

Discussion Questions



Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Expectations impact everything** - especially our expectations of Jesus
2. Jesus rejected all forms of worldly power (economic, political, and religious prestige)
3. The kingdom Jesus proclaimed turned the world's hierarchy upside down
4. Jesus came to proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for prisoners, sight for the blind, and freedom for the oppressed
5. We often try to make Jesus fit our expectations rather than conforming ourselves to His kingdom

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Historical Context

1. How does understanding the 500 years of Jewish history before Jesus help you understand what people were expecting from the Messiah?
2. Why do you think the Jewish people wanted a powerful military and political leader as their Messiah?
3. How would Jesus' first sermon (Luke 4:18-19) have challenged the expectations of His listeners?

Examining the Temptations

4. Read Luke 4:1-13. What do the three temptations of Jesus reveal about the kind of power the world values?
 - Economic power (turning stones to bread)
 - Political power (kingdoms of the world)
 - Religious prestige (jumping from the temple)

5. Why was it significant that Jesus rejected these forms of power? What does this tell us about the nature of God's kingdom?
6. The sermon mentioned that these temptations "nagged at Jesus all the way to the crucifixion." How does this help you understand Jesus' humanity and His commitment to God's plan?

Personal Reflection

7. The sermon listed several ways we might twist our expectations of Jesus. Discuss these honestly as a group:
 - Expecting Jesus to align with our political party
 - Wanting Jesus to be "for us" but not "with us" (blessing without accountability)
 - Expecting Jesus to lead us where we want, not where He needs
 - Expecting Jesus to prevent all bad things from happening
 - Wanting Jesus as Savior but not as Lord
8. Which of these expectations resonates most with you personally? Why?
9. Share an example of a time when Jesus didn't meet your expectations. How did you respond? What did you learn?
10. What does it mean practically to want Jesus as "Savior but not Lord"? What areas of your life might you be holding back from His lordship?

Practical Application

Individual Reflection

Take 3-5 minutes of silence for each person to consider:

- What expectations of Jesus do I need to surrender?
- In what ways have I been trying to make Jesus fit my agenda rather than submitting to His?
- What would it look like for me to embrace the "upside-down kingdom" this week?

Group Sharing

11. What is one specific expectation of Jesus you need to surrender this week?
12. The sermon emphasized that Jesus came for the poor, prisoners, blind, and oppressed. How does this challenge the way you view:
 - Success?
 - Power?
 - Your own priorities?
13. What is one practical way you can live out the "upside-down kingdom" values this week? (Consider: first shall be last, love your enemies, serve the marginalized, etc.)

Action Steps for the Week

Choose one or more of the following:

1. **Daily Prayer Focus:** Each day this week, pray: "Jesus, show me where my expectations of You don't align with who You really are."
2. **Scripture Study:** Read through the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and note all the ways Jesus turns worldly values upside down.
3. **Service Opportunity:** Identify one person or group that society overlooks (like those Jesus mentioned in His first sermon) and find a practical way to serve them.
4. **Expectation Inventory:** Journal about your honest expectations of Jesus in these areas:
 - Your finances
 - Your relationships
 - Your career
 - Your comfort and safety
 - Your political views
5. **Accountability:** Share with one person in the group an area where you've been wanting Jesus as Savior but not Lord, and ask them to check in with you this week.

Closing Reflection

Read together Luke 4:18-19:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Question: How does this vision of Jesus' mission challenge or inspire you?

Closing Prayer

Pray together, inviting each person to:

- Confess areas where they've tried to make Jesus fit their expectations
- Surrender their will to His lordship
- Ask for grace to embrace the upside-down kingdom