

Straight Bible Talk

Manchester Church of Christ, Share Christ's Love and Share His Message

Jesus Is King

"The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it." Just a simple declaration. No "ifs," to take into consideration. No "but," that would take everything back that has just been said. "The earth is the Lord's."

Here is another quotation from Genesis (one of the books of Moses). "God blessed them; and God said to them, (Adam and Eve) "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Maybe I am dense, but this is how I understand these verses from Psalms and Genesis. God is over everything. It is all His. People are over everything except God and they derive their right from God to use the earth, its resources, its animals and its plants as long as no principle or law of God is violated.

God has put His only begotten Son, Jesus, in charge. Jesus told his disciples, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." Peter repeated this idea, "God has made him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified." Jesus is King over all the earth. Paul wrote that God "rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world." John wrote, "He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever."

The Psalmist predicted that there would be opposition to God's plan for His Mes-

siah. "He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, 'But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.'" Further, it is written, (in the same Psalm) "Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!"

At this point, many people are ready to yawn, sit back and say, "So what! Jesus is King and everything belongs to God. How does that affect me?" Glad you asked.

We live in a country where we expect government to respond to the needs of the people. It is government "of the people, for the people, by the people." God's government is different. Our government is based on the principle that the people know better than the government. God's government is based on the principle that God knows better than the people.

You can probably see where this is going. In America we expect government to fix the problems that people cause. We even expect government to fix problems that are caused by nature, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, earthquakes, etc. In the kingdom of God, God says (my paraphrase), "You messed it up. You suffer the consequences." In this world, people say, "It's not my fault, fix it for me."

While it was just an illustration, Jesus talked about people who build their houses on the sand as opposed to people who build their houses on rock. Those whose houses are built on the sand come crashing down when the rain and winds

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Manchester
Church of Christ

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595 Tolland Turnpike

Sun Bible Classes—9 AM
Sun Worship—10 AM
Sun Eve Worship—6:00 PM
Wed Bible Class—7:00 PM

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

Acts 17:31

All scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise indicated.

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come. Those on the rock are built to withstand the elements. That sounds like good advice for those who want to build their houses on the beach to have a great ocean view!

Yet Jesus' illustration is not about home construction, but life construction. The analogy is about people who listen to Jesus and do what he says (their house is on the rock) contrasted with people who listen, but do not put Jesus' teachings into practice (their house is on the sand).

People expect God to solve their problems, but when God demands that they change and follow the teachings of Jesus, their reply is, "No thanks, that is not what I had in mind." God has made Jesus king, ruler over all, but people (including many Christians) want to pretend that he is just a spiritual adviser whose advice may be accepted or rejected depending on their own whims.

Whole churches are organized on the principle that God has left matters up to them to determine. Everything from morals to worship to the organization of the church is deemed a matter of local determination. Lip service is given to Jesus as king, but they act like he is a figurative king and the real power lies with the peo-

ple.

It is from Jesus (through the apostles whom he chose) that we know right and wrong. It is from the same source that we know how to worship God. And it is also in the same way we know how the church is to be organized.

The New Testament is the covenant made by the King with his people. It contains all the instructions that pertain "to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." If the King has spoken then it matters. If the King has not spoken then there is no authority to act. We serve a King, not a president, not a legislature, not a synod, presbytery nor conference: not even a Watchtower Society.

Consider marriage, for example. Jesus said, (quoting Moses) "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." Marriage is between a man and a woman when Jesus is accepted as King. It is also a covenant that is supposed to continue "until death do us part."

This is the law for Christians. The world will always have its own laws because it does not recognize

Jesus as King. When the laws of the world are in conflict with the laws of the King, Christians will always give their allegiance to their King.

First century Christians were not committed to changing the laws of Rome. They were committed to obeying Jesus. He was their King. They were committed to converting the world to obey the King. Christians still have the same mandate from Jesus.

Consider baptism for example. Baptize is a Greek word that means to immerse, to plunge, to dip. It never meant to sprinkle or pour water on a person. There were different Greek words for that. Christians are still baptized by being immersed in water, like Jesus. Jesus was immersed in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. Christians still follow the example of their King. Many churches have changed baptize to sprinkle or pour. They have rejected the word of the King.

Righteousness will never be the goal of those outside of Christ. Righteousness is the goal of those who have chosen to follow Jesus as their King. We need to obey Jesus. We need to challenge others to obey him as well. We are committed to living as changed people and we are committed to our King, Jesus.