Group Guide

Prince/Pauper

December 13, 2026

Main Passage: Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 8:18-22; Zechariah 9:9-10

Theological Theme

Jesus is the Prince of Peace who modeled a life of humility for us to follow.

Introduction

- When you think of Jesus as a prince, what comes to mind for you?
- When you think of Jesus as living as a pauper, what comes to mind?

1. Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6-7)

Isaiah 9:6 may feel very familiar as a verse often read at Christmastime. This beautiful verse is a messianic prophecy that fits well with the celebration of Jesus's birth.

- How is the Messiah portrayed as a prince in this passage?
- What do we learn about Jesus and His character from this passage?
- Which of these descriptions of Christ do you feel most in need of now? Why?

2. No Place to Rest (Matthew 8:18-22)

The heading in the CSB here is "The Cost of Following Jesus." Following Jesus has a cost for all of us, but it is worth whatever sacrifice it requires. The scribe (some translations, like the NIV, refer to him as a "teacher of the law") who approached Jesus here had a human view of the relationship he might have with Jesus. In Jesus's day, a potential disciple would find a rabbi who was popular or well equipped and then follow him to learn.

- What point was Jesus making to the scribe in these verses?
- How does this remain relevant for our lives today?

What earthly duties are hard for you to give up in order to follow Jesus?

3. He Will Proclaim Peace (Zechariah 9:9-10)

Verse 9 calls to mind Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The Gospel writers recognized Jesus as fulfilling this prophetic word from Zechariah (Matthew 21:5; John 12:15). In keeping with our theme today, this passage from Zechariah paints a contradictory picture of royalty by human standards.

How is the description of the Messiah here reflective of a prince?

How is He simultaneously reflecting the status of a pauper?

How have you held incorrect expectations of Jesus? How does the truth about Him change those expectations?

Conclusion

Jesus's earthly ministry was marked with humility. He humbly obeyed the Father, and He lived simply. He had more authority and power than any other king, but no earthly trappings or pride in His ministry. He is worthy of our worship, and He is the example to emulate as we walk through life as His disciples.

What does our study of Jesus as prince and pauper teach us about Him?

What are some ways you have experienced the shalom that Jesus brings?

How might living humbly with others give us further opportunities for gospel conversations?