

Talking about Jesus at work and home

What kind of King?

A colleague shows you a video from a weekend march where crowds chant "Christ is King", and asks: "Is that your lot, then?"

Reader's edition

Level	Setting	Conversation	Topic
🌿 Growing → 🍎 Confident Confident from section 5	💼 Work	🚪 Open door & ✋ Push-back	Christ is King

Levels 🌱 Starter: new or unsure · 🌿 Growing: some confidence · 🍎 Confident: the harder conversations

St John's Church, Woking

Workplace & Neighbourhood Evangelism

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RUTH the Christian · DAN and GEMMA the other people

THE NOTES IN THE CONVERSATION

1 STOP AND THINK · 1 WHAT'S GOING ON · 1 THE SPIRIT · 1 AT WORK · 1 BIBLE AND VOICES

Each note runs across the page, in its own colour, under the line it goes with. Underlined Bible references open the verse (NIV UK).

BEFORE YOU READ

This isn't a script to learn off by heart. It's one example of how a conversation like this might go. It's good to be prepared (1 Peter 3:15), but in a real conversation it's the Holy Spirit who leads, usually quietly, through the Bible, prayer and ordinary good sense, and sometimes more clearly. Jesus promised His followers that when they were put on trial for Him, the Spirit would give them the words (Luke 12:11–12), and He still helps us when we're put on the spot. So read it through, stop where it asks you to, and think about what *you* might say. Then pray for your own conversations. You don't need to get it perfect. It's God who brings people to faith, and He's pleased to use ordinary people like us to do it.

About this booklet

Goes with

- *What kind of King? Sunday lunch* and *What kind of King? Over the gate*: the same question at home and on your street
- *What kind of King? Hard questions*: the companion handout (questions 1 to 3 go with this conversation)
- *Nations and the kingship of Christ*: the Go deeper booklet on this theme
- *Faith at work: your rights, and the right thing to do*: the guide to the law at work

How this booklet was made

This conversation was written with the help of AI (Claude, made by Anthropic). The AI did the research and wrote the drafts. A member of St John's chose the topic, decided what it should cover, read it through, asked for changes and approved it.

AI can get things wrong, and it can sound very sure of itself when it does. So the conversation has been through these checks:

- **The people.** A separate reviewer read each person's lines on their own, to check that they sound like one real person and that nobody changes their mind without a reason on the page.
- **Theology.** Separate AI reviewers read it against Scripture, the historic creeds and what Christians down the centuries have said. One reviewer was asked to hunt for error, for overstatement and for anything that might hurt someone who's struggling. Everything they found was put right and checked again.
- **Quotations.** Every quotation from another writer has been checked against its original source. Bible quotations have been checked against the NIV.
- **Facts, figures and the law.** The research figures have been checked against the original reports, and "Know where you stand" against current sources on the law at work.

It hasn't yet been reviewed by a trained theologian or a member of the clergy, or by a lawyer.

Please read it with care. Even after all these checks, some mistakes may remain. Test what you read against Scripture, as the Bereans did: they "examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" (Acts 17:11). If something doesn't look right, please let Tim Parr know at timparr40@gmail.com.

The views in this booklet are the author's own. They don't necessarily reflect the views of the leadership of St John's Church.

The small print

What kind of King? At work · Talking about Jesus at work and home · Reader's edition · Version 4.4, November 2026. "Know where you stand" is general information for England, Wales and Scotland (September 2026), not legal advice.

Quotations from other writers are used for comment and discussion.

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PART 1

The conversation

*The whole conversation, with numbered notes across the page under the lines they go with: what is going on, the Spirit, the Bible, and what Christians have said down the centuries. Where you see **Stop and think**, stop and decide what you would say before you read on.*

The setting

Monday morning in an open-plan office in Woking. **Ruth** (48, project manager, goes to St John's) is making coffee. **Dan** (32, data analyst, not religious, easy-going) is scrolling his phone. Everyone in the team knows Ruth goes to church. Dan's closest friend from university, Imran, is Muslim. At the weekend there was a large march in London. Clips of people carrying crosses and chanting "Christ is King!" have been all over social media.

1 "Is that your lot?"

Dan

(holds up his phone: a crowd, a big wooden cross, chanting "Christ is King") "Ruth, genuine question. Is this your lot, then?"

1 The Spirit

Ruth feels her face go hot. Silently: *"Lord, help me. Give me the right words, or the grace to say nothing clever."* That's often all the preparation there's time for, and God hears it.

Ruth

"Oof. Honestly? No, that's not what I'd recognise as my lot. But I'd be lying if I said it didn't bother me that they're using Jesus's name. What did you make of it?"

2 What's going on

Ruth doesn't get defensive or give a speech. She's honest ("it bothers me"), and then she *asks a question*. Being asked what they believe is the thing non-Christians most often remember from faith conversations with Christians (33%, *Talking Jesus 2022*). It also tells her where Dan is coming from.

2 The fear behind it

Dan

"Made me feel a bit sick, to be honest. Someone shouted at Imran's mum on the Tube last autumn. Because of her hijab. She's not been on it since. And these guys are waving crosses."

3 Stop and think

What would you say next?

Option A (what Ruth said): "That's awful. I'm really sorry. How's Imran doing with it all?" *Why:* she responds to the *person* before the *argument*. Imran and his mum are frightened neighbours, and Jesus defined "neighbour" across a religious divide (Luke 10:25–37).

Option B (less helpful): "Well, the media always shows the worst bits, and to be fair there are real problems with immigration…" *Why it tends to backfire:* it may contain truth, but here it sounds like defending the march and dismissing someone's fear. It turns the conversation into politics, not Jesus.

Ruth

"That's awful. I'm really sorry. How's Imran doing with it all?"

Dan

"He's all right. Angry more than anything. Weird thing is, my dad went on one of these marches last year. He's not racist. He's just been angry since about 2008, and he's furious about the hotel in his town, and nobody listens to him."

Ruth

"I can believe that. Loads of people are worried about their towns and feel ignored, and I think Christians should be listening to them too. It's the using Jesus as a flag that I can't get my head round."

4 What's going on

Ruth *refuses to demonise* Dan's dad. The Evangelical Alliance calls churches to pastor *both* those who feel ignored *and* those who feel unsafe. Christians can differ on immigration policy. They can't make Christ a tribal mascot. Ruth keeps the two apart.

3 "Bunch of gammons"

Gemma

(passing with her mug, glancing at Dan's phone) "Oh, that lot. Bunch of gammons. Embarrassing."

Dan

(flat) "My dad was on one last year, Gemma."

Gemma

"Oh. Well. I didn't mean... You know what I mean."

5 What's going on

"Gammon" is British slang, an insult for a man, usually older and white, with right-wing or pro-Brexit views, whose face goes pink when he's angry, like a gammon steak. It lumps a whole group of people together, and Dan's dad is one of them.

6 Stop and think

A colleague has sneered, Dan is bristling, and half the office can hear. What would you say?

Option A (what Ruth said): a calm reply that doesn't join the sneer and doesn't defend what was chanted. *Why:* Dan is trying to stand up for his dad and his best friend's mum at the same time. Ruth shows him it's possible to do both.

Option B (less helpful): "I know, it's awful, they're all...", or jumping to defend the march. *Why it tends to backfire:* either way, someone at the coffee machine gets written off, and Dan learns that Christians just pick a side.

Ruth

"Some of what was chanted was vile, Gemma, I'll give you that. But plenty of people there were just worried about their towns. I don't think we get to write them all off."

Gemma

"Mm. If you say so." *(She heads back to her desk.)*

Dan

(quietly) "Thanks. People in here talk about blokes like my dad like they're cartoons."

Ruth

"He's not a cartoon. He's your dad."

Dan

(half a laugh) "He's a bit of a cartoon, to be fair. But he's *my* cartoon."

7 What's going on

Dan is holding two loyalties he has no words for: his dad, and Imran's mum. Ruth gives him a way to hold both. She doesn't lecture Gemma either. A couple of sentences, then she lets it go. *Refusing to write anyone off*, the marchers or the colleague who sneers at them, is part of showing what kind of King she follows.

8 At work

Talking about the news at the coffee machine is fine. Sweeping put-downs of any group sour a team, and remarks that demean someone's race, religion or belief, age or sex can amount to harassment under the Equality Act 2010. Ruth's calm reply is the wise response and the lawful one. If remarks like Gemma's became a pattern, or were aimed at a colleague, that would be one for a manager. *(More in "Know where you stand", below.)*

4 "But you do think Christ is King?"

Dan

"Hang on, though. You said it bothers you, them using Jesus's name. But you *do* think Christ is King, don't you? So what's the difference between you and them?"

9 The Spirit

This is the moment Dan has opened the door himself. Ruth doesn't hear a voice telling her what to do. She prays a quick "Help!", trusts God, and makes a judgement call: Dan seems genuinely interested, so she answers. Here's one way it could go…

Ruth

"Yeah, I do. I think Jesus *is* King, of everyone, not just Britain. But the question is what *kind* of king He is."

Dan

"Go on."

Ruth

"He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, not a warhorse. He washed His friends' feet. And when they were nailing Him to a cross, He prayed, 'Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing.' I'm sure plenty of people there weren't trying to scare anyone. But if you shout His name while you're scaring someone's mum off the Tube, I think you've missed who He is."

10 What's going on

Ruth doesn't reject the phrase. She *reclaims* it and fills it with Jesus's own character (Zechariah 9:9; John 13; Luke 23:34). *The issue has become a doorway to Jesus.* Three short, everyday pictures say more than a theology lecture would.

Dan

(pause) "Huh. I didn't know that forgive-them bit was actually in the Bible."

Dan

(checks the time on his phone) "Right. Sprint review at ten. I should get back to this."

Ruth

"Go! Nice to talk properly."

11 What's going on

At work, conversations come in snatches. Dan's busy, and Ruth lets him go without trying to finish the whole gospel by the coffee machine. If something has caught him, he'll come back.

5 "Hasn't Christianity always been about power?"

Lunchtime. Ruth is eating her sandwich on a bench outside. Dan comes out with his.

Dan

"Survived the sprint review. Just about." *(sits)* "That forgive-them thing's been bugging me, genuinely. Because come on, hasn't Christianity always been about power, though? Crusades, the Empire, all that?"

12 Stop and think

How honest should Ruth be?

Option A (what Ruth said): she admits it straight, and points back to Jesus.

Option B (less helpful): "That's a myth. The Crusades were a response to Islamic expansion, and most wars aren't religious..." *Why it tends to backfire:* there's history worth discussing, but leading with defence sounds like excuse-making, and Dan will hear "Christians never admit anything". There's a time for history, and it's rarely the first reply.

Ruth

"Christians have done terrible things with power, no question. Sometimes even great Christians convinced themselves it was what God wanted. But whenever they did, they were going against Jesus, not following Him. When Peter pulled out a sword to defend Him, Jesus told him to put it away."

Dan

"So why bother with Christianity, then? Genuinely."

Ruth

"Honestly, the thing that got me, years ago, wasn't Christianity being strong. It was that Jesus is a king who died for His enemies, and that includes people like me."

Dan

"Enemies? Bit strong. To be fair, you're about the least judgemental person in this office."

Ruth

(laughs) "That's kind! But I'd spent years pleasing myself, basically living as if God wasn't King at all. The Bible calls that sin. And Jesus didn't wait for me to sort myself out. He died for me, in my place, while I was still like that, so I could be forgiven."

13 What's going on

Being honest about the church's failures takes the heat out of it. Then a *short personal story*, which non-Christians often remember from faith conversations (30%, *Talking Jesus 2022*). Dan's push-back ("Enemies?") lets Ruth *name sin plainly but personally*. Sin isn't "being nasty"; it's living as if God isn't King, which ties back to the whole conversation. Then the heart of the gospel: a King who died for His enemies. That's grace, Jesus taking our place, and forgiveness, all in plain words (Romans 5:8–10; Isaiah 53:6).

6 "So is Imran going to hell?"

Dan

(quieter) "OK. Genuine question, and you can tell me to get lost. Imran prays five times a day. He's a better person than me, honestly. Do you think he's going to hell?"

14 The Spirit

This is the question Dan has been circling all along: is Ruth's faith safe for his friends? There's no line that's both honest and comfortable. Ruth prays silently, *"Lord, truth and love. Both."* Nothing more comes, so she decides not to dodge it.

Ruth

"I'm glad you asked me straight. Honestly? I don't get to decide who's in and who's out. God does, and He knows Imran far better than I do. What I believe is that nobody gets to God by being good enough. Not Imran, not you, and definitely not me. That's why I need Jesus."

Dan

"So that's a yes, then. Bit arrogant, isn't it? Your way's the only way?"

15 Stop and think

Dan has put the hardest question there is. How do you hold truth and love together?

Option A (what Ruth said): she's honest that Christians believe Jesus is the only way, but explains that it's the opposite of "we're better than you": it's a rescue for people who can't make it. *Why:* it doesn't water down what Jesus said, and it doesn't make Imran smaller.

Option B (less helpful): "No, no, all religions lead to God really." Or: "Yes, I'm afraid so." *Why it tends to backfire:* the first isn't what Jesus said, and it doesn't respect Imran either, who also believes his faith is true. The second pronounces on someone only God can judge, and hands Dan exactly the arrogance he was afraid of.

Ruth

"It would be arrogant, if it was *my* way, or if it said good people get in and the rest don't. It says the opposite: none of us can make it, so God came to us. Jesus said He's the way to the Father. I believe Him, so of course I'd love Imran to know Him. But it's a rescue, not a club, and I'm only in it because I needed rescuing."

Dan

"Imran would say his way's the only way too, to be fair."

Ruth

"He might, and I'd love to hear him say it. We genuinely disagree about who Jesus is. But I don't have to agree with Imran to love him. Or his mum."

Dan

(long pause) "Huh. I'll think about that." *(then, lighter)* "Well, you're not like the guys in the video, I'll give you that."

16 What's going on

Ruth is honest about what Christians believe (John 14:6; Acts 4:12) *without pronouncing on Imran*, and without pretending all faiths say the same thing, which would be disrespectful to Imran too. She makes it about grace, not superiority: the "only way" is a way for people who can't save themselves. And she shows that real disagreement and real love can sit side by side. "I'll think about that" is a good outcome.

Ruth

"Ha, thanks. Most Christians I know aren't either. If you ever wanted to see what Jesus actually said and did, try Luke's Gospel. It's the one with the forgive-them bit, in chapter 23. I'd happily send you a link."

Dan

"Go on, then. No promises."

Ruth

"And can I say, I'd genuinely like to pray for Imran's mum. Would that be weird?"

Dan

"No… no, that's nice actually. I'll tell him."

17 What's going on

Two *small, easy next steps* that someone can say yes to: an easy route into the Bible, and an offer to pray. In the Evangelical Alliance's *Finding Jesus* survey (2025) of 280 recent converts, 47% said reading the Bible helped as they explored faith, and 37% said answered prayer did. Yet in *Talking Jesus 2022*, of non-Christians who'd talked about faith with a Christian they know, only 13% remembered being offered prayer. Praying for a Muslim friend's mother shows exactly the kind of King Ruth described.

18 At work

Dan raised the subject, and came back to it himself at lunch. Ruth makes one offer of each (a link and a prayer). That's comfortably within the law. If he'd said "no thanks", the right thing, and the lawful thing, is to leave it there. Sending the link by WhatsApp rather than work email keeps it personal. *(More in "Know where you stand", below.)*

Ending A: Dan leans in

That afternoon Ruth sends Dan a link to Luke 23. On Friday he says, "I read that chapter. The bit with the criminal on the cross is mad. 'Today you'll be with me in paradise'? After everything he'd done?" Ruth says, "That's grace. He admitted he deserved it and just asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom, and that was enough. And read on into chapter 24: on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. That's why I think He's actually King, not just a good man who died. Want to grab lunch and talk about it?" Later she mentions that St John's runs *Christianity Explored* every few months: "It's basically reading Mark's Gospel together, usually at the vicarage, often with something to eat, and no pressure."

Ending B: It goes cold

Dan never opens the link. On Friday, when Ruth asks if he had a look, he says, "Maybe. Religion's not really my thing, though," and goes back to his desk. Ruth doesn't push. She prays for Dan, Imran and Imran's mum that week. A fortnight later she simply asks, "How's Imran's mum doing?" Dan notices that she remembered. The door stays open. When a conversation goes cold, staying a friend and following up lightly is itself faithful witness.

PART 2

Toolkit

Quick answers for when you only have a moment, the main points to remember, and where you stand.

20-second answers

For when you've only got a moment before the conversation moves on. Each one aims to say something true with real weight, to leave a question in their mind, and to point to Jesus, "with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15).

> **"Is that your lot, then?"**
>
> "Not the Jesus I follow. He's a King who prayed for the people killing Him. If you shout His name while scaring people, you've missed who He is." *(Luke 23:34)*

> **"Isn't Christianity a white, Western religion?"**
>
> "It started in the Middle East, and today most Christians are African, Asian or Latin American. The Bible's picture of the end is a crowd from every nation and language worshipping Jesus together. Jesus isn't anyone's tribal mascot." *(Revelation 7:9)*

> **"Isn't Britain a Christian country?"**
>
> "Britain's been hugely shaped by Christianity: hospitals, schools, the idea that every person matters. But nobody's a Christian by passport. William Wilberforce put it brilliantly: 'Christianity is not a geographical, but a moral term.' You become a Christian by trusting Jesus personally, like the criminal on the cross in Luke 23. Jesus calls it being 'born again'." *(Luke 23:42–43; John 1:12–13; John 3:3; William Wilberforce, A Practical View, 1797)*

> **"Do you think my Muslim friend is going to hell?"**
>
> "I don't get to decide that. God does, and He's fairer and kinder than I am. What I believe is that nobody gets to God by being good enough, me included. Jesus said He's the way to the Father, so of course I'd love my friend to know Him. It's a rescue, not a club for good people." *(John 14:6; Genesis 18:25; Psalm 103:8; Ephesians 2:8–9)*

> **"So do Christians want Muslims out?"**
>
> "Jesus told me to love my neighbour, and He made a religious outsider the hero of His most famous story. I disagree with my Muslim friends about who Jesus is, but I'm called to love them, full stop." *(Luke 10:25–37)*

> **"Saying 'Christ is King' is just political."**
>
> "It's bigger than politics. It means Jesus is King over *every* nation, ours included, and over me. That humbles every country; it isn't a flag for one." *(Philippians 2:9–11; Psalm 2:10–12)*

> **"What about the Crusades?"**
>
> "Christians have done terrible things in Jesus's name, sometimes even Christians I'd otherwise admire, and it always went against His teaching. He told Peter to put the sword away, and for its first few centuries the church spread without any force at all. So judge Christianity first by Christ, and fair enough, judge us by whether we actually look like Him." *(John 18:10–11, 36; Matthew 7:16–20; John 13:35)*

> **"Is worrying about immigration racist?"**
>
> "Not necessarily. You can worry about your town *and* treat every person with dignity. Governments have a real God-given job to make fair rules, and Christians can disagree on the policy. But we can't disagree on loving the stranger in front of us." *(Romans 13:1–7; Leviticus 19:33–34)*

> **"Why does it even matter who's King?"**
>
> "Because if Jesus really rose from the dead, He's not just a good teacher; He's Lord of everything, including you and me. That's either the best news in the world or it isn't true. Worth checking out?" *(Acts 2:32–36; 1 Corinthians 15:14)*

Three things to take away

1. **Person before argument.** When someone shares fear or hurt, respond to *them* first.
2. **Reclaim, don't reject.** "Christ is King" is true. So show what kind of King He is: the donkey, the towel, the cross.
3. **Own the failures, point to Jesus.** Christians fail; Jesus doesn't. Then offer a small next step.

How the Spirit guides us

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be with His followers as they speak about Him (Luke 12:11–12; Acts 1:8). Most of the time the Spirit guides us in quiet, ordinary ways: as we pray and ask for wisdom (James 1:5), through the Bible He inspired, as He brings to mind what we've learned from it (John 14:26; Colossians 3:16), and through the love, gentleness and self-control He grows in us (Galatians 5:22–25). Sometimes He gives a clearer sense of what to say or do, as He did for Philip (Acts 8:29), and sometimes He closes one door and opens another (Acts 16:6–10). Any sense like that should fit with the Bible and with His character of love, so weigh it wisely, perhaps with a Christian friend (1 Thessalonians 5:19–21). If you don't feel any special prompt, that's normal. It doesn't mean He isn't there. And He works in other people too, in ways we can't see: convincing people about sin and opening their hearts to Jesus (John 16:8; Acts 16:14). So pray, use wisdom, speak "with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15), and leave the results with Him (1 Corinthians 3:6).

Know where you stand

> **The law in this conversation**
> General information for England, Wales and Scotland (September 2026), not legal advice.

- **Dan asked, so Ruth is on solid ground.** Answering a colleague's question about your faith, sharing your own story and offering to pray once are all protected under the Equality Act 2010. A chat between colleagues over coffee is the most comfortable setting of all.
- **Hot topics need care, not silence.** Talking about the marches, immigration or Islam at work is lawful. What can cross into harassment is language that demeans a colleague's religion or race, and there may be Muslim colleagues within earshot. Ruth's approach (no sweeping claims about Muslims, and love for her neighbour) is also the legally wise one.
- **When a colleague sneers, don't join in.** Gemma's "bunch of gammons" is the kind of remark that sours a team. You don't have to report a one-off comment, but you don't have to agree with it either. One calm sentence is enough. If remarks like that become a pattern, or one is serious or aimed at a particular colleague, raise it with a manager.
- **Take "no" as no.** One invitation (to read Luke, to lunch, to Christianity Explored) is fine. Repeating it after a clear no is where Christians at work have got into trouble. And if Ruth were Dan's manager, she'd need to let him lead: in a 2016 case, an NHS Trust disciplined a senior therapist for pressing her faith on a junior colleague she supervised. The tribunals rejected her claim of religious discrimination: she'd been disciplined for unwanted conduct towards someone junior to her, not for being a Christian.

- **If you're ever pulled up.** Stay gracious, keep a note of what was said, and get advice early from the Christian Institute, the Christian Legal Centre or Acas. Employers must act in proportion: in 2025 the Court of Appeal ruled that sacking Kristie Higgs over Facebook posts she'd shared was unlawful. But not every disagreement is a hill to die on. Sometimes the right thing is simply to be gracious and step back.

Scripture

> "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)

> "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight…" (John 18:36)

> "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9)

> "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." (1 Peter 3:15–16)

Go deeper

The companion handout: *What kind of King? Hard questions*. It takes the questions that come up in the three "What kind of King?" conversations (this one, at Sunday lunch, and over the gate) one at a time, each with a question to ask back, something you could say, and more to read. Questions 1 ("Christ is King"), 2 ("always about power") and 3 ("Is my Muslim friend going to hell?") go with this conversation. Ask in the group for a copy.

The Go deeper booklet: *Nations and the kingship of Christ*. What Christians have said about Jesus the King, our rulers and our country, from the first century to today. Section 6, "Marches, flags and your neighbour", goes with this conversation. Ask in the group for a copy.

Short reads (free online)

- "Christian nationalism in the UK: a contest for the nation's soul?", Peter Lynas, Evangelical Alliance (23 September 2025)
- "Flags, marches and 'Christ is King!'", Jamie Sewell, Premier Christianity (about 5 minutes): a vicar hears the chant through a frightened friend and through frustrated working-class men
- "Why are Christians such hypocrites?", Christianity Explored (about 2 minutes): for "Hasn't Christianity always been about power?"

Longer reads

- "Christianity and Nationalism in the UK", Evangelical Alliance (about 12 minutes): healthy patriotism, and where it goes wrong
- "Did Christianity spread by violence?", David Robertson, Solas (about 10 minutes)
- "Faith at work: what you need to know", Christian Legal Centre (April 2024): your rights, and where the lines are

Books

- *The Air We Breathe*, Glen Scrivener (The Good Book Company): how Christianity shaped the values Britain still lives by
- *Bullies and Saints*, John Dickson (Zondervan): an honest look at the good and evil of Christian history
- *King's Cross*, Tim Keller (Hodder): the King who came to serve, through Mark's Gospel

From the history of the church (quotations checked against the original texts)

> "religion is to be defended, not by putting to death, but by dying" (Lactantius, early 4th century: *Divine Institutes* V.20)

> "not to accuse others, but to confess our own sins" (John Newton, fast-day sermon, 1781: *The Works of the Rev. John Newton*)

> "Christianity is not a geographical, but a moral term" (William Wilberforce, 1797: *A Practical View of Christianity*)

The same question, in other places

This conversation is one of three. The same question ("Christ is King?") comes up at work, at home and on your street. Each one is a different conversation with different people, so each one tests something a little different. Here's what changed from place to place, and what stayed the same. If you'd like to read one of the others, ask in the group for a copy.

The other two conversations

- **What kind of King? Sunday lunch (at home).** Kirsty's dad Mike, carving the roast the day after a march: "You lot should be saying it louder." It tests staying calm when your family knows exactly how to wind you up, and loving a parent you disagree with.
- **What kind of King? Over the gate (on your street).** Ruth's widowed neighbour Linda saw the march on the news: "Is that church now? I thought I was a Christian." Then: "Geoff was a good man… So where does that leave…" It tests answering grief honestly and gently, and staying a friend.

	At work: Ruth and Dan (this one)	At home: Kirsty and her dad	On your street: Ruth and Linda
Where they stood	Dan was uneasy about the march, and worried for a friend	Mike was all for it: "You lot should be saying it louder"	Linda was frightened by it, and wondered if she was a Christian
History	A friendly colleague. Dan knows Ruth's work self	Thirty-five years. Mike remembers her at seventeen, and last Christmas	Years as neighbours (Geoff once sorted Ruth's fuse box); closer since Linda was widowed in March
What was at stake	Ruth's reputation, a colleague listening, and the law at work	The family peace, and the children watching	A friendship Ruth sees every day, and a widow's grief
The hardest moment	"Imran prays five times a day… Do you think he's going to hell?"	"Don't do that… make me the bad guy."	"Geoff was a good man… So where does that leave…"
The first move	Be honest, then ask a question	Agree where you honestly can, then ask a question	Answer the worry in one line, then follow the real question
What opened the door	Dan's own question: "So what's the difference?"	Being told he wasn't the bad guy, then family memory: Nan's faith	Linda's own question: "I thought I was a Christian."
The gospel, in plain words	A King who died for His enemies, me included: a rescue, not a club	A King who died in my place while I was living as if He wasn't King	A King who weeps with the grieving, died for us and is stronger than death: anyone can start trusting Him
The next step	A link to Luke's Gospel, and an offer to pray	Nan's Bible next Sunday, and a prayer for his back	A lift to the Wednesday coffee morning, the Lazarus passage through the door, and an offer to pray
If it went cold	Ask after Imran's mum a fortnight later	Talk allotments next Sunday; there's always another lunch	A cake on the 14th, the date each month that Geoff died

What stayed the same, wherever they were:

1. **Person before argument.** Listen first. Ask before you answer.
2. **Reclaim, don't reject.** Christ *is* King. Show what kind of King: the donkey, the towel, the cross.
3. **Point to Jesus, then offer one small next step** that fits where you are.



"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Luke 23:34

St John's Church, Woking

Workplace & Neighbourhood Evangelism

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