

## “The First Fold” | Is Jesus a Genie or a King?

**GETTING STARTED:** When was the last time you saw someone make something out of folded paper? What’s the most impressive thing you’ve ever seen done with origami? (Try googling “*amazing origami*” for inspiration!)

### EXPLORE THE TOPIC

1. What does the modern parable, “Red sky at morning, sailors take warning; red sky at night, sailors delight” mean? What other homegrown wisdom phrases come to mind?
2. What “status quo” images of Jesus exist today? Where do these images come from? What perpetuates their existence?
3. Identify each of the miracles that Jesus had performed earlier in Matthew’s gospel. Why aren’t these “good enough” for the Pharisees and Sadducees?
  - Matthew 14:13-21
  - Matthew 14:22-36
  - Matthew 15:21-28
  - Matthew 15:29-39
4. What is the difference between a sign and a miracle?
5. The term “asking” found in Matthew 16:1 sounds innocent enough, but carries the idea of a test or interrogation. What pattern do you notice regarding requests (demands!) made of Jesus?
  - Matthew 12:10
  - Matthew 12:38
  - Matthew 15:23
  - Matthew 16:1
6. Read Matthew 16:4. Jesus is suggesting that the only sign they will receive is that of Jesus risen anew. How does the story of Jonah point to Jesus?
7. In what ways do we make demands of Jesus today? When have you seen Jesus viewed or portrayed as a genie, rather than a King?
8. As we grow in our relationship with Christ we must move away from trying to “get what we want” from Jesus to a place of trust. What advice would you give to someone that has a hard time trusting in general? How is trusting God different? How does the desire to see a “sign” relate to this topic?
9. Read Philippians 2:5-11. What words or phrases help point to Jesus as King? What words or phrases point to Jesus as a servant? In what ways was He both? How does that challenge the common help view of royalty or kingship?
10. How does making demands for needs (“*I need money*”) and demands for reasons (“*I lost my job, God, why?*”) complicate our relationship with God?

### APPLY THE TRUTH

Take time to reflect on the words of Philippians 2:5-11. Assess whether or not you treat Jesus as a genie or a King, or some combination of both.

### NOTES:

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