

# ROYALS

WEEK 3 (HYBRID)

## BIG IDEA

When you're not sure who to listen to, ask God for wisdom.

## BIBLE

I Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14; James 1:5; Proverbs 16:16

## WHAT?

### DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
- **What's one piece of advice you wish you could give to yourself as a kid?**
- **What are some places where people get advice?**

### QUESTION | What makes your life noisy?

- Do you ever feel like life is just a little too noisy? Like you're sometimes so distracted you can barely think? **What makes your life seem noisy sometimes?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give a few students a chance to respond.*
- We're constantly bombarded by information, notifications, reminders, responsibilities — it's a lot to deal with on a normal day, but it's even worse when we're trying to make a big decision or get some guidance. Between the advice of our friends or family, the stuff we find on the

internet, and whatever our gut is telling us to do, it's not easy to know whose advice to listen to.

## SO WHAT?

### STORY | Talk about a time you listened to the wrong person for advice.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story from your own life (or ask a volunteer or student to tell a story) about a time when you listened to the wrong person for advice. This could be either a silly or serious story. If possible, try choosing a story where you were offered good advice, but took bad advice instead.*
- With so many voices to choose from, it's hard to know who to listen to. We all have moments when we find ourselves asking questions like, "What do I do now? Who do I trust? Which voice is the right voice to follow?"

### DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
- **How do you know if the place you are getting advice from is trustworthy?**

### OBJECT LESSON | The Crown

- For the last couple of weeks, we've been talking famous kings in Scripture. So far, we've talked about . . .
  - King David and the mistakes he made when he was in charge.

- Absalom, whose confidence that he knew best led him toward destruction.
- Today I want to introduce you to a third person. Unlike Absalom, this guy really did become king after David. And when he did, he taught us all a few really important things about who we should be listening to.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Building on your object lesson, reveal the third crown in your collection. Pick it up whenever you talk about royalty or Solomon.*

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KINGS

- The kings we're talking about lived around 3,000 years ago, when they ruled the nation of Israel.
- For a long time, Israel didn't have an official human ruler because it was led by God. But eventually, the Israelites decided they knew better than God did and demanded a king. They wanted a human leader to rule them, just like all the other nations had. So God gave the Israelites what they asked for.
  - First there was King Saul, whose crown passed to David when Saul disobeyed God.
  - Then God chose David to wear the crown, wield the power, and care for God's people.
  - One of David's sons, Absalom, tried to take the throne from David against God's will and failed.
- But David couldn't be king forever. Eventually, David passed the crown on to his son, Solomon.

## SCRIPTURE | I Kings 2:10-12

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read I Kings 2:10-12.*
- The transition of the crown from David to Solomon happened naturally and uneventfully. David died. When he did, Solomon took the throne.

## SCRIPTURE | I Kings 3:3-14

- After hearing the stories of David and Absalom, you might be wondering what horrible thing Solomon did next. Let's take a look.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read 1 Kings 3:3-14.*
- So far so good in Solomon's story!
  - Solomon began his reign by following God closely. He placed the good of God's people above his personal peace, prosperity, or desire to be a powerful or popular king. As far as God was concerned, Solomon's priorities were in the right place.
  - One night, Solomon had a dream where God asked him, "What do you want?" So Solomon asked for unlimited ice cream. Just kidding. He asked for wisdom.
  - We don't know exactly why this was Solomon's request, but maybe it's because he really wanted to lead his kingdom well. Maybe he didn't want to go down the same path David and Absalom had by using his power to hurt others or become proud.
  - God gave Solomon wisdom, but God didn't stop there. Scripture says Solomon received the ability to pass fair judgment, which is really important when you're leading people. You need to be fair when you're ruling a kingdom.
- Solomon could have listened to anyone. He could have hired a million people to help him make decisions, or hired no one at all and just trusted his gut. But instead, Solomon asked for God's wisdom — a wisdom more trustworthy than anything a person could give him.

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
- **If you could ask God for one thing, what would you ask God for? Be honest.**

- **Why do you think Solomon wanted wisdom more than anything else?**
- **How would you define wisdom?**

### STORY | A Man and His Money

- But maybe you're still wondering what exactly "wisdom" is.
  - Is it the same thing as knowledge?
  - Is it the ability to intuitively know what to do anytime there's a tough decision?
  - Is it a weird superpower?
  - Does having it mean you have to start dressing like an elderly professor?
- You can dress however you want, but no, that last part is not a requirement for getting or having wisdom.
- Think of it this way: **if *knowledge* is a collection of all of the information in the world, *wisdom* is what you have when you actually use that knowledge.** Wisdom is knowledge plus action.

### SCRIPTURE | James 1:5

- Solomon may have received wisdom in a pretty spectacular way, but here's the good news for you and me. We don't have to wait until we become king or have a mysterious dream in order to have a moment like this with God. Here's what the book of James says.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read James 1:5.*
- Wait, all we need to do is ask? We don't need to do anything special? Make big promises? Make a deal with God? We can just ask? Yeah. It really is that simple. You don't have to be wearing a crown or ruling a kingdom to get access to God's wisdom.
- No matter what our problem is, and no matter who we are, **when we're not sure who to listen to, we can ask God for wisdom.**

## NOW WHAT?

### MUSIC | "Doxology" (Maverick City Music)

- Sure, we can learn wisdom from life experiences, mistakes made, or smart people who share it with us. But ultimately, all wisdom is a gift from God that is given to us when we listen and look for it. The book of James says every good gift is from God – including wisdom. It's a gift, or a blessing, that flows from God.
- There is a famous song called The Doxology.
  - It's a short song that was written in the year 1674 by Thomas Ken and has been sung by Jesus-followers all over the world ever since.
  - And since I remember everything better when I put it to music, I thought you might too. Listen to this song and consider how wisdom is a blessing that flows from God.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, play a short clip (0:53-1:52) from the song "[Doxology](#)" (Maverick City Music). For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*

### DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
- **What are some scenarios where you and I might need wisdom?**
- **Why do you think we try to get guidance from sources other than God?**

### THREE WAYS TO ASK FOR WISDOM

- Just like Solomon found himself with a lot of responsibility and too many voices giving him advice, you and I also have a lots of voices telling us what to do, think, believe, or attempt. With so many potential

people we could be listening to, we even need to ask God for wisdom about which voices we should be listening to!

- So how did Solomon figure out who to listen to? And how can you and I do the same? Here are three ways.
  - **RECOGNIZE YOU NEED GOD'S HELP.** Remember, this is where Absalom went wrong – don't be like Absalom. Be like Solomon, who was quick to recognize he had a lot to learn.
    - When Solomon became king, he knew he didn't have experience yet. He didn't even have his dad, the previous king, to help him figure out what to do next. He needed help and he knew it.
    - Like Solomon, you and I still have a lot to learn too. We don't know everything there is to know about the world or how it works. We barely even understand ourselves! We need a guide – a voice that will lead us down safe paths and guide us back when we make a wrong turn. But that's exactly why God is there to help us. All throughout the Bible, over and over again, God promises to help us. We just have to ask.
  - **ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED – NOT WHAT YOU WANT.**
    - Solomon could have asked for riches, fame, more power – anything he wanted! God didn't give him any rules. But what did he ask for? Wisdom. Solomon chose to focus on what he really needed.
    - When you and I are making decisions, we sometimes make the mistake of look for the quickest solution to get us whatever we want in the moment. But often times, the things we think we want are not the wisest choice for us. Sometimes, the things we think we want even rob us of what we really need.
  - **REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE MATTERS MORE THAN WHAT YOU HAVE.**
    - When given the chance, Solomon asked God for something that would grow his character – not his bank account. That's because Solomon understood *who he was* as a king would be far more important than *what he had* as a king.

- The voices around us usually tell us the opposite of this truth. They tell us that what we have or own is more important than who we are. Even if they don't say it outright, it's still communicated. We need God's wisdom to help us see the difference between focusing on something we want (like money, popularity, opportunities, or stuff) or something we truly need.

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
- **Read Proverbs 16:16. What are some places where you can find God's wisdom?**
- **What is one area of your life where you need God's wisdom, today? What are you going to do this week to ask God for wisdom in this area?**

## RESPONSE | Who Are You Listening To?

- So as we wrap things up today, let's take a moment to think about who we're listening to.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before your program, print the handouts provided in your Week 3 folder and place one under each seat, along with a pen. If possible, try to make your space as silent as possible as you begin. You may want to whisper as you speak.*
- It's super quiet in here right now.
  - If we lived in a world where everything was this quiet and we could hear people's voices this clearly, it would be a lot easier to make the wiser choice. But the reality is it's almost never this quiet — not anywhere.
  - If we want to hear God speak to us more easily, we have to learn how to find or make spaces that are quiet. I mean that literally (as

in, no sounds) and metaphorically too. In order to hear God well, we need to find quiet places, free of distractions, people, notifications, reminders, or messages. That's where we'll be able to best hear God's voice so we can make choices that align with God's heart.

- On your paper, here's what I want you to do:
  - List every voice you usually listen to — as many as you can. Think about family, friends, trusted adults, or people you follow online.
  - Circle the three names you listen to the most.
  - Star the names that usually give you wisdom that aligns with God's wisdom.
  - Cross out any voices you're not sure you should be listening to.
- Take a moment to look at your list.
  - What would it take for you to add more trustworthy voices to your list?
  - What will it take for you to listen less to the voices you're not sure you should be listening to?
  - What can you do to raise the volume on the voices that best reflect God's wisdom?
- You know, Solomon is called the wisest man who ever lived. But even with all that wisdom, Solomon wasn't perfect. That's because wisdom is something you need to choose to apply. You don't just get it once and then you're done. You have to continue practicing wisdom and gaining more of it.
- I don't know if any of you will ever become leaders of entire nations, but I do believe you have the potential to do big things for God. But to accomplish them, you're going to need God's wisdom. So start asking! And start listening. Because **when we're not sure who to listen to, we can ask God for wisdom.**