

“Thy Kingdom Come”
Lesson 6 - The Reign of the King in His Kingdom
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Introduction: What does a king do?

- A. In earlier lessons we learned that Jesus came into this world to be a king.
 - 1. This was announced by Gabriel to Mary. **(Lk 1:30-32)**
 - 2. Jesus affirmed His role as king to Pilate. **(Jn 18:37)**
- B. Still we have the question: “What does a King do?”
 - 1. The answer is found in the nature of the kingdom!
 - 2. The kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom that exists within the hearts of men. **(Lk 17:20-21)**
 - 3. Is there anything the King is doing today?

I. The Beginning of the King’s reign

- A. Consider Jesus’ arrival in heaven from earth! **(Dan 7:13-14)**
 - 1. Here we see a great scene of triumph. Jesus is like a victorious general similar to the Roman legions of old, returning home from victory with the spoils. **(Psa 68:18-19; Eph 4:8-13)**
 - 2. Imagine the scene as Jesus approached the gates of heaven! **(Psa 24:7-10)**
- B. Do we realize that Jesus gave these gifts to us so that we might work in His kingdom? **(Eph 4:16)**
 - 1. As we consider the gifts the king gave then we can better understand our role in the kingdom.
 - 2. What would be the first steps in the beginning of the king’s reign?

II. The Role of the Apostles in the kingdom

- A. What is an apostle? ἀπόστολος apostolos □ AV - apostle 78, messenger 2, he that is sent 1; 81 □ 1) a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders 1a) specifically applied to the twelve apostles of Christ 1b) in a broader sense applied to other eminent Christian teachers 1b1) of Barnabas 1b2) of Timothy and Silvanus
 - 1. These apostles were to be special witnesses. **(Acts 1:21-26)**
 - 2. As with the King, these men were to bear witness of the truth. **(Acts 4:18-20)**
 - 3. These were humble men who spoke God’s revealed truth as debtors to an unmerited grace they had received! **(Rom 1:15)**
- B. The apostles were given the full revelation of God to deliver to men. **(Jn 16:7-13; Eph 3:3-5)**
 - 1. Along with this revelation God would bear witness with them with signs and wonders. **(Heb 2:3-4)**
 - 2. Paul pointed out the special signs that accompanied apostles. **(2 Cor 12:12)**
 - 3. To refuse to hear an apostle is to refuse to hear the King! **(1 Jn 4:1,6)**
- C. Jesus spoke in His ministry of the special role of the apostles.
 - 1. He spoke of giving them the “keys of the kingdom” and of their “binding and loosing.” **(Mt 16:18-19; Mt 18:18)**
 - a. The “keys” were the promises of God that gave men the conditions to

enter the kingdom. Notice how the Pharisees did not have these keys.
(Mt 23:13; Lk 11:52)

- b. Some have suggested a unique reference to Peter who then was allowed to preach the first gospel sermon to the Jews and then to the Gentiles.
- c. "Binding and losing" are terms that refer to the law of God.
- 2. He spoke of them as reigning with Him on twelve thrones. **(Lk 22:28-30)**
 - a. When did Jesus begin His reign?
 - b. How do the apostles sit on thrones? **(Mt 23:2; 1 Cor 14:37)**
 - c. Remember that the King's will in the hearts of men cannot take place without the proper delivery of His teaching. In fact we must have the "whole council of God." **(Jn 6:44-45; Acts 20:26-27)**

III. The present work of the King today

- A. His work in providing a perfect sacrifice is finished. **(Jn 4:34; 5:36; 17:4; 19:30)**
 - 1. No one can add to this great work.
 - 2. There is however work for "our man in heaven!"
- B. He rules in the kingdoms of men. **(Rev 2:26-27; Psalms 2:8-12)**
- C. He rules in the hearts of men. **(Phil 2:9-11)**
 - 1. He provides opportunity for those who wish to know Him. **(Acts 16:9-10; Col 4:3-4)**
 - 2. Do you pray for doors of opportunity?
- D. He is our High Priest. **(Heb 8:1-2)**
 - 1. He approaches God on our behalf! **(1 Jn 2:1-2; 1 Tim 2:5)**
 - 2. He wants us to approach Him. **(Heb 4:15-16)**
 - a. What kind of throne does He have?
 - b. What does God want us to do in time of need?
 - c. If we do not feel that we can approach God then how can He reign in our lives?

Conclusion: Where would we be if Jesus had ascended into heaven and then did nothing?

- A. How do we show that we serve a God who is active in our lives? **(Heb 4:14-16)**
- B. How is God presently working in your life? Do you have the courage to really let Him reign in your life?

"An Arab chief tells a story of a spy who was captured and then sentenced to death by a general in the Persian army. This general had the strange custom of giving condemned criminals a choice between the firing squad and the big, black door. As the moment for execution drew near, the spy was brought to the Persian general, who asked the question, "What will it be: the firing squad or the big, black door?"

The spy hesitated for a long time. It was a difficult decision. He chose the firing squad.

Moments later shots rang out confirming his execution. The general turned to his aide and said, "They always prefer the known way to the unknown. It is characteristic of people to be afraid of the undefined. Yet, we gave him a choice."

The aide said, "What lies beyond the big door?"

"Freedom," replied the general. "I've known only a few brave enough to take it."

-- Don McCullough, "Reasons to Fear Easter,"

Questions for Lesson 6

The reign of the King in His Kingdom

1. What is the role of a King in his kingdom? How does Jesus rule as a king?
2. How is Jesus' entry into heaven depicted in Dan 7:13-14 and Eph 4:8?
3. What is an apostle?
4. What does "binding and loosing" mean in **Mt 16:19 and Mt 18:18**?
5. How were the apostles to "sit on thrones" in the kingdom of Christ? (**Lk 22:28-30**)
6. Why is delivering the "whole council of God" the goal of every teacher in the kingdom? (**Acts 20:26-27**)
7. What work did Jesus finish on earth? Did He have yet other work to do?
8. How does Jesus rule in the kingdoms of men?

9. What does Jesus do for us now as our king?

10. Why is it important that we feel that we can approach the throne of our king? How do we do this?

Eroding the Foundation - Subjectivism
Tim Nichols

Modern man has lost the ability to learn and obey God's truth by destroying, for the most part, the most basic principle on which truth can rest. This is a principle that is taught in the scriptures (**1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:6, 7; 4:1-5; Titus 1:10-13**) as much as it is an observation made in the real world. The notion that truth exists at all is rejected by many, - even by some who claim to be Christians. It really seems to be a part of the breakdown of "rational thinking" more than a deterioration of "communication" skills.

We are seeing, in our day, the fruit of subjectivism. Words do not mean anything in these days of relativism. As a result of this men seem to feel free to construe the words of others in any way they choose. They expect others to construe their words to mean what they do not mean in the dictionary. These are two sides of one coin. The coin of subjectivism.

In "the old days" two men would approach a question or a problem with something in common. They both believed that truth existed and they usually believed that the truth they were seeking could be found. They may have differed widely concerning just what the truth was, but they both believed it was out there, independent of what they chose to think. They both argued about the evidence with the mutual hope of finding the truth. Today, many (if not most) in our culture have been "educated" (indoctrinated may be more accurate) to believe that all truth is relative. When we attempt to speak with many of our neighbors and some of our weak brethren we are simply not on the same page. When we present evidence for the existence of God, the inspiration of the Bible, the truthfulness of specific Bible doctrines, and the rightness and wrongness of certain human actions, we are met with confused looks by those who stand on no foundation and believe that none exists. While we love those who are thus adrift without anchor or rudder we are

often frustrated in our attempts to find some "common ground" that will serve as a basis for study and communication.

This may be a slight exaggeration, but it seems that when a subjectivist says that, "You are a dirty, stinking skunk!" he is shocked that you did not construe his words to mean that, "You are an immaculate, charming sweetheart." In his confused mind you are responsible for knowing what he meant and that what he meant was not definite and rigid. You are guilty of unfair judging when you take his words to mean what we normally use those words to mean. With him, meanings are flexible rather than fixed. When he says, "You look like a monkey", he may mean "Apples are fruit." This can be frustrating when we are on the receiving end of "communication" with a subjectivist, but it is much more bearable than when we are on the sending end. The subjectivist feels free to take your words to mean anything he chooses and to tell others what he has "perceived" you to say. After all, in his mind, words can mean no more than the ideas that they represent. Since ideas, in his distorted thinking, can never be objectively fixed, he feels free to impose any meaning upon them that he chooses.

Over the past several years we have heard enough straw men quoted by subjectivists to supply the need of every corn field in the world. While we might as well give up trying to convince the subjectivists of anything beyond the truth that truth exists, we need to call them to account for the public statements for the sake of those who hear their claims. One brother told me this week that, in "45 years of attending the church of Christ, no one ever told [me] what Jesus has done for us!" When I asked him for the names of the elders, teachers, and preachers who had neglected their work by not telling him about the grace, mercy, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. At first he refused to give me their names on the grounds that I might be unkind in my dealing with them. When I promised to be kind and to simply tell them what he had told me and ask them to study some Bible verses with me he changed his tune and said, "Well, they did teach me what Jesus has done for us, but they did not teach me about how the Holy Spirit will directly guide me in my daily life." Notice the giant difference between the former and latter statements! And such non-thinkers cannot see the inherent dishonesty of their own words because truth, to them, is always "fuzzy."

Others tell us that "nothing can be questioned in churches of Christ." When you ask them what question they are not permitted to ask, they are at a complete loss. Usually, they have no response because most preachers and teachers among us are delighted to have questions to explore from the Bible. A few have said, more or less in response, "But they claim to have the answers!" And this is the problem for the subjectivist: "answers!" He hates all things presented by others as absolute facts. He repudiates the very idea of undeniable truths proceeding from others. He paints the whole realm of ideas gray so he can select what he chooses from the

whole to turn either black or white at will. He cannot maneuver well in an environment with fixed boundaries and immovable obstacles. There he loses his freedom to manipulate, exploit, negotiate, and orchestrate.

The Bible does not present a problem for the subjectivist because of *what* it specifically teaches. His problem with the Bible is *that* it specifically teaches. His problem with the church and her teachers is not really *what* is taught. His problem is *that* specific things are taught as inflexible truth. His battle is not really with the specific doctrines that he seems to attack as much as it is with the notion that specific doctrines can be settled once and for all. This leaves him without arguments in favor of his own ideas and it places him perpetually at odds with God's people who are always prepared "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (**Jude 3**).

Larry W. Rouse
3637 Robin Circle
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 981-6768
E-Mail: Bible1@Juno.com
Church Web Page: www.cahabachurch.com