

THE CONQUERING KING



+ **SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

Jesus fulfills the office of king, ruling over all of creation and guiding and directing His people, the church.

+ **BACKGROUND PASSAGES:**

Colossians 1; Hebrews 1; Revelation 22

+ **SETTING:**

We have been looking the last few weeks at Jesus as King, accused, crucified, and risen. And to sum up, He is the conquering King. He oversees the universe, guides the church, and rewards the faithful when He returns. He is sovereign over all and sovereign over us. As King, He is victorious over all. Therefore, Christians should respond to His mighty sovereignty and majestic grace through faith-filled obedience.

DAY 1

READ:

Isaiah 40:21-26

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Isaiah 40:22

NOTES



KEY DOCTRINE #54: CHRIST AS KING

God has always been King over His creation, whether in heaven or on earth. Yet some of His creatures in both realms have rebelled against Him, leaving destruction in their wake. To restore His broken world, God promised a King who would deliver His people and restore all of creation. The promise of a coming King finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ and looks forward to its perfection when Jesus returns for His bride, the church.

If you've stood on the ocean shore, a mountain peak, or a canyon rim, you've likely felt the awe and wonder of how breathtakingly vast our earth is. The view from a plane, pictures of the earth sent from space, and even a satellite imaging app provide a better understanding of how much ground there is to cover if we were to traverse every inch of our planet. These macro viewpoints call attention to the reality of how tiny we really are.

Yet we are not the tiniest. This terrestrial globe is filled with intricacies at the finest level. Under the microscope is an entire world teeming with life that points to the detail in which God created this world. And the micro-level viewpoints that can be seen in medical labs aren't even the end of the line for how small things really are. There is an atomic-level frontier that scientists are still exploring.

The sheer size of the water, land, and horizon brings a sense of smallness to the soul. The incredible infinitesimal detail of a red blood cell, mitochondria, and an atom is mind-blowing. It all screams of intelligent design and creative wonder. And this is all a tiny fraction of what's out there in the universe. Our grand planet is a dwarf compared to the size of others. Our galaxy is one of billions! The enormity of outer space is larger than our tiny brains can comprehend.

Our King Jesus made it all. He spoke, and all matter and life began their existence. As Creator, He is the supreme Ruler over it all. He knows every particle and speck. He sees the seemingly infinite breadth of the cosmos at a glance

How does recognizing the creative work of Jesus, the King of the cosmos, help you trust Him more fully?

DAY 2

READ:

Colossians 1:1-29

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Colossians 1:18

NOTES

Music contains much beauty. For those of us without much of a musical background, it is easy to take for granted all that is involved for good music to make it to our ears.

It all starts with the composer, who transfers the vision of the song in her mind to notes on a page. Most songs include more than one instrument. Often, the more instruments involved—when done right—the more gorgeous the sound. Good music isn't just about simple sounds played from a chart. There are dynamics to consider. Each piece of the musical puzzle must not simply sound the right note, it needs to have the proper timing, tone, and volume.

Played by themselves, each part doesn't make much of an impact. Even worse, if individuals just decide to play whatever they want on top of each other, the result is an awful cacophony. Conversely, when clear musical instructions are followed by a skilled ensemble under leadership of a capable conductor, the result is an awe-inspiring symphony. This director leads, corrects, encourages, and keeps the pace. Without him, the band can easily drift.

As Christians, we each have a part to play in Christ's church. If we each attempt to live our lives without a directive score, out from the umbrella of our Director, the song we project to the world around us is chaos and confusion. But we were not left without a game plan. Nor are we lost without a shepherd. God has given us His Word to teach us and His Son to guide us. As the Head of the church, Jesus is our more-than-capable maestro. As we follow His lead and play our parts with excellence, we can glorify God together through our beautiful music.

How can you better play your part in the body of Christ?

DAY 3

READ:

Colossians 1:15-20

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Colossians 1:18-20

NOTES

All sorts of new acronyms have popped up in recent decades, especially with the dawn of text messages. With more and more cropping up each year, it can be hard to keep up with all the meanings! LMK (let me know), IDK (I don't know), and IYKYK (if you know, you know) are a few fun examples. JK (just kidding) and LOL (laugh out loud) are perhaps the most commonly understood. FWIW (for what it's worth), OMW (on my way), TY (thank you), and IMO (in my opinion) are more convenient shortcuts.

A fun acronym that seems to have leapt out of the confines of text messages and made its way to commercials and many memes is GOAT (greatest of all time). Since this cipher also happens to be a real word, if you didn't understand the reference, the message within the commercials simply doesn't translate.

There are many categories to which the GOAT can be applied. Best quarterback. Best sandwich. Best movie. You name it. Though certainly debatable, the GOAT label has been appointed for many categories and spheres of influence. That is, until something or someone else arrives on the scene to surpass the current GOAT.

There is one GOAT from whom that position will never be usurped: Jesus Christ. The King of kings is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. The Son of God is the ultimate, the supreme, the absolute; indeed, the greatest of all time.

How does your life reflect the reality that Jesus is the GOAT?

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"Bearing shame and scoffing rude, In my place condemned He stood, Sealed my pardon with His blood; Hallelujah, what a Savior! Guilty, vile and helpless we, Spotless Lamb of God was He; Full atonement! can it be? Hallelujah! what a Savior!"¹

—Philip P. Bliss (1838–1876)

DAY 4

READ:

Revelation 22:1-13

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Revelation 22:12-13

NOTES

Yesterday we looked at several texting shortcuts. We referred to one last week that encapsulates great meaning: YOLO (you only live once). Predominantly, this is used in the context of living life to its fullest. You only live once, so make the most of each moment. Don't think about tomorrow or the consequences that may be due to your actions. This is similar in meaning to the Latin term *carpe diem*: "seize the day." The idea is to pursue pleasure and forget the future.

However, a twist on YOLO can be fruitful for the Christian. If we keep eternity in view, YOLO can be an incredible reminder of the limited time we have on this earth. Once our bodies are dead and gone, our souls will live on. For the Christian, this is a great and glorious truth because we will spend eternity in the presence of our Savior. It is a destiny that is greater than anything we can image. But the converse reality is that those who do not follow King Jesus are doomed to an afterlife of suffering. Because their souls will live on as well, but not in the comfort of Christ.

If we truly grasp this reality, the fact that we have a short time on this earth to be a part of God's rescue plan, then we can embrace YOLO as fuel for living out the Great Commission. Unfortunately, we are great wasters of time. Instead of living out our days as vessels for God's glory, we pour out our moments on things that will eventually burn away. But if we live out this life with eternal purpose, we can bring souls with us into glory and together enjoy the everlasting rewards of our Savior. Because as missionary C. T. Studd poignantly penned, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last."²

When it comes to the eternal destiny of souls, how can you be making the most of this one life on earth you've been given?

DAY 5

READ:

Revelation 22:12-21

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Revelation 22:14-15

NOTES

As we grow older, it is natural to become more and more contemplative. With the passing of time comes the wisdom of hindsight. What we once thought was so essential, through the rearview mirror, now seems insignificant. In some cases, we can recall that at the time, we thought we were in the right. We couldn't yet see the error of our ways.

In this passage, we get a peek into the white throne judgment of Christ, where only those who trust in the salvation of Jesus will be received into His glory. These are among the most frightening verses in the Bible, as they suggest that there will be some who claim to have done deeds for Jesus. They believed that those works would save them from the wrath of God. But those who depend on works will be sent away from the eternal presence of Jesus.

Salvation is not something to be achieved. Redemption is not a matter of slapping the label of Christian on our lives. Nor does deliverance come through mere words proclaimed. Only faith in the Savior delivers pardon of sins. If we have truly trusted in Jesus—not our works—to save us, then we will be welcomed into eternity and will be saved from eternal wrath in the lake of fire.

So, how can we know with confidence that God will welcome us into eternal paradise? True faith always produces fruit. Because we cannot find confirmation of spiritual conversion in mere words. We find evidence of salvation in our actions when possible. Jesus stated that only those who do the will of the Father will enter the kingdom (Matthew 7:21). This is the man who builds his house on the bedrock of God's provision for eternal life.

How do we live our lives knowing Jesus is returning soon and will reward those according to their work?

GROUP

NOTES

VOICES from THE CHURCH

"The living Christ is the head of a living organism, and identifying Christ as the church's head denotes that he has sovereign lordship and supreme authority over her."³

–Dustin Bengte

POINT 1: Jesus is the eternal King, ruling the cosmos (Hebrews 1:5-9).

Jesus is the Son of God, the firstborn of all, who was given a supreme status that all would worship Him, including the angels.



What are some ways we should worship Jesus?

KEY DOCTRINE #54: CHRIST AS KING

God has always been King over His creation, whether in heaven or on earth. Yet some of His creatures in both realms have rebelled against Him, leaving destruction in their wake. To restore His broken world, God promised a King who would deliver His people and restore all of creation. The promise of a coming King finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ and looks forward to its perfection when Jesus returns for His bride, the church.



What characteristics make Jesus the greatest King?

POINT 2: Jesus is the resurrected King, directing the church (Colossians 1:18-20).

Jesus is the head of the church and first place in everything.



If Jesus is the head of the church and first place in everything, how should we submit our lives to Him?

Jesus's blood shed for us brought peace and reconciled our relationship to the Father.



Where in your life are you experiencing peace because of Jesus?

POINT 3: Jesus is the returning King, rewarding the faithful (Revelation 22:12-13).

Jesus is coming back soon, and when we face Him on His judgment seat, we will be evaluated according to the kingdom work we accomplished.

? From Day 5: **How do we live our lives knowing Jesus is returning soon and will reward those according to their work?**

Jesus is the origin and sustainer of all things. He is supreme, finishing all that He started, including the good work in us.

? **How is Jesus the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end?**

MY RESPONSE

Because Jesus is our King, we seek to submit to His perfect leadership in all areas of our lives, knowing all He does is for God's glory and our good.

- **HEAD:** How is Jesus King in various areas of your life?
- **HEART:** How can we stir up our affections for the urgency of spreading the good news?
- **HANDS:** How can you bring light to a world filled with darkness?



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"Heaven is more than a destination; it is a motivation. Knowing that we shall dwell in the heavenly city ought to make a difference in our lives here and now."⁴

—Warren Wiersbe (1929–2019)

ENGAGE YOUR GROUP IN A “SATURDAY SERVE”

by Ken Braddy

Groups are a vital ministry in the local church. These small group gatherings may go by various names and take different shapes, but Sunday School groups are among the most familiar. Yet regardless of the name or shape of your group, if there isn't discipleship taking place, helping people to know Jesus and grow to be more like Him, then what is the point?

THE LIFE OF A GROUP

A church without discipleship is just a gathering. So groups within the church ought to have a distinct purpose and flavor, a unique LIFE marked by four measurable goals:

- 1) Learn and obey God's Word.
- 2) Invite people to become disciples.
- 3) Form deeper relationships.
- 4) Engage in acts of service.

A GROUP THAT SERVES TOGETHER . . .

Focusing on number 4, let's consider how to engage your group in a “Saturday Serve” event.

A Saturday Serve is just what it sounds like—a day (or a half-day) that your group can set aside once a quarter to serve others who are members of the group, people who are potential members for your group, and even those who will never be candidates for group membership.

If a group started serving at 9 am, most would be finished at noon and could enjoy a quick meal before scattering for the day. If you keep your Saturday Serve to about 3 hours, you and your group members will have the afternoon and evening to do whatever you wish. The first part of the day will be spent serving others, so in my view, it's a win-win kind of day.

Here are just a few ways you and your group can engage in a Saturday Serve:

- Visit your group's absentees (short "porch visits").
- Take your group's Bible study material to each absentee's house and invite them back to the group.
- Ask around and determine if any senior adults in your church have household projects you and your group can accomplish for them.
- Sort clothes at your community's clothes closet.
- Serve at a food pantry.
- Answer phones at a crisis pregnancy center.
- Clean up a park.
- Paint a school's playground.
- Prayer walk neighborhoods.
- Conduct a coat drive.
- Serve a meal at a local homeless shelter.
- Visit shut-ins from your church.
- Go to a nursing home and lead a Bible study, sing songs, or play games with the residents.

A church without discipleship is just a gathering. So groups within the church ought to have a distinct purpose and flavor.

- Provide childcare for a group of young adults in your church so they can enjoy a time of fellowship.
- Do some maintenance at your church (coordinate with your pastor or another staff leader).

The list of possible serve projects is almost endless. Set a date, get commitments from people to serve, decide on a project, and then make it happen!

And above all, make sure your group has the mind-set of serving in the name of Jesus Christ. Represent your Savior well, and pray for the Lord to open doors for the gospel.

Ken Braddy is Lifeway's Director of Sunday School. He is a group leader at his church and an author. His latest book, *Breakthrough: Creating a New Scorecard for Group Ministry Success*, can be found at lifeway.com.

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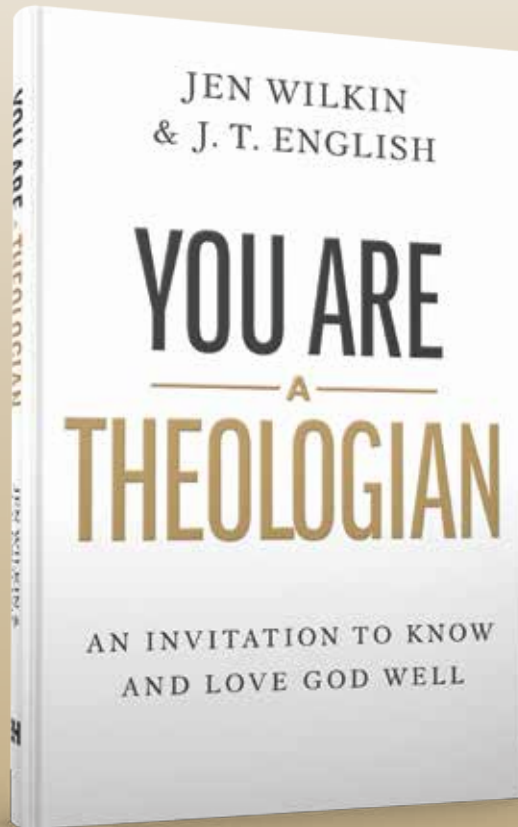
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FROM DEATH TO RESURRECTION

From before the beginning of the world, God planned to send the Son to take away the sins of the world, demonstrating His sovereign holiness, love, and grace. Jesus came to die in the place of sinners. But He also came to rise again for their salvation. In many ways, Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection is the focal point of the entire Old Testament. The Lord made covenants, a law, and a kingdom so that the Son would have a context in which to serve and be recognized. All those who come to Jesus in faith become His disciples, citizens of the kingdom of God that Jesus will teach, cleanse, and rule as the promised Prophet, Priest, and King.

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