jesus' last name. It's his title, meaning "anointed one," and is roughly equivalent to the term *king*." Mark E. Moore

**Read** Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then as a group or family recite it, then encourage any who will to try and recite it from memory. When Peter identified Jesus as the Christ, what do you think he meant?

**Ask:** In the past two weeks, does it seem like your world is out of control? What are examples of plans suddenly turned on end due to Covid-19 (or the Corona Virus)? How have you felt amid the chaotic challenges and changes to schedules? Has it been comforting, frightening, or stressful, to be reminded that you are relieved of control of your life? Has it reminded you you're really not lord of your own life? Is this a reminder you have needed for some time? Have you drawn closer to the one who has always been in control, or has it been harder to trust Jesus as Lord? **Leader**, allow time for the group to share honestly. There may be moments of pause or silence, but don't hurry this section.

**Read** Psalm 110:1, then read aloud the entire sermon in Acts 2:14-40. You might ask several to read a few verses then pass to the next person read Acts 2:35-37 What are some really strong points you hear Peter preach about Jesus before he quotes Psalm 110:1? *Leader, you might divide the group into groups of 2-4 persons and assign verse sections (16-21; 22-24; 25-28; 29-34) and ask them to summarize Peter's message. Why do you think the crowd reacted so quickly and wanted to know what they must do, after Peter quoted from Psalm 110 and identified Jesus as the anointed one (the Christ or Messiah) the Psalm had promised?*

What did Peter say when the crowd asked what they should they do? How do repentance and baptism depend on who Jesus is (Lord and Christ)? How important is it that the people acknowledged Jesus as Lord and Messiah before being baptized? Would the blessings that Peter said would accompany their

repentance and baptism (receiving forgiveness of their sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit) make sense or even be possible if Jesus was not Lord and the anointed one?

You might also look at Matthew 22:41-46 where the same verse (Psalm 110:1) stopped further questions to Jesus? Any thought as to why? **Note**, in the Hebrew, the first word LORD in the verse is *Yahweh* (the name of God) and the second is *Adonai*, a more general word for lord.

**Ask:** what is more challenging for you, that Jesus who is both Lord and Christ: forgives your sins? rules in your life? or rules the universe? Which do you think is more challenging for Jesus?

Some **additional passages** concerning Jesus as Lord and Christ (or Messiah). As a group you might read these and put in your own words:

Luke 2:11

John 11:27

Acts 3:19-21

Ephesians 1:3

James 1:1

**Close out by praying for greater reliance on our Lord and savior.**

Examples of rituals marking rites of passage for the discussion starter: pinning ceremony for nursing graduation, college social club/fraternity/sorority initiation such as anointment with gross food such as PB and J, moving the graduation tassel to the opposite side of a mortarboard hat, a receiving and pinning on of a military campaign ribbon or receiving bronze star, swearing in to protect the constitution at a federal job, or a jury swearing in, being given a symbolic key to a city, digging soil prior to a new building's construction, cutting a ribbon to open a new store or public works project, a student or scout serving as honorary mayor for a day, presenting a judge's gavel, British knighthood symbolized with sword touches.