

**WARM-UP**

- Who do you trust the most? Why?
- Recall an instance when somebody promised you something. Was that person able to fulfill his or her promise? Why or why not?
- Tell us about a time when you felt like you could not complete something, but were able to do it anyway.

**WORD** <sup>49</sup>Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" <sup>50</sup>Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' **do you believe?** You will see greater things than these." <sup>51</sup>And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." **JOHN 1:49-51**

(Read also **JOHN 1:43-48.**)

In this story, Jesus had just called His first disciples to follow Him. Among these was Philip, who loved pointing others to Jesus. Philip found Nathanael sitting under a fig tree and, with enthusiasm, told him that the man foretold by Moses and prophets had come. Nathanael had his doubts, but Jesus turned them into faith. Nathanael then praised Jesus and called Him the Son of God, while Jesus went a step further by speaking of the Son of Man. Today, we will explore these titles of Jesus and their significance during—and beyond—Christmas.

# 1 | Jesus is the Son of God.

*Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"* **JOHN 1:49**

Nathanael doubted Philip's claim that the man Moses and the prophets spoke of was someone from Nazareth, a small, rural town that surely a king would not come from. But God works differently than we humans think—He chooses the foolish and little things to accomplish His grand plans. When Jesus told Nathanael that He saw him before Philip did, Nathanael's doubts were removed and he acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God. This title referred to the promised Savior King from the line of David who would bring restoration to Israel and rule with peace, justice, and righteousness. How does this change the way you think of the wise men who gave gifts to Jesus when He was born (Matthew 2:1–11)?

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## 2 | Jesus is the Son of Man.

*And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."* **JOHN 1:51**

Nathanael's response to Jesus' wisdom seemed to be an earthly and political statement. Little did he know that Jesus would not only reign on earth, but the kingdom of heaven would also come. Jesus tells him that the heavens would be opened with *angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man*. While some people associate this title with humanity and humility, it speaks of a glorious and heavenly ruler. Daniel had a preview of this Son of Man who would establish an eternal kingdom and rule forever, not only for Israel, but also other nations (Daniel 7:13-14). How does this truth support the fact that Jesus died and resurrected for people from different cultures and backgrounds?

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The picture that Jesus showed Nathanael is the fulfillment of a similar dream that the patriarch Jacob had of angels going up and down a ladder (Genesis 28:10-19). Ultimately, Jesus bridges heaven and earth together by being the means of getting to heaven, while also being the means of heaven coming down here on earth. These two titles of Jesus affirm both His humanity and divinity. We can celebrate Christmas because Christ came down to live among us, ultimately giving Himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sin, so that in Him we may have eternal life.

## APPLICATION

- Jesus' humanity and divinity exist together. Through this, He became a way of bringing man to God, and heaven to earth. This week, take some time to meditate on this truth and give praise to God.
- Both Jesus' humanity and divinity enabled Him to redeem mankind from sin. How does this truth strengthen your relationship with God?
- Jesus came to redeem and rule all nations. How can you be a blessing to people from different cultures and backgrounds this Christmas?

## PRAYER

- Thank God that through Jesus, we can have eternal life with Him. Pray for God's grace to live this out here on earth—that your heart may be fixed on the things that are eternal, not temporary.
- Pray that you would trust God in all things, and that He removes any fear or doubt that would hinder you from trusting who He is and His plans for your life.
- Pray that God uses you to be a blessing to others this Christmas. Ask God for wisdom and for open doors to preach the gospel to friends and family.



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