

## GATEWAY CHURCH NORTHUMBERLAND

25.10.15

### **King Jesus - Joss Bray**

We've talked a lot about the kingdom of God recently. And of course, Jesus talked a lot about it - especially in parables - which we've looked at. Since Jesus himself is the king of that kingdom, we need to know what sort of king he is and the sorts of things we should expect him to do.

We need to know our Lord - why? - Because when we become Christians we are actually saying - Jesus - become Lord of my life - we are following you.

We are saying - I don't want to live for myself any longer. I want to get rid of the things that hold me back from living for God. I now realise that there is a God who loved me so much that he sent his Son Jesus to open up the way to knowing God as my father. And he did it in the only way possible - taking in himself the whole weight of sin and nastiness and corruption and evil that the world poured out on him.

That punishment should have been ours - we deserved it. Deep down inside we followed the world and its teachings and bowed to its pressures which kept God out of our lives. The world tends to deny he exists, or even if he could exist, he is a distant concept, one of many valid religions that were equally worth following - or not - depending on your belief - or lack of it.

But when Jesus came - both fully man - and fully God - in God's image - he blew away all that. He was fully involved in the world - but not governed by it. He fully experienced everything we do - but he kept his focus on his heavenly father. He was tempted in every way that we are - yet he never sinned - he never went against what God's will was for his life.

In the way he treated people, the way he healed people, the way he pointed to the kingdom of God coming, the miracles he did, and his character - and so much more - he demonstrated that living for God was not only possible, but actually the most important thing to do with our lives.

He lived for his Father - but he died for us. In his death, evil did everything it could to him - there was not a more excruciating suffering and death devised that he could have suffered. That is where the word excruciating comes from - it means "from the cross".

So Jesus died - but God raised him from death - gloriously. At that point, evil was defeated. The power of God overcame everything that the power of evil could do. That's the thing about God's power and his kingdom - it overcomes. And it reconciles God and us - it breaks the barrier that sin has become between us. The definition of reconcile includes "to bring into agreement or harmony; make compatible or consistent". That is what has happened between us and God.

What is more, the promise is also that God will reconcile and make new all of heaven and earth. There will be a time when Jesus returns and all things will be made new. There will be no more trace of evil or sin any more and those who believed and trusted in him will have eternal life forever in paradise with him. There will be agreement and harmony and creation will be compatible and consistent again with God's original design.

God's plan is summed up in John 3 - one of the most well known bible passages. It says:

JN 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

So there is the plan - to give eternal life to those who believe and to save the world. It's as simple and as comprehensive as that. This is the Gospel - the good news. This is why Jesus came.

Now - he reigns in glory - on a heavenly throne. The time is coming when these plans will come to pass. Here is what John saw in Revelation chapter 21 -

REV 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he

will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"

That is absolutely amazing and very good news and it will happen.

### **So what is this King Jesus like who is seated on the throne?**

The first thing to understand is who Jesus actually is.

### **He is the king of Kings and Lord of Lords**

Paul writes in Ephesians 1 about the power of God that raised Jesus from the dead:

EPH 1:19..... That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

And in Revelation 19 it says this about Jesus about when he returns:

REV 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Note he is not just the most powerful king, first among many, or one of many lords. He is the King over all of them, the Lord of all, no one and nothing approaches his majesty. He is so far above them just as a king is so far above his subjects. There is no one to compare with Jesus. Everything in the universe is under his feet.

And yet - he is the same Jesus who ate and drank with sinners - us - and sacrificed himself for us. It is a relief that we can know this all powerful King and that he showed us exactly what he was like when he was on the earth. He called ordinary men and women friends - and he still does - even though he is Lord and King.

JN 15:14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

We are friends with the King of the universe - welcomed into his throne room and part of his plan for the world. He calls us friends if we follow him - not servants but friends.

### **He is the king who is eternal**

There is no end to his reign - and this was the plan from the beginning of eternity as well. This is what was written by Isaiah, thousands of years before Jesus was born. It's read every Christmas - but let's let the significance of what it says sink in again:

ISA 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

Wow - this king is forever - there will be no successor, no passing on of authority. He will reign forever and ever! He is the only person who we can follow that will be there forever.

But what sort of king is he - what is his nature, what is he like?

### **He is the King of love**

You know that passage in 1 Corinthians 13 about love - well it is all about Jesus as well -

CO 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

That's just as well - we can have confidence that when he we meet him face to face - that's way he will be like - even though he is full of majesty and power and authority.

He came to earth as a servant King - to love and serve us - his subjects - that is amazing. In Mark 10 it says:

MK 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

## **The King who gives**

What does he give? Primarily and most importantly, he gave himself out of love for us. In Ephesians 5, Paul encourages us to be like Jesus:

EPH 5:1 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Can you imagine the Queen moving out of Buckingham Palace and living on the streets, or wherever she could find a bed? Can you imagine her moving among the poor and needy, eating and drinking with them, being friends with them? Can you imagine her being beaten up and killed with only a handful of people caring?

No - it's very difficult isn't it - but that's exactly the sort of king that Jesus is. He laid aside his majesty and got stuck in with practical love and self sacrifice. Not what you expect from a monarch at all. But this is Jesus - the king of kings - the very embodiment of God and his nature.

But when he left this earth he didn't leave us alone - "job done - let's wait till the end times and sort everything out then". No - he gave the Holy Spirit to be our counsellor and to live in us so that the very power of God that was in Him empowers us to live the life that God calls us to - and to do the same things as he did.

Jesus isn't a demanding King who expects us to make bricks without straw - as the Egyptians did to the Jews. He isn't a king of austerity either! Jesus is more generous than we can imagine and he does not have a problem with balancing the books of Heaven. There are glorious riches and unending blessing that Jesus commands and gives freely.

## **He is the King who promises**

Jesus promised many things and the promises of God run all the way through the bible. We can be sure that he will fulfill these promises because we can be sure of who he is.

We are going to start a teaching series from next week about the promises of God which I hope will lift our eyes and inspire us in

everything we do. I am hoping that it will change us so much that we will be reinvigorated with God's power to be his people and to do his will.

### **So finally, to summarise, why is it so important to know our King?**

We need to know what sort of King we follow because we will become more like him the more we follow him. We need to have confidence in who he is and what he has done for us. We need to be sure of his character and love, as well as his power and majesty.

Paul sums it up in Philippians 2:

PHP 2:5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

So this is the challenge to all of us - let's bow our heads and think and pray this through now.

If you have already decided to follow King Jesus - excellent. Now make sure that your attitude is the same as his. That is true discipleship. Are you being changed into someone who is more Christ like? Am I? This is a time for reflection, repentance and determination. It's a time to receive forgiveness from God and the grace which is poured out on us. That grace is freely given and totally undeserved and comes with the mercy of a king who calls us friends.

If you haven't decided to follow Jesus yet - this is your chance. He is calling you to make that decision and come to him now. He loves you so much and wants to restore and forgive and bless you. He wants to give you a hope for the future and a real purpose in life. He wants to take your burdens and cares and give you rest. He wants to do this so much he died for you - the King on the cross.