



## 2. Topsy-Turvy Kingdom

**Age range:** Primary

**Theme:** We gather as a community for collective worship that is **inspiring, invitational and inclusive**, reflecting the fact that we are a part of a diverse school family and the wider church community. This term, we are reflecting on some important words of Jesus in the ‘Sermon on the Mount’, which Christians call the ‘Beatitudes’. We are using some of the wider themes in Jesus’ words to help us to think about the attitudes we have towards each other – and the ways in which your own school’s vision and values helps to shape this into your community.



### How does this link to your school’s Christian vision & values?

Many of the qualities expressed in Jesus’ words will be familiar values for your school community, so we encourage you to link each week’s collective worship to your school vision – and the way that you live this out through your values. Today we are especially thinking about what Jesus taught the crowds in the ‘Sermon (Lesson) on the Mount(ain)’, thinking about what God’s Kingdom might be like. This is an important back-drop to the term’s themes as it explores how different the prevailing culture was in Jesus’ time, under Roman occupation.

### Resources:

- The PowerPoint slides are numbered with a point in the script so you can find your way, and the parts in **bold** show you where to click on to activate the next slide or animation. You could quite easily use this collective worship without the PowerPoint if you preferred.
- **You will need to find....** a role play crown, or a paper one, to play the game at the start. Use this music from the Queen’s coronation [here](#). You will also need to print out the discs on p3 (on yellow card if you have it) that can be ‘flipped’, showing the opposites that Jesus spoke about in the verses referenced for this week. Make the discs look like large coins by sticking the two sides together: lose-gain; greatest-least; last-first
- **There are also some ideas for reflective activities / ideas to ponder for use in your reflective areas for this term, listed at the end of the script along with a handy wall chart to print each week for your reflective area. You can find all these as a separate file in our resources area, which may make it easier for teachers to print and use in their classrooms.**
- **Reflective prayer activity:** this week, put a crown in your role play area, to gather ideas about ‘forgotten people’ in our day and think about how Jesus’ words might apply today, in your school community.

### Gathering: Teach the new gathering words, which will be the same each week.



- **Leader: We are here together**
- **ALL: May our attitudes make our school community a happy place today.**

### Engaging:



- **Slide 2:** Today, we’re going to think about some words that Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of God, as we begin our new term of themes.
- But first, let’s think for a few moments about kings, queens – and kingdoms..... You might know these famous rulers....[King Henry VIII and Queen Victoria: if you’ve covered these periods of history in your curriculum, you may be able to flesh this out with your children] **This picture is our King.** He was crowned in 2023, becoming King in September 2022 after his mother, the late Queen Elizabeth II (our longest reigning monarch) died. He was 74 years old when he became King!
- All three of these rulers have each had their own ideas about being a good leader – and what they wanted their kingdoms to be like.
- **Slide 3: What would you do if you were allowed to be Queen or King for a day?** Allow pupils a few moments to think, then play ‘pass the crown’ with some coronation music, and whoever is left holding the crown when you stop the music gets to share their ‘decrees’.
- [Comment on their ideas – they will probably be a real mix, and are likely to show pupils’ age-appropriate ideas about being ‘in charge’ or a ‘leader’. This will help make the transition to the ideas that Jesus introduced]
- **Slide 4:** I wonder what would *you* do if you were **allowed to be Queen or King for a day?** Allow pupils a few moments to think, then play ‘pass the crown’ with some coronation music, and whoever is left holding the crown when you stop the music gets to share their ‘decrees’. [Comment on their ideas – they will probably be a real mix, and are likely to show pupils’ age-appropriate ideas about being ‘in charge’ or a ‘leader’. This will help make the transition to the ideas that Jesus introduced]
- **Slide 4:** Before we find out what Jesus said about God’s Kingdom, we need to spend a few moments thinking about the world in Jesus’ time, which as some of you may know, was ruled by the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was ruled by the Caesars, who were very powerful, and literally had the power to decide who lived or



died. Like most leaders at that point in history, they had to show how strong and powerful they were so that their enemies would be too frightened to fight them. The Caesars were protected by the fearsome **Roman army**, and history is full of stories of how cruel and unkind they were in the way they treated people, especially those whom they had conquered!

- So, now let's find out what Jesus said about *God's Kingdom*.....and why some of his words were so difficult for the people to understand.....
- **Slide 5:** Use the large coins to explore which words children think are 'Roman Empire' words and which might be 'God's Kingdom' words. Then share the Bible verses with them as well to confirm which way round the words go:
- 'The last shall be first and the first shall be last'; (you may need to explain that the 'last' would be the people that the Romans would have treated badly, those without power and influence e.g. slaves, women, the poor etc.)
- 'If you want to be great then you must serve others';
- 'Whoever loses their life for my sake will find their life'.
- **Talking time:** Allow children time in small groups or with talk partners to talk about what they think Jesus was meaning. Don't worry if they don't fully understand, or even find it impossible – few of the people who listened to Jesus understood either!
- **Slide 6:** Over the coming weeks, we are going to be exploring some more of Jesus' words about God's Kingdom, and think about how they might help us here in our school community to live well together. The words are part of a very famous part of the Bible called the 'Sermon on the Mount'....but we'll hear more next week!

### Slide 7: Responding (and words for worship)

... So now we're going to be still and quiet, as we wonder together....  
....the words Jesus spoke about God's kingdom were strange and confusing to the people who heard them...  
....about being last so that you can be first...  
...about giving up your life for others, to find your life....  
....about serving others in order to be great....  
....these were puzzling, confusing and topsy-turvy words then, and now....  
....**I wonder what the world might be like if these things happened?...**  
....**I wonder how we might live out these words in the life of our school?....**



I'm going to turn my thoughts into a prayer now. Make the prayer your own if you'd like to...or if you'd prefer not to pray, then just sit quietly with your own thoughts.

### Slide 8: Dear God

**The words that we have heard today are puzzling.**

**They remind us that your kingdom is different.**

**Help us to understand what this means through our times together this term.**

### Slide 9: Amen

### Sending: Slide 10

**Leader:** As we leave this place and time and go into the day ahead...

**All:** May these puzzling words keep us thinking....!



### To listen to:

Some Coronation music e.g. Zadok the Priest, video [here](#). To sing: [Together](#) (NBD)



### Slide 11: Reflection areas

Put a toy crown in your reflection area. The pupils can write or draw people that are often last, overlooked or forgotten in our world, such as street cleaners, people who are too elderly to get out of their home, refugees, and place the slips of paper inside the crown. Later in the week take the children's ideas out of the crown. How could you serve them? Are there any charities that your school supports which do this? If

there any people in your school community who often get forgotten (e.g. cleaners who come in after you've gone home or kitchen staff who come in before school starts) Leave them a thank you note for all they do so that they feel noticed.

- **Treat time:** as a class, vote on some 'decrees' that it *is* possible to put into practice e.g. extra 'golden time' on a Friday if all work is finished; or a movie afternoon; or a longer playtime. Can you think of some 'decrees' that benefit children in other classes as well, or maybe support other people in your community?



Enlarge, then print onto yellow card and stick back-to-back



**find**



**lose**



**first**



**last**



**greatest**



**servant**





*...Jesus said that the Kingdom of God has some rather topsy-turvy values!*



**I wonder what you think about Jesus' words about the last being first or serving others to be truly great?**



**Talk together about people in our community who show these values or maybe feel forgotten.**



**What might we do to show that they are not forgotten and that we appreciate them?**

