

# How Do I Switch Daddies?

**MOVIE:**  
*A KNIGHT'S TALE*



## **Lesson Objective:**

To educate teens on how they can come to know God as their real Daddy. This entails that they have come to the realization that they may be looking to Satan as their current daddy, admitting the reality of their lineage in Adam's sin. It means they believe and put their trust in God's only means of salvation from sin in Jesus Christ. And, finally, that they are willing to make a life-long commitment to represent (image) their real Daddy well through their true identity.

## **Intro to the Movie:**

*A Knight's Tale* is the story of William Thatcher (Heath Ledger) who despite being born a peasant, dreams of one day becoming a jousting champion. However, in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, only nobles were able to compete in jousting tournaments. Thatcher catches a break when the noble knight he was serving kicks the bucket in the middle of a tournament. So he disguises himself as the dead man and wins the tournament. The taste of victory compels Thatcher to continue his charade; he's determined to "change his stars." With one month to refine his skills, he trains with his comrades, Roland and Wat. A chance meeting on a dirt road with Geoffrey Chaucer turns out to be another turn of good fortune. Chaucer agrees to forge the patents of nobility to "prove" Thatcher's royalty for future jousting tournaments. His one month of intensive training pays dividends as he takes the jousting circuit by storm. With each victory, he continues to pass himself off as someone he is not.

One of the key scenes in the movies takes place during one of those smaller tournaments. William is slotted to joust Prince Edward of Wales, who is riding under another name in order to compete. Typical protocol was to yield, or withdraw, rather than risk injuring British royalty. This is what Count Ahdemar, William's eventual rival, does in his bout with the Prince. William, however, tilts

with Edward, beating him and winning the tournament. Curiously, William's courage to ride against the Prince earns him Edward's respect and admiration. Prince Edward will later repay William for his act of honorable and knightly courage.

William rises to quick stardom. His successes bring him to the final match of the World Championship tournament where he must face his nemesis Ahdemar. But five minutes before the fight, William's dubious persona (identity) comes to light. He's been found a fraud. Rather than running, he decides to face the music. He's forced to forfeit and is arrested shortly thereafter; it is the crisis moment of the movie.

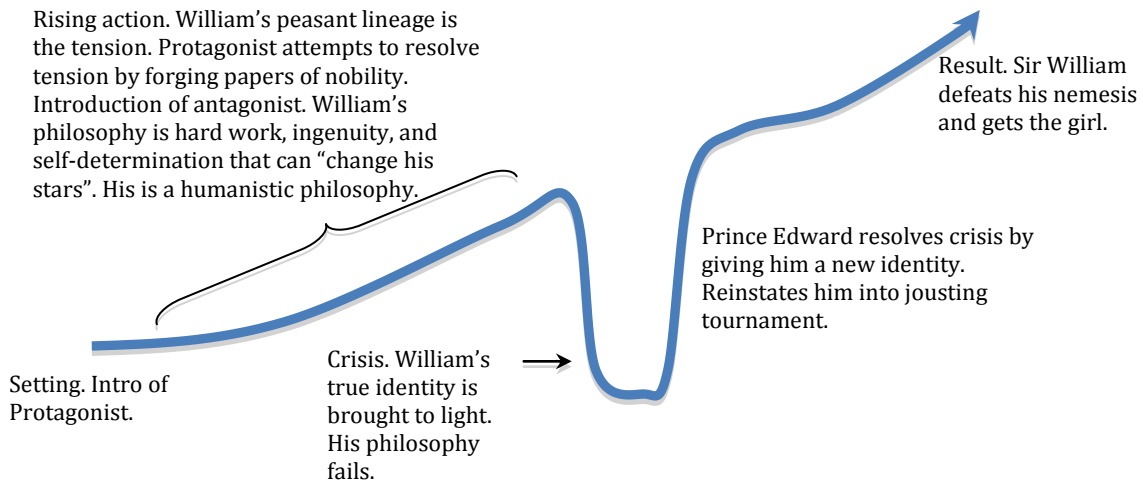
It seems William's stars have not changed after all. But, in a startling turn of events, with the crowd hurling insults and vegetables and William locked in the stocks, Prince Edward emerges from the crowd. He frees William and announces to everyone that William is descended from an ancient royal line. He resolves the crisis, knights him as "Sir William" and reinstates him in the tournament. Sir William goes on to defeat Count Ahdemar in a remarkable, yet predictable, come-from-behind victory. It is that point of resolution that marks the turning point in the story.

(The 3D lenses) As you prepare your teens to watch the movie, provide a brief teaching on the elements of a good story. Define terms such as setting, protagonist, antagonist, tension, crisis or climax, resolution, and results. Your definitions could look like this:

- setting** – when and where the story takes place
- protagonist** – the leading character of the story; the "good guy"
- antagonist** – the negative corollary to the protagonist; the "bad guy"
- tension** – the "rub" in the storyline, or plot. The protagonist will attempt to resolve this tension. It is here that his philosophy is revealed.
- crisis** – the point of the story where the protagonist hits rock bottom. It is here that we discover whether or not the protagonist's philosophy worked.
- resolution** – how the crisis gets resolved
- results** – the outcome of the resolution.

After reviewing these terms together, challenge your teens to look specifically for these elements as they watch the movie. This will give added meaning and purpose to the evening, particularly for those who have already seen the movie.

For the benefit of leaders, below is a basic overview of *A Knight's Tale* and visual application of what is covered above.



### Discussion Group Questions:

1. How does William attempt to resolve the tension of his peasant lineage and the requirements of the jousting tournaments?
2. Have you ever been tempted to lie or cheat your way to "success." If so, what was the end result?
3. How would you describe William's philosophy? Does his philosophy work? Why not?
4. How does Prince Edward resolve William's crisis? Could anybody have done what Edward did? Why not? What was it about Edward's identity that gave him the right to intervene?

### Group Input:

Leader-solicited responses from the large group on reactions to some of the questions.

Gathering of ideas and themes recognized in the discussion groups with a focus on guiding the audience toward the main objective: *To educate teens on how they can come to know God as their real Daddy.*

**Bullet Objective:**

*Put this summary in your own words, but here is a sample for your benefit:*

Recall the scene where William's identity goes from peasant to nobleman. Friends, do not let the obvious pass you by: William is a peasant and there is *nothing* he can do to alter that fact. His philosophy of self-determination, hard work, and unscrupulous ingenuity *fails*. Prince Edward, the son of King Edward, intervenes on the condemned man's behalf. The son, under the full authority of his father, declares him innocent and bestows upon him a *new identity* of nobility. Interestingly, William kneels in submission to acquiring this new identity in a demonstration of humble acknowledgment and acceptance (he is not forced to do so).

This is a picture of the gospel – of what God did for humankind. Check out the parallels: God created humankind to be in direct fellowship with him. Humankind disobeyed God – that is the crisis because it unravels God's perfect universe. Humans attempt to resolve this tension by working harder and doing better. While they know instinctively that “there's gotta be something more” outside of the what they see, they look to themselves to resolve their own problems. Did that philosophy work for William? No. Is it working for humankind? No. The reason is because humans got themselves into this mess and, therefore, cannot be the means by which they get themselves out of it. That's like fighting fire with fire. What happens when you do that? Yeah, the fire only gets more out of control! Humans need outside intervention to save them from themselves.

Thus, God sent Jesus, his one and only Son, who willingly chose death on a cross and, on behalf of condemned humanity, did for us what we could not. Jesus became sin and bore the brunt of God's wrath for sin and died for us. Three days later he conquered death by his resurrection. He lives by the Father's side never again to taste Satan's sting. When we bow before him as William did before Edward, he imparts his innocence and righteousness to us by the authority of his Father! He changes our identity from being enemies of God to friends with God (See Romans 5:10). In so doing, God undoes the work of Satan in Genesis 3. Humankind's philosophy fails and God's redemption is exalted. We receive brand new identities because the King has deemed it so.

Notice, God's story of salvation begins and ends with him. Have you ever stopped to consider how Christianity is different from every other faith? It is unique in that we in no way initiate our salvation. Listen to this verse in Ephesians 2:8-9:

*8-9*For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith. *It is not the result of your own efforts*, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it.

Can we take credit, or receive the glory, for our salvation? No. For Scripture consistently tells us that in and of ourselves we are helpless (See Romans 5:6). Incidentally, was William helpless? Could he do anything to rescue himself? No. What did he need? He needed intervention. What's more, if he ever wanted to enter the jousting stadium again, he needed an identity change. He needed to be a member of the nobility class. What did the son of the King bestow on William? Nobility. What do we need to enter God's kingdom? Righteousness. Can we get this by our own effort? No. Where can we get it? The Son of the King must enter the scene of our lives. We must, like William, bow before him, repent of our old nature (identity), and live for him. In exchange, he gives us his righteousness; and on his merits, we are able to enter God's Kingdom. Isn't this awesome? What a gift! What a Savior!

### Challenge:

1. Have you surrendered to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? If not, what is keeping you from exchanging your identity from that of a "peasant" to that of a "noble" in God's eyes?
2. If you have already bowed before King Jesus (like William did before the Prince), how well are you representing the King right now? Are there areas of your life that perhaps are not in alignment with Jesus' way of life? We challenge you to talk to God. Ask him to reveal to you areas in need of an overhaul.

*King of Kings, thank you for accepting us as your children because we have bowed before your son, Jesus Christ. We want to represent you with honor and for your Kingdom's purposes. Help us to do that this week and far beyond that. Amen*