

***33 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”***

***34 “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”***

***35 “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”***

***36 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”***

***37 “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.***

***Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”***

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**BE GLAD YOU HAVE A KING!!**

According to a list that I looked at recently, the world today has 44 countries that are ruled by a monarch. Whether it's a king or queen, or some other name, there are 44 nations that give their rule to a single leader. That man or woman then has in most cases absolute authority to do whatever he or she wishes.

Hearing a piece of trivia like that makes me wonder – How many of the citizens of those nations are happy about having a monarch? I'm sure that there are some leaders that genuinely care for their people and do their best to provide, but I'd assert that there are likely just as many, if not more that rule simply for their own gain without a whim of care for their subjects. You've heard the proverb “Power corrupts, but absolute power corrupts absolutely.” If you give a person total control, they are bound to twist that control to benefit themselves.

It would be impossible to survey all those people who are ruled over by monarchs, but I think it would be interesting to hear what they have to say. I wonder how many would say, “I'm glad to have a King!!” It is the exact opposite sentiment that founded our great nation. It was frustration that King George of England was over taxing and under supplying the colonies that prompted the American Revolution. If you would have asked the colonials, “Are you glad to have a king?” they would have overwhelming replied “No way!!”

Today in word and song we say in one voice **“I'm glad to have a King!!”** As Christians we willingly place our lives in the hands of Christ. He rules and cares for us like no one can. We are glad to be his subjects in his kingdom and we long to reign with him in heaven everlasting. Let's take a closer look at Jesus' conversation with Pontius Pilate and how he explains to him that he is a King. As we study these words we recognize their impact today on us. Let's be joyful that **Jesus is Our King.**

When Jesus first began preaching and teaching, many people liked him. They loved the fact that he was concerned about those who were less fortunate. They loved that he performed miracles and fed the people. Even though Jesus' message never changed, the way that people reacted to it did. As his 3-year ministry progressed Jesus became less and less popular. People got more and more upset that he wasn't displaying more political power. They grew less comfortable with the message that he was preaching – that he was the only way to heaven. They didn't like the fact that Jesus told the world of

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their sins. By the time that Jesus reached Good Friday, there weren't too many people supporting him. Even his disciples had scattered and left Jesus alone.

The Jewish nation had rejected Jesus as their King. They didn't want his kind of rule. They didn't want the things that he was offering them, and so they tried to do away with him. They tried and convicted Jesus of religious crimes and then sought approval from Rome's Judean ruler, Pontius Pilate to put him to death. It's Pilate's examination of Jesus that is our text this morning.

***Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"*** The Jews presented this Jesus to Pilate as a threat to national security. They told him that he was not a supporter of Caesar and that he was convincing others to rebel with him, but it seems pretty clear that Pilate didn't buy it. Pilate felt way more pressure from the Jewish people than he did from Jesus himself, that's why he went along with the ordeal.

Jesus didn't mix words as he answered Pilate's question. At the risk of sounding like a lunatic, Jesus gave Pilate a clear testimony to the truth. He said, ***"My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."*** Pilate was right in not feeling threatened by Jesus, because he wasn't here to establish political power. He was here to set up a spiritual kingdom.

The Jews were not the only ones to reject Jesus as King. Our lives often reflect less than wholehearted allegiance to our divine ruler. He spent his own life that we could be his citizens but how much less than that are we willing to give to him. A person wisely once said, "Let me look at your checkbook register and your daily planner and I will be able to tell a whole lot about who you are!" A person will devote time and money to the things that they enjoy, to the things that they place as a priority in their lives. I'm not going to ask to look at those things of yours, but I would ask you to consider this question. Would a stranger be able to detect your allegiance to King Jesus based on the way you spend your money or arrange your schedule? Would he see that God is a priority in your life, or would that person find other things to be king? Would they see a schedule that puts God's things first, or would they find him in a different role?

We don't give our whole heart to our king. We aren't always allied to him and isn't always our #1 priority. We don't joyfully pay tribute to him in generous offerings. We don't give him praise and honor like he deserves. And what happens when a king finds out that his subject is serving someone else? It gets ugly, right? That unfaithful subject gets thrown in prison if it's a nice king. A dictator? No time for prison, he'd just lop off your head on the spot.

And that's the fate that we deserve. When we refuse to give God our whole heart, when we treat other things as more important than faith things, we deserve to have that precious gift of faith snatched away from us. We deserve to be cast out of the king's presence forever and tossed into the prison house of hell. We deserve to die for our failure to live for Jesus.

Kings aren't known for giving people second chances! If they do, that's it. The end of their patience runs out after a person's been given another opportunity to do what is right. After 3 or 4 chances, even the kindest of kings grows weary of waiting. But our King does better than give a second chance, or third chance, or hundredth chance. He comes and sets us free from the punishment that we

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deserve. And when he does he doesn't tell us – "Do better next time," or "Don't screw up again!" Even better than that, he tells us that he has done it all! There is nothing more left to be done. It is finished, we are forgiven!!

What a blessing that Christ's kingdom is out of this world and that our citizenship depends on him. Our sins don't cost us anything, because they cost Jesus everything. He gave his own life to pay for our failures. He suffered and died so that we could be citizens in his kingdom. He forgives us when our priorities are bad and when our allegiance proves to be on earthly things. He wipes clean the slate of our wrongs so that when the Father looks at us he sees the perfect obedience of his Son.

Throughout history you read accounts of kings and their pursuits of greatness and glory. Sadly, many such pursuits come at the expense of their own citizens. They are forced to do intense work for little or no compensation. They are forced into battles they simply can't win all in the name of country. Cruel dictators might even take the lives of others to display their power and exert their influence over the people. But our King did just the opposite. He didn't abuse or kill us for his own gain, in fact he allowed himself to be abused, he allowed himself to be killed for our gain. He gave his life to us on the cross so that we could spend an eternity with him. He died to show the world his love so that people like you and me could have the promise of heaven. He gave up everything so that we could have it.

Having a King like Christ is one huge spiritual blessing, but knowing it through faith is another. Being given the gift to know that the price is paid is purely God's grace. Being aware of forgiveness through Jesus and the peace that is ours is such a blessing. How many in this world struggle everyday trying to pay to appease the king? How many continue to work towards salvation, not recognizing that the work's already been done. Wouldn't your life be different if you didn't know that Jesus was your King? If you didn't know that the price has been paid in full? Let's remember to thank God for the faith he's given us to recognize that we are his.

And let that faith change your life and the way you live it! You are on the side of the King! He has slain the dragon for you and his companions sin and death can't threaten you anymore. King Jesus hold the power and that means you have the power too. We need not fear the arrows of the evil one! King Jesus reigns and peace in him is yours. We can put our hope in Jesus and the victory that he has won. On Jesus side, flanked by his army, the stuff of this world that once was big and scary is much less so! Threats like cancer, broken relationships, rejection, loneliness don't pack as big a punch anymore do they. Addiction, temptation, worldly pressure, poverty used to paralyze us and leave us quaking under their swords, but we know that King Jesus has overcome them all. Trusting in our own power gives us plenty of reason to shiver in fear, but behind our mighty warrior King we can stand boldly and confidently in the Power of Jesus. Our king boldly proclaims to us all: ***In this world there will be trouble, but I have overcome the world!***

In the olden days, when a king won a battle, he sent out messengers to spread the word. He wants everyone to know that the battle is over and that his side was victorious. He wants those who are his new subjects to know that the old leader is no longer in control. The victorious king wants the news of the victory to spread. Our King is no different. He wants the world to be aware that the victory has been won. So he sends out messengers. He sends out people like you, people like me to announce the victory of the King. He wants us to tell the people in our lives that we have peace and forgiveness

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through the death and resurrection of Jesus. He wants us to share the wonderful news that we are citizens of Christ the King. He wants us to share the joy that he has given us with many others.

Jesus wasn't the most popular guy in Jerusalem the day that they sentenced him to death. Even after he rose from the dead he didn't receive widespread acceptance. Today the statistics show a similar story: 2.1 billion Christians. That's a lot of people, but still less than 1/3 the world's population. Christ is King, but 2/3 of the people who are alive today don't know it!!! Let's do what we can to change that. Let's make outreach a priority in our own lives, in our efforts as a church, in our prayer lives. Let's use our gifts to further God's kingdom.

In the letter he wrote to the Phillipians, Paul announced the glory of King Jesus. He told of the coming day, when all would bow before him. Even those who were unbelievers will be forced to exalt the King on the Last Day. Paul speaks the words of God as he writes *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.* (Philippians 2:9-11) But there's no need to wait until then. Through the faith that God has given us, we can get a head start on what we will do with all the world on the last day and what we will do forever in heaven with saints and angels. And so this day, let's bow our knees, and confess with our tongues: "Jesus is Our King!!!" The world may not agree, but we can say loudly and proudly "**I'm Glad to Have a King!!**" Amen.