

**One truth shared:** God worked through incredibly unlikely beginnings to bring us Jesus. He is our one, true king and champion.

*A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra’s den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper’s nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.*

**Isaiah 11:1-10**

### True Champion

We all love a good champion story. You know the one, where a person or team rises from the ashes and overcomes incredible odds to achieve a glorious victory. *Rudy*, *Remember the Titans*, and *The Blindside* are just a few of the many movies that tell a champion’s story.

Why do we like those stories? Well, they seem to lift us up to a better place. They give us something to feel good about in the midst of life’s problems. In a way, we almost feel like we share in their victory.

In today’s Bible verses, the Old Testament prophet Isaiah tells another champion’s story—the story of a mighty ruler, a victorious king from humble beginnings. This king would come from a line of kings that had been all but cut off—from a family tree that had been cut down without a trunk, branches, leaves, or fruit, and only its stump left in the ground. The miracle of Christmas is that from a dead stump in a dead, decaying world comes a live twig—a small, living shoot—in the form of a real person. God raised up a new king—a champion.

Isaiah tells us that this king, despite his humble beginnings, would be like none the world had ever seen.

- He would reign with perfect power, authority, wisdom, understanding, and justice.
- He would always do what was right, and most importantly for you and me, he would make us right with God.
- He would conquer every obstacle that this world and the devil could throw at him.
- He would overcome the most incredible odds to live perfectly in our place, lay down his life, and win for us forgiveness and eternal life with God.
- He would bring forth a kingdom where there would be nothing but peace and comfort everywhere.

Who is this king? Who is this champion? He’s Jesus! Movie characters like Rudy, the Titans, and Michael Oher (from *The Blindside*) may help us feel better temporarily, but Jesus is the only champion that can fulfill all our eternal needs and give us the lasting joy, hope, and peace we long for. Why? Because his victory truly is *our* victory.

This Advent and Christmas let’s celebrate the king and champion foretold by Isaiah the prophet. Our one true champion—Jesus.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, you are the true champion we need. We marvel at your humble beginnings and celebrate your glorious victory over sin and death. Thank you that your victory is our victory. Amen.

# Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

## Year A – Advent 2

### Come, Lord Jesus

**One truth shared:** God worked through incredibly unlikely beginnings to bring us Jesus. He is our one, true king and champion.

## True Champion

**Starting the Discussion:** *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

Compile a list of your favorite stories or movies about people who overcame incredible odds to become champions.

**Connecting:** *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

- Why do we like stories about unlikely underdogs who become champions?
- How is the story of Jesus a similar champion's story?

**Digging In:** *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- Jesus came from the family line of Jesse. Discuss how this family line became “a stump” by the time Jesus was born.
- Read through Isaiah 11:1-10. They describe what the coming King, Jesus, would be like as well as what his kingdom would be like. Which characteristics of this King or his kingdom are especially meaningful for you?
- What encouragement does God want us to have when Isaiah says in verse 10 that our King Jesus “will stand as a banner for the peoples”?
- How is Isaiah 11:10 a special encouragement for us who are non-Jews?

**Conclusion:** *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the “connecting question” above.*

In what ways is our champion, Jesus, a better champion than any you might find in books, movies, or even in real life?