



Strength for the Journey

“Christ the King”

Matthew 4:17



Notes:

3) The second trait that characterizes kingdom people is a new management system. Joe describes four management systems of the world that Jesus blew away. Which of them present the strongest appeal in your life: the Essenes (separation from others); the chief priests (compromise in order to have more power); the Pharisees (rule-keepers who scrutinize others); the Zealots (rebels)?

4) Soon after Matthew 4:17 comes Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, which is filled with statements like “Blessed are the poor in spirit”; “Blessed are the meek”; “Turn the other cheek”; “Go the extra mile”; “Love your enemies”; “Bless those who curse you”; “Pray for those who use you.” Why do we find such instructions so weird and counterintuitive?

5) Other than Christ, do you have one single authority in your life who calls every shot? If so, who is that person? Do you have a problem with thinking that you are the boss?

Dotted lines for taking notes.

Digging Deeper:

If you have enough time, answer one or more of these optional questions. But be sure to save time for the final two sections.

1) Read Matthew 8:23–27. How faithful and forceful are you, like the woman Joe mentioned who worked at Moody Bible Institute, to “wake Jesus up”?

2) How does the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) illustrate Joe’s point that people’s needs trump our rules?

3) Joe points out that Jesus got angry about the oppression of the poor and needy. How can you relate?

Strength through Reflection:

1) Read the call to action below. When you get into a tense or difficult situation, how hard is it for you to hit the pause button?

2) Can you remember a time when, instead of following your first instincts, you stopped and checked in with Jesus?



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Strength through Prayer:

Spend a few moments in prayer. Commit yourself to Jesus as the sole authority of your life. Ask him to help you respond to life in ways that please him, rather than succumbing to your first instincts.

You may want to begin your prayer with these words:

“Lord Jesus, you are my authority, my King. Since I am under your management, enable me by your Spirit to respond to the situations of life in ways that honor you.”

A vertical column of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

Closing Call to Action:

We need to practice the “first instincts drill”: When we get into a tense or difficult situation and are tempted to react in the wrong way, hit the pause button. Take time to check in with Jesus and his Word; talk to a Christian friend or pastor. Make this commitment:

I will not go by my first instincts. I will live according to the authority of my King, Jesus Christ. He is the manager of my life.