

Small Group Study Guide

ICE BREAK

- Chris opened with the Kenny Stabler story and the idea of saying a lot with very few words. If you had to summarize your own life philosophy in two or three words right now, what would it be and why?

STUDY

1. Before hearing this sermon, how would you have described the gospel to someone who had never heard it? Has your thinking shifted at all? If so, how?
2. **The angel's announcement in Luke 2:10-11 describes the good news as the arrival of One who is "the Messiah, the Lord" -- without specifying whose Messiah or Lord of what.** What does it mean to you that He is simply described as "the Lord," full stop, without qualification?
3. **Romans 10:9-13 connects declaring "Jesus is Lord" with calling on the name of the Lord. Chris pointed out that the Greek verbs suggest an ongoing declaration and belief rather than a single moment.** How does that change the way you think about your own faith journey?
4. **Chris quoted N.T. Wright, who said that confessing Jesus as Lord meant, among other things, that Caesar was not.** In our world today, what are the "Caesars" -- the competing authorities or voices -- that the confession "Jesus is Lord" pushes back against? Let's drill down a little deeper personally - what are those competing authorities or voices in your own life?
5. **Stanley Hauerwas said, "Our salvation comes only when we cease trying to interpret Jesus' story in light of our history, and instead we interpret ourselves in light of his."** Can you think of a time when you were interpreting Jesus through your own story rather than the other way around? What did that look like, and what helped you shift?
6. **Chris shared the story of Beverly Ross leaving the hospital after losing her daughter and asking her husband to remind her that the tomb is empty.** How does the lordship and resurrection of Jesus function as an anchor in moments of devastating loss? Have you experienced something like this personally?
7. **The sermon identified four ways "Jesus is Lord" speaks into our lives:**
 - A **saving declaration** when we are convicted of sin.
 - An **anchoring declaration** when everything feels uncertain.
 - A **consoling declaration** in heartache and loss.
 - A **focusing declaration** in seasons of opportunity and prosperity

Which of these resonates most with where you are right now and why?
8. **The early church would confess "Jesus is Lord" in the waters of baptism.** What role does public confession -- whether in baptism or in other contexts -- play in the life of a believer? Why does it matter that faith is not only internal but also expressed outwardly?

REFLECTION and PRAYER

Paul describes the gospel as something believers 'stand in,' and elsewhere compares it to spiked sandals that provide traction on difficult terrain -- where in your life do you most need the stability and grip that the gospel provides, and what would it look like to lean into it more fully?

Pray into this for each other as you

close your group time