

The King is Coming!

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your King is coming to you!” Zechariah 9:9 (see Matthew 21:5)

Jesus Christ is King! The prophets heralded the coming Messiah King (Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 7:13-14). The wise men hailed Christ's birth as King (Matthew 2:2). Jesus Himself said, “I am a King... for this reason I have come into the world (John 18:37).” The disciples declared Jesus was King (John 1:49; Luke 19:38). The apostles “upset the world” when they boldly proclaimed “King Jesus (Acts 17:6-7).” The angels in heaven worship Jesus as the King of kings (Revelation 17:14). At Calvary, Jesus proved He is a King worthy of our devotion (Revelation 5:12). Jesus Christ is God the Savior King who came not only to die for His Kingdom but to reign over His Kingdom (Philippians 2:8-11). The Kingdom was at the heart of Jesus' ministry (Mark 1:14-15). Jesus told His disciples to seek His Kingdom, pray for His Kingdom and proclaim His Kingdom (Matthew 6:10, 6:33; 24:14). Since God the Father has appointed Jesus as King, the Kingdom of God is the realm of Christ's Sovereign rule (Ephesians 1:22).

The Kingship of Christ is not an option for Christians. Jesus said, “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I say (Luke 6:46)?” God wants to give us His Kingdom but we cannot receive it unless Christ is our King (Luke 12:32; Acts 4:12). We cannot receive Christ's Spirit apart from Christ's Sovereignty. The focus of the early disciples was on Christ their risen King and His Sovereign Kingdom. They knew when they were born again they had changed kingdoms; God had rescued them from Satan's dominion and transplanted them into Christ's Kingdom (Colossians 1:13). They did not just outwardly change their old worldly lifestyle for a new “Christian” lifestyle. They knew Christianity meant Christ reigned in their lives. They knew discipleship meant they were bondslaves of Jesus Christ because He had ransomed them with His

own life (Romans 6:22; 1 Peter 2:16; 1 Corinthians 6:20).

Jesus told His disciples a parable of a king who was far away and whose servants did not want him to return and reign over them (Luke 19:11-27). As long as the king remained away, his sovereignty did not threaten them. In the same way, many professing Christians want Jesus to remain a far off King so they can honor Him with their lips from a safe distance but not be threatened by His Sovereign demands on their life. They want to enjoy the benefits of belonging to Christ's Kingdom without the cost of losing their soul-life to serve Christ the King (Matthew 10:38-39). At the end of the parable, Jesus said when the king finally returned, he ordered all those who rejected his reign over them to be slain. This is really a story of the end of the age. When Christ returns, He will gather out of His Kingdom all those who practiced lawlessness and never made Him King and throw them into the eternal fire of hell (Matthew 7:21-23; 13:36-50; 25:41).

The desire to submit to Christ's Kingship should motivate every child of the Kingdom. But who can free us from our soul's primal need for self-preservation, self-autonomy and self-fulfillment? We cannot possibly free ourselves from our sinful nature; only Jesus Christ is able (Romans 7:24-25). If we think we are able, in our natural strength, to be Christ's bondslaves in spirit, soul and body, it is because we have never honestly tried. It is impossible for us in the natural to turn away from preserving and promoting our soul-life and live a life of absolute surrender to Christ. First, we must acknowledge this truth. Next, God must open the eyes of our heart to see what Jesus Christ has already fully accomplished for us by His death on the cross.

The revelation of the cross of Christ is the secret to coming under the sovereignty of Christ. When we see that God has included us in His Son's death on the cross, we are freed to be Christ's bondslaves (Romans 6:6-22). When we know our old sinful nature has been crucified with Christ,

then Christ our King can fully reign in us (Galatians 2:20). If we do not know we have died with Christ, we will never fully experience Christ's Sovereignty. Christ will not force His Sovereignty on us if we are busy trying to be good “Christians” and fulfill ourselves in “Christian” ministry. The Kingdom and the cross are inseparable; we cannot know the King and possess His Kingdom except by the cross. But God will not share His precious revelation of the cross of His Son if we still want to maintain self-control and self-sovereignty over our lives. As long as we still think we are able in our own strength to do Christ's work, we will be blinded by our own self-confidence to the power of the cross of Christ. God will only reveal the truth of the cross to us when we finally come to the end of ourselves and are truly ready to receive His Son's Sovereignty in our lives.

Jesus said His Kingdom would be given to a people who produce its fruit (Matthew 21:43). He compared His Kingdom to planting a seed (Mark 4:14-20). When we first receive the word of Christ's Kingship into our heart, it is only a small seed. If His seed doesn't find a heart of faith in us, it shrivels and dies in the heat of affliction and persecution or is choked out by the pleasures and worries of this world. However, if the word of Christ's Sovereignty finds a heart of faith in us, it grows like a mustard seed into a mature tree. It takes over the whole garden of our life and bears much fruit. Christ our King died for us and included us in His death so He might sovereignly live in us. If we know we have died with Christ, let us now suffer with Christ in this life so that we might also reign with Him in the age to come (2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 20:6). Let us lay down our lives and prepare the way for the coming of our King! Come soon King Jesus!

*“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”
1 Timothy 1:17*

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