

Revelation 1:4b-8 “There Is No King Like Jesus” November 24-26, 2012
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Revelation 1:4b-8

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.⁷ “Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen.⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Introduction

How many kings, presently ruling, can you name? If you asked me last week, I would have to give you the long “aaaaahhhh, and finally respond, “None.” But there are a number to pick from. For example, there’s King Philippe of Belgium, King Harold of Norway, Gustav in Sweden, and King Abdullah II in Jordan, to name a few. But in the United States these kings aren’t “headliners.” But there is one presently ruling king we all know – it’s Jesus. On this last weekend of the church year that is called Christ the King weekend, based on Revelation 1, let’s focus on **Jesus Christ – the King of Kings ... a very special king; a very loving king.**

1) ... a very special king

The apostle John is the human writer of Revelation. As he writes he is old and in exile on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. An angel of the Lord is giving him visions of the New Testament times and into eternity. Right up front the Lord pronounces his grace – his undeserved love – and peace – the result of God in love sending his Son to save us. This assurance is important in that even though the end message of Revelation is that God and we are victorious, there are many frightening things in Revelation. Up front God is assuring us of his love and his peace.

John goes on to give reasons for Jesus being the King of Kings. One is that he is true God, a person of the Triune God. John identifies the persons of the Trinity in the following way. The **“him who is, and who was, and who is to come”** is God the Father. This is the eternal Father.

God the Holy Spirit is referred to as **“the seven spirits before his throne.”** It is not that the Holy Spirit is seven different spirits. This is a take-off of Isaiah 11 where it says of the Messiah, **“1) The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him – 2) the Spirit of wisdom and 3) of understanding, 4) the Spirit of counsel and 5) of power, 6) the Spirit of knowledge and 7) of the fear of the LORD ...”** The seven phrases describe seven characteristics or functions of the Holy Spirit.

The angel then called out, **“...and from Jesus Christ.”** Keep in mind that Jesus basically means “Savior” and “Christ” means “the anointed one” or Messiah – the one anointed or appointed and empowered as the Savior. He is King of Kings because is a person of the God who is one and yet three distinct persons.

The angel gives more reasons that Jesus is the King of Kings. He described Jesus as **“the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.”**

Jesus is **faithful witness**. He is the Word of John 1 who became flesh and dwelt among us. And while no one has ever seen he Father, as John wrote in John 1, Jesus, the only-begotten of the Father, has made him known. Jesus is the Truth. You want truth, look to Jesus.

Jesus is the **first-born from the dead**. As the Great High Priest Jesus offered himself on Calvary’s cross for all the sins of all humankind. He died. He was buried. But on the third day of death he came to life and showed himself

numerous times to as many as 500 people at one time. In so doing he proved he is who he said he was. He proved sin was paid for. He became the **“first-born from the dead”** in that is the Key to resurrection and eternal life because all who believe in him will rise from the dead and live eternally.

Jesus is **“the ruler of the kings of the earth.”** After Jesus rose from the dead, forty days later he ascended into heaven. Now he rules over everything and everyone one. He controls the universe. Even though not all want to acknowledge this, all earthly powers are subject to Jesus’ power and authority. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, Jesus rules over all things for the church.

We are in a time when many teach that whether you are Buddhist, Hindu, Jew, Muslim, spiritist, etc., you all worship the same god. You just call him by different names and approach him in different ways. But the true God takes issue with this. God said through Paul, **“There is no God but one (1Co8:4).”** God makes it clear that this one God is three distinct persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as is brought out in Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14. This is the Lord who says, **“You shall have no other gods”** and to cast god in any other way than three-in-one is to violate this command.

As we approach another Christmas season and see and hear via the media all the confusion about who Jesus really is, keep in mind that Jesus Christ is King of Kings. He is a specific and living person of the true, Triune God. The True God emphasizes: **“whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him (John 5).”** The True God teaches, **“If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”** See and believe that there is no king like Jesus, a very special person, true God, the King of Kings.

2) ...a loving king

But not only see and believe in Jesus Christ as a special king. See and trust in him as a loving king.

Have you ever felt close to any of the U.S. presidents in power while you have been alive? Have you ever felt that they personally loved you and cared about you? Most of us have never seen a president let alone be close to one. But Jesus, our King, is close to and cares for us. We need this

Let’s face it, we are all sinners who need a loving king like Jesus. The apostle Paul in his less-than-flattering description of all humankind put it this way, **“As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one (Rom 3:10-12).”** Paul added, **“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom3:23)”** No one has the pure condition and pure conduct God demands to be in eternal fellowship with Him and have eternal life. Paul spoke of what we deserve, **“The wages of sin is death (6:23)...”** – spiritual deadness, physical death, and eternal separation from God in hell. We need a loving king to save us.

John emphasizes that Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, is that king. **“To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6) and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen (5b,6).”** Note the present tense – **“to him who loves us.”** Jesus’ love is not a one-time affection. It is an eternal attitude toward people who don’t deserve Jesus’ love. Jesus loves us with an everlasting love. When we sin, Jesus doesn’t stop loving us. When we’re sick, it’s not because Jesus’ love got sick. When we’re troubled, it’s not because Jesus has trouble with his love. His love is unfailing.

It was out of this love that came to earth and **“has freed us from our sins by his blood.”** Did you note that while Jesus loves us (present tense), he has freed us (past tense)? The freedom is a done deal. The curse of sin, the slavery to sin, the deadness caused by sin – Jesus has freed us from these. His holy life and his death on the cross set us free. Isaiah wrote, **“By his wounds we are healed (53).”** **“The blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.”** There is nothing you must do to be saved. As Paul and his companions told the Jailor in Philippi, **“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved (Acts 16).”** Jesus is a loving king to sinners.

This is also brought out in this fact: ***“To him who ... has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.”*** In a time when immigration looms large on the political scene, does it dawn on you what a blessing it is to be an American citizen and what a prized possession we hold in the eyes of most illegal aliens! We have something we take for granted and they greatly desire. Likewise, as Christians we are blessed to be a part of another kingdom – the kingdom of God. We were aliens when it came to the kingdom of God. But with the shedding of his blood for our sins and the sending of his Spirit into our hearts, Jesus has made us citizens of the kingdom of God. He rules in our hearts now through faith and we can look forward to living with him in the glory of eternity.

But we are also priests. He is our Great High Priest who made the sacrifice for our sins and constantly intercedes for us. We don't need to have human priests who sacrifice and intercede in our behalf. We have the privilege of being priests who serve our God and Father. What a privilege! What a purpose! Why are we in this life? We are here to serve the Lord with our lives. We are here to do everything for the glory of God. As a result, even though the King of Kings has all power and glory in and of himself, we want to glorify him in all things submitting to his power and authority in all things.

And we give Jesus glory and we look forward to and are ready for his return. John wrote, ***“Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.”*** Jesus is our King of Kings and special and loving friend who will not leave us in this world of sin but will return in glory to free us from sin and give us joy and glory eternal. This is the truth - *“So shall it be! Amen.”*

This means that we can always depend on Jesus. He won't go out of business. He won't be voted out of office, impeached or deposed. He said, ***“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”*** The alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet; the omega, the last. As the Son of God, Jesus has been from eternity. As true man and true God Jesus is now and will be to eternity. There is no King like Jesus ... a special king; a loving king.. Always depend on Jesus. Always worship Jesus. Always live for Jesus. He lives, loves, and rules for you. Amen.