

John Chapter 18 v 28 - 40

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[0 : 00] John 18 verse 28. Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor.

By now it was early morning and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness, the Jews did not enter the palace. They wanted to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate came out to them and asked, what charges are you bringing against this man?

If you were not a criminal, they replied, we would not have handed him over to you. Pilate said, take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.

But we have no right to execute anyone, the Jews objected. This happened so that the words of Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, are you the king of the Jews? Is that your own idea, Jesus asked, or did others talk to you about me?

[1 : 08] Do you think I am a Jew? Pilate replied. It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?

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.

You are a king then, said Pilate. Jesus answered, you're right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born and for this reason I came into the world to testify to the truth.

Everyone on the side of truth listens to me. What is truth? Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, I find no basis for a charge against him.

But it is your custom for me to release to you one prisoner at the time of the Passover. Do you want me to release the king of the Jews? They shouted back, no, not him.

[2 : 15] Give us Barabbas. Now Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion. It's a great privilege to be with you tonight to remember Good Friday.

It always seems a strange title, doesn't it? Good Friday, the day in which we remember the awful, awful details of what our Saviour suffered.

But the good was not the pain and the suffering. The good was what was accomplished. And that Christ died for sinners. And because he died for sinners, we have everlasting life.

I hope to be able to help you think about some of those things tonight as we consider God's word. But before we turn to the word, let's look to God for grace and his spirit to understand what we have.

Most Holy One, as we bow humbly before you this evening, what a joy it is to be able to sing about a friend whose steadfast love. About a friend who was worshipped in the heavens above.

[3 : 22] About a friend who came to earth and suffered and died. And a friend, O Lord, who waits to welcome us into his own dear presence at the end of the ages. We recognise, Lord, that it was a miracle of grace that brought us to understand these things.

Many of us would have known things about Christ and the gospel. But by your mercy and for your glory, you came to us by your spirit and wakened us from the dead and gave us a new and a living hope.

Our prayer is this very evening that it might be your pleasure, O Lord, to stir up again in us the wonder of your love. The marvels of your mercy and the joy, the real joy of sins forgiven and the hope of glory before us.

Have mercy on us, O Lord. We claim nothing by our own merit or right. We simply remember that there is one who ever lives to make intercession for us.

And through him, we come boldly to the throne of grace this night. In Jesus' name. Amen. I'd like to turn your attention to the passage that was read for us.

[4 : 31] It's always a challenge on Good Friday, or if you don't feel it, I do, to not be always preaching from the exact same passage. And I've been led to consider this judgment before Pilate. And I believe, therefore, it will bring to our mind and attention much of the wonder of God's grace and love. Before we delve into the passage, can I get you to put your thinking caps on and ask you a question.

What do you think of the idea of having a king? Now, this isn't a party political statement, nor a revelation of my views on the present monarchy.

But what do you think? And I want to suggest to you that in modern times, kings and even queens, though they're nice and they might bring you some pleasures, they're really quite irrelevant.

This, just this last week or so, wasn't it? The Supreme Court of Great Britain, you know, I never knew we had one. The Supreme Court of Great Britain decided that private letters that Prince Charles had written to Parliament can be published.

[5 : 41] We wait with bated breath. There was a day when no such thing could have happened because as the heir to the throne, he would have been the ultimate ruler. But in our society, kings are of little consequence.

And there may be a country here or there in the world where somebody rules like a king, but they're few and far between. With that in mind, I ask you to lay aside that kind of thinking as we go into this passage.

The whole matter revolves around what kind of king Jesus might be. And what you and I need is help from God to come and to be educated, to be informed, to be stirred by this passage.

To renew our conviction that Jesus is king. Jesus is my king. And if he's not your king tonight, that you should surrender to him. But bow the knee and delight in his loving kindness and mercy.

Is Jesus king? Is what I titled the sermon. Because that's the football, if you want, that's being kicked around all the way through this passage. Is he king?

[6 : 53] What kind of king is he? So I have three subheadings and hopefully they'll help us get through it. Is Jesus king? The first section is no, but claims to be, says the Jews.

The second one, not as usually defined. And the third one, oh, I've no idea. It's all too confusing. Let me see if I can tease these out and solve the mystery that's now in your mind of what on earth he's going to be talking about up there.

No, but claims to be, says the Jews. In John chapter 18, it says in verse 28, Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor.

But now it was early morning and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness, the Jews did not enter the palace. They wanted to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate came out to them and asked, what charges are you bringing against this man?

If he were not a criminal, they replied, we would not have handed him over to you. Pilate said, take him yourselves and judge him by your own law. But we have no right to execute anyone.

[8 : 07] The Jews objected. Pilate, this happened so that the words Jesus had spoken, indicating the kind of death he was going to die, would be fulfilled.

Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, are you the king of the Jews? So there is the first question. Are you the king of the Jews?

It's a very specific charge, a very specific inquiry. And as I studied the passage, I became aware that the Jews in particular wanted Pilate to consider Jesus to be a king.

And therefore a threat to the Roman Empire and its stability in that land. The Romans knew how troublesome the Jews could be. Pilate didn't normally live in Jerusalem.

But he came into Jerusalem whenever it was a major feast. Here we are at the time of the Passover. And these uppity Jews, this was the kind of time of the year when they really got stropky and caused trouble.

[9 : 10] Somebody claiming to be a king, we better pay attention. And you can see therefore how Pilate himself was even manipulated by these Jews into focusing on this idea that Jesus is king.

The Jews want Jesus put to death. Pilate suggests they go and sort it out themselves. And they give themselves away when they reply and say to them, We have no right to execute anyone.

They wanted Jesus crucified. Jewish execution would have been stoning. They wanted Jesus crucified. Because way back in the Old Testament, in the book of Deuteronomy, you find these words.

If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree. But you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

For he who is hanged is accursed of God. You'll find it in Deuteronomy 21, verse 22, and verse 23.

[10:27] He who is hanged is accursed of God. I believe the Jews wanted Jesus crucified and charged him with being a king with the specific intent of having what had become the cruelest of Roman executions carried out on Jesus.

They wanted him hung up between heaven and earth so that they could put an end to this public rabble which just a week before were crying out, Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! They wanted to put an end to this man who was a threat to their control, to their stability.

And they knew that the only way they could do that was by changing the mind of the population. If Jesus ended up on a tree or a cross as we know it, then he must be accursed of God.

He could not possibly be the Messiah that they had been singing about. He could not possibly be anybody worth looking at.

[11:35] In fact, the Romans looked on crucifixion as being the cruelest and most humiliating form of execution. You couldn't crucify a Roman citizen.

It was considered only to be for those who were less than Romans. And in the Jews' mind, they knew that fine well. They were aware that Jesus had been teaching and preaching and that in his preaching and teaching, he had been stirring up people's minds and drawing to himself a great, immense form of support.

They could see that this brought a threat to their very security and comfort. Earlier on in John chapter 11, there's a discussion after the raising of Lazarus.

And Caiaphas was involved even then in chapter 11 and verse 50. It says that Caiaphas announced, You know nothing at all. You do not realize that it's better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.

He did not say this on his own. But as high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nations. And it goes on later in that chapter today, chapter to say, So from that day on, they plotted to take his life.

[12:58] This had been a rolling campaign. And now they've been up all night breaking the Jewish laws, having a mockery of a trial in which they ask him to condemn himself.

And then when they put him in the position where he must either admit to being Messiah or deny who he is, they charge him with blasphemy. They knew what they were doing was wrong because if you had read earlier in the chapter, you would see that as soon as it was daybreak, they gathered together again just to make sure the legal knots were tied.

You weren't allowed to condemn anybody to death during the night hours. It was in the Jewish law. And now that they have him where they want him, it's time to go and visit Pilate.

In Luke's gospel, when they bring him, it says in chapter 23, verse 2, And they began to accuse him, saying, We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king.

They had picked the right man in Pilate. He was no lover of the Jews. In fact, from the day that he began in that nation to be procurator or the governor, he had made it his business to annoy them and to manipulate them and to use them.

[14:27] Apparently, when he first arrived in the city, he marched in with the Roman standards blazing, flying in the wind. And with them would be pictures of the emperor, the thing that's blasphemous to the Jews.

So from the very beginning, he rubbed them up the wrong way. And apparently at that time, a number of people were clubbed to death. And then there was a whole issue of where the money from the treasury had gone.

Pilate put his hand in their till. And they knew he wasn't a friend. They knew that if there was an opportunity to put down some of the important of the Jews, then he would be the man to take it. And so the Lord of glory is brought in before the Savior. And again, I need to just pause a little minute and remind you this trial has been going on for hours. And the Lord Jesus has had no sleep. The Lord Jesus has been spat on. He's been beaten. And he would not be looking like you and I like to look as we leave the bathroom in the morning. He would have been at his very worst.

[15 : 38] And at his worst, he's standing before Pilate. And I almost sympathize with Pilate if I'm allowed to do such a thing. Looking at this, can I use the word ragamuffin? And thinking, a king?

Whose leg are they pulling? A king? Kings don't look like this. And so Pilate has the privilege. Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law. Verse 31. But we have no right to execute anyone the Jews objected. This happened so that the words Jesus had spoken indicating the kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

Verse 32 is very, very important. We tend on Good Friday to look at all the details of the horror. And they are awesome, are they not?

We tend to tease out the pain and the sorrow. But you and I must never forget that this is what Jesus has been planning for since he began his ministry.

[16 : 48] They want him cursed. My Bible says, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

By becoming a curse for us. Where about Galatians 3 and 13? The Lord of glory, King of kings and Lord of lords will surrender to Pilate, will submit to this humiliation for the one single purpose of bearing the penalty of his people that they might go free.

I can't think of anything more royal and dignified. He's not looking much like a king, but he's acting like a king. He's acting like one who cares.

He's acting like one who has a purpose and will bring it to pass. Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, are you the king of the Jews?

I want to put that question to you at this point, you see. I'm sure Pilate's impatience, he was renowned for it, is active. He would be aware that he's being manipulated by the Jews.

[18 : 10] You can only imagine what he's thinking and feeling. Another one of these troublemakers. Oh, I wish I could get home and get my breakfast.

Let's get this over with quickly. Are you the king of the Jews? There's not a court in the land where you're called upon to condemn yourself. And yet that's been happening all the way through Jesus' trial.

You and I need to recognize that that's a question you and I are called upon to wrestle with. What does it matter? Well, Pilate thought it was a piece of nonsense.

I'm sure he did. When you read on in chapter 19, you find this sort of theme coming up. They put a crown of thorns on him and they beat him. Hail, king of the Jews! When they finally lift him up on the cross and stretch him out naked before mankind, there's a title above him.

It was a big joke. I'm persuaded that's the case. Maybe you can argue me out of it later. But the more I studied it, the more it became apparent to me, you see, that they're laughing at this thought of him being king.

[19 : 23] But I want to put it to you. Pilate's not laughing today. Or as we might say, he's laughing on the other side of his face. You see, the Bible tells us that this king came to earth with a specific purpose of delivering men and women from sin, judgment, and eternal hell.

And that he did that not simply by giving us new instructions to live by, but by coming in our place, suffering our penalty, bearing our curse, so that we could be those who are without condemnation. Romans chapter 8 and verse 1. He bore my penalty. Even at this point, before they've got him nailed to the tree, he's bearing my shame.

I don't know what you think about Good Friday. I'm a good Scotsman, you see. And in Scotland, we don't really celebrate Good Friday. John Knox and the Presbyterians knocked that right out of us.

But I don't have any hard feelings about it in case you think I'm here under pressure in any sense. I find it's a useful time, isn't it, to stop and think. Who is Jesus to me?

[20 : 42] If you're a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you need to sit up and say, Hallelujah, amen. He's my king. He's my substitute.

He's my saviour. He loved me this much. I have a friend who's faithful love. He loved me this much. And I fear, dear Christian friends, one of the problems with having these sort of Christian events is that you can just say, well, it's Good Friday.

I better go to church. That's where I should be. Nothing good on the telly anyway. I never checked, by the way. And I fear as Christians we need to wrestle with and be grasped afresh by the wonder of God's love for us.

And to come and bow afresh before Jesus and say, I know he's king. King of my life, I crown thee now. Thine shall the glory be, said one of the hymns, doesn't it?

And so on Good Friday, what I'd like to think I'm doing, and I'm hoping you're joining with me, is I'm coming before Jesus and said, you're my Lord. You're my king.

[21 : 54] You're in charge. My life's not my own to live as I feel and fancy. My life is yours. You've given me and I now want to live for your glory. But there might just be somebody here who's not a Christian or as I found a phrase in Lloyd-Jones, he called him a cultural Christian.

Somebody for whom Christianity is really just part of how they grew up. And the Bible says you need to reckon on this fact that Jesus is king.

Philippians chapter 2 says, There's a day coming when every knee shall bow before and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, Master, and King.

And so I challenge you right now, dear friend, if Jesus is king, sing from the depth of your heart and give God the praise and the glory that he did this for you. If he's not king, make it your business this very night, by his grace, to become one of his subjects.

And to be at peace in his kingdom. We're living in strange days. We're living in days when the law of the land even wants to regulate Christianity and tell us what we can say and what we can't say.

[23 : 12] Just a few days ago, there was a man on trial, wasn't there, in Taunton and Somerset for being a street preacher. He got involved in a conversation with a homosexual. And if I understand it right, it was the other man who came up to him and says, What do you think about?

And he quoted Leviticus to him, in which, of course, it tells us quite plainly that homosexual is a sin. Practicing homosexuality, you need to make that distinction, don't you?

It's a sin against God and liable for judgment. And in that, he became guilty. He was fined. Told to pay £250 for causing an offence.

And the judge had the audacity to say to him, Listen, friend, you shouldn't have used Leviticus 18. You should have used Leviticus 20. Now, it doesn't sound much, but what he was actually doing was saying, We are the kings in this world and we'll tell you what is right and what can be used and what can't be used.

How will it ever change? By you and me making sure that the Lord of glory is my king. And that the Lord of glory is the king of kings in my life.

[24 : 28] Are you the king of the Jews? Is that your own idea? Jesus asked, or did others talk to you about me? Do you think I'm a Jew? Pilate replied. Sorry, but I just visualised him spitting those words out.

Do you think I'm a Jew? It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me.

What is it you have done? 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. You are a king then, said Pilate.

Right here in the heart of this passage is this statement that while Jesus might not look like a king, he might not be treated like a king, he is nonetheless king.

And so I titled this section, Not As Usually Defined. Not as human beings would define kingdoms. Christ is king of a realm that extends beyond all human borders, right down through time, and all the way into eternity.

[25 : 45] My kingdom is not of this world. It's not limited to dirt. It's not limited to road.

It's not limited to treasure. It's an eternal kingdom. And he's come to earth to recover it. He's come to earth to take back to God that which belongs to God, and which man through sin, encouraged by Satan, has turned his back on.

Are you familiar with John Bunyan's other book? Everybody knows Pilgrim's Progress. He actually wrote a lot of books, by the way. But there's another one that's well worth the thinking about.

It's called Man's Soul. I always found it a difficult book to read. Day one I've published a sort of condensed version, and it helps a bit, but it's still difficult.

But essentially, the idea is that man was once the subject of the great king. Satan, Diabolus, came in, and he stole man's heart and took control over him.

[26 : 51] And then the battle takes place so that Christ comes and recovers man for his kingdom. You see, that's a picture of history.

Christ has a kingdom. We are his subjects. And therefore, if we are not serving him, we are all rebels. Back in the book of Daniel, there's three different verses that talk about it.

I'll just read one. It says in Daniel 2, 44, In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people.

It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. It will itself endure forever.

Daniel 2, 44. It's the passage in which he's explaining the great statue, if you remember, from the book of Daniel. What is a king?

[27 : 51] My English dictionary says, A male monarch of a major territorial unit. That's a mouthful. A male monarch of a major territorial unit.

And in Pilate's mind, that's what he would be looking for. That's where he would be drawn. That's what would have made his ears prick up. I need to pay attention to this.

I'm a servant of Caesar. Anybody claiming to be a king? Well, they're a usurper, and they're a threat to the stability of the great Roman Empire. In ancient times, kings were important people.

You've only to read your Bible through the book of Kings, and Samuel, and Chronicles, to see how kings affected the whole welfare of their nation. Good and bad kings changed the very atmosphere and the presence of God amongst the people.

God was technically Israel's king. When they came out of Egypt, they had no human king. They had his footstool, the Ark of the Covenant.

[28 : 59] And where the footstool was, the king was present. But after the book of Joshua, after the book of Judges, when Samuel is getting old, the elders gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 1 Samuel 8, 4, they said to him, You are old and your sons do not walk in your ways.

Now appoint a king to lead us, such as the other nations have. And if you've ever wondered why trawling through Samuel in 1 and 2 Kings and Chronicles is such hard work, it's there to show us that there's no such thing as a perfect human king.

There's no such human being, there's not a human being on the planet who is really worthy of being the absolute sovereign ruler over all our lives. In the midst of that, David is held up as the pristine example.

But even he got involved in adultery and was responsible for murder. But he received the promise, When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body and I will establish his kingdom.

The reason the Pharisees and the Sadducees were so upset at the people putting down the palm leaves and singing, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, was those words in the Old Testament are applied to David's son.

[30 : 27] And they weren't having it. Jesus came to recover God's kingdom. Lost in the garden through sin. Human beings have been in rebellion ever since.

There were little cameos, little pockets in the history of the Old Testament where God's reign came back on earth and where his rule was visible and seen.

But wherever you had human beings involved, they soon messed it up. Man was born upright, comes into my mind from the book of Ecclesiastes. But he has gone, many have lost the words.

You can finish it, can't you? But he's gone astray is how I'll finish it. One of the joys of getting older. You see, the fact is, men and women had been setting up their own kingdoms as such were in rebellion against God's king.

And so Jesus Christ comes and when Pilate puts him on the spot, he makes it very plain that he is a king. My kingdom, my servants. There are people who are his.

[31 : 42] They are a group of people who are on the earth at the same time as him. When he began to preach, his message was, repent for the kingdom of heaven is near.

And repeatedly through the gospels, you get these little pictures of the kingdom references where Christ is present, his people are present, he is ruling over their lives.

They're not stuck in any physical territory, but they are his subjects. He's been gathering a new people. He's been setting people apart for his own glory and for his own name.

My kingdom, if it's 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.

It's the kingdom of God. It's the kingdom of heaven. It's not the kingdom as it's normally thought of. It's not the United Kingdom of Great Britain or any other place that has the word kingdom in its title.

[32 : 48] It's a spiritual kingdom. And it's to be the focal point of a believer's life. Why would I say such a thing? Do you remember how we're taught to pray in Matthew chapter 6?

Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. and then before you go very far down of it, your kingdom come. Your will be done.

On earth, you know the next line? You see, it always existed in heaven. Jesus has come to earth as a king, as a mighty champion.

And he himself will recover the kingdom for God and have a people to populate it. but it will mean going to Calvary.

It will mean stretching out his hands so that the Roman centurions could nail him to that tree. It will mean being hoisted up between heaven and earth and watching the people going back and laughing saying he claimed to be the king of the Jews.

[33 : 58] If he is, let him come down and show it. Let him come down and show it. I don't believe I've ever fully understood the depth of the humiliation which my saviour endured.

And yet he was the king. For a commoner like me, I don't know where you fit in, but for a commoner like me, you know, you could almost say, well, maybe I would deserve some of that.

But him, the one who fed the hungry, the one who raised the dead, the one who healed the sick, how long, much time have you got?

Nobody takes my life from me, he said in chapter 10, didn't he? I lay it down of myself. Nobody takes, he did that as a volunteer so that you and I would be delivered from eternal judgment.

So that, in the words of the apostle Paul, that believers might be rescued from the kingdom of darkness and brought into the kingdom of God's son whom he loves.

[35 : 08] You know, once you get an idea like kingdom, it sort of keeps on popping up all over the Bible. And if it's a kingdom, there must be a king. And what a king.

What a king. It's not one as usually defined. And so the question comes in, which kingdom are you in? Are you in the kingdom of darkness?

Tragically, every human being is born as a subject of the kingdom of darkness. What do you have to do to be in the kingdom of darkness? Nothing. You see, Satan hijacked humanity.

Not just Adam and Eve in the garden, he affected them and through them, he's affected every human being that's born. And left to themselves, men and women, great and poor, are rebels against God.

And when they meet him at the final judgment, God says, depart from me. I never knew you. You had never any time for me. I'm sorry. There's no place in heaven for you. Or there's the other kingdom, the everlasting kingdom, which shall never end.

[36 : 24] In which there is eternal peace and joy. How do you get into that kingdom? You come back here and you look at Jesus and say, who is he doing this for?

I mean, he already had his place in the kingdom of heaven. He is God after all. Who is he doing this for? He did it for everybody who believe in him.

Ask any Christian, what makes them think that God should save them? And I hope they'll say to you something like, they've no idea. What did God see in me?

What does God see in you? That you should be going to heaven and I shouldn't? I've no idea. There's nothing about me that he should desire me. I deserve the other place.

Do you know this? As a work of free and suffering grace, God, the son, suffered and died for me, put up with this obnoxious Roman governor so that I could live forever.

[37 : 34] How do you get into the other kingdom? You lay claim to him as your king. I surrender all, says one of the hymn writers.

I surrender, not some things, all. You are my Lord, my God, and my master.

Dear friends, there's two kingdoms in the world. If you're no longer in Satan's kingdom, I have no idea what you've got to be gloomy about. My Bible says, rejoice always.

I've been troubled by that verse for a wee while now. Rejoice always. You know, life's not easy, is it? There are things that have happened and might happen in the days that lie ahead which really, you almost feel you deserve to have a good groan.

Rejoice always. Why? Because the pain is pleasant? No. Because suffering makes me a better person? No. Because I know that I'm a child of the king.

[38 : 41] The record of my sin has been blotted out because the Lord of glory took my place, bore my curse. I have been declared righteous. I stand before the bar of heaven as innocent.

Surely, dear friends, there should be a joy flowing from us which is infectious. I've been persuaded of that for the last year or so. I've not managed to get there yet. The more I think about what he does for me, why he did it, how he did it, the more I'm amazed.

Oh dear, where's the time gone? I want to just move on to the third point and warn you about Pilate's response. Are you a king then?

Jesus answered, you are right in saying that I'm a king. In fact, for this reason I was born. For this I came into the world to testify to the truth. Everyone who on the side of truth listens to me. What is truth? Pilate asked. I want to stop there.

[39 : 51] What is truth? Grab the picture, you see. They've been kicking the ball back and forward if I can use that kind of analogy. They've been touching swords if you want, discussing this thing.

And finally, Jesus comes out and lays it on the line. Not only is he a king, but that's the reason he came into the world. To announce the restoration of God's kingdom and to call men and women to come into that kingdom.

What a tragedy it is then that you find someone like Pilate. Some of us would give a right arm for a face-to-face interview with Jesus. I know that's my left one, by the way.

A right arm. Pilate has an opportunity that I've never had and few others will ever have this side of heaven itself.

He's looked Jesus in the eye and he said, what's truth? Who knows anything? Don't expect me to make a decision.

[41 : 00] No, it's all too confusing. You've heard that from people, haven't you? There's too many religions. There's too many parts of Christianity. Why would anybody expect me to make a decision on this matter?

It's not new. It's right before you. Jesus is God's king. It says in Psalm 2, Therefore, you kings, be wise, be warned, you rulers of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the sun, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way. For his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are they who take refuge in him.

Blessed are they who take refuge in him. That's what's in front of Pilate. And Pilate turns his back on him. The Lord of glory perseveres with the course that's laid for him because he knows that the only way possible for your sin and for mine to be covered, to be taken from us is for somebody else to pay the bill.

And he's no ordinary individual. So then, after all, you are a king is how M.R. Vincent translates this little statement.

[42 : 19] I wonder if just for a moment there was a light beginning to break in his mind and then suddenly all just shut back down again. He's satisfied that Jesus isn't any kind of king that's a threat to the order of the Roman Empire.

He wants to think he's a king. Well, on he goes. We'll sort him out. We'll make an example of him. He's just another Jewish body that will help them to remember who's in charge.

For this cause I was born. When Herod was asked where is he who's born king of the Jews, he understood what he was about.

He got so worked up he sent out his soldiers and killed every baby under two years old. Pilate, what is truth? Who cares?

Jesus was born a king from the minute he came forth from Mary's womb.

[43 : 25] She had been told Luke chapter 1 verse 31 I'll not read it to you you can read it yourself. She had been told that he was to be king he was born to fulfill the promise to David that there would be someone to sit on his throne.

He was born a king and he came into the world that he might bear witness to that truth. Here is a picture of God's mercy which I want you to pick up on if you possibly can.

Everybody knows John 3 16 just for a minute there I thought about getting you to say it aloud too revolutionary perhaps but you already thought it haven't you?

God's love that he gave. God the son demonstrated his own love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for you and me.

Died and he came into the world with that purpose. The disciples struggled with this concept I'm going up to Jerusalem the Jews are going to kill me and after three days I'll rise from the dead again.

[44 : 36] No way said Peter. Sorry about the paraphrase. It'll never happen. Get behind me Satan.

That's why he came. Good Friday is good because at this point in the history of the world God effected a redemption which is powerful enough to save whoever whoever will accept it.

All the way back to the dawn of time and all the way forward to the end of history it's the one message the simple straightforward message you and me are sinners we've come short of the glory of God Christ died for sinners believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

ABC somebody says all have sinned believe and confess and yet you look folks even in our own churches who hear these things week in and week out and it just never seems to get through maybe one of you are here tonight I don't know you all well enough you see maybe there's just somebody maybe one of these youngsters you've been growing up in a Christian home your mum and dad have tried their best to tell you about the gospel they're not perfect I don't need to tell you that you've probably found it out already but what they will tell you is we believe Jesus is my saviour he died for me and what they want you to do is to have him as your saviour and king what's keeping you back what's holding you back why are you not saying this very night I want Jesus to be king it's because you're a rebel at heart it's because in you there is just that little bit and it's maybe bigger than I'm saying which says who does he think

I don't do what my mum and dad always tells me and I'm not going to do what the preacher says but it's a matter of life and death what is truth I've seen so many youngsters I'm getting old you see I've seen so many youngsters grow up and go off their own way and they think they're so clever and smart and they're the biggest fools in the world why would I say that Psalm 14 verse 1 I hope somebody's taught you it the fool has said in his heart no God for me no God for me Jesus went to Calvary and my goodness where did the time go I really do need to stop everyone who is of the truth hears my voice my sheep hear my voice and follow me that's the mark of the gospel isn't it it's not the cleverness of the preacher in fact old

[47 : 36] Mr. Spurgeon was see I've started talking again haven't I old Mr. Spurgeon was converted when the preacher didn't turn up wasn't he and the deacon got in the pulpit and he couldn't preach and he looked at the boy at the back who'd stumbled in through the snow and he says I'm talking to you laddie and God dealt with him on that moment there's a lot more to it than that somebody will explain the full story to you if you want to read it it's not the cleverness of the preacher it's a work of God when you see that Jesus did this with a purpose of saving the likes of you and me and bringing us to glory and Christian when you recognize that if you had been left to yourself you'd still be going to hell then surely you have to get out of a skipping your step and a sing hallelujah he loved me he died for me the life I now live in the flesh I'm going to live for the son of God you know

I write these sermons week after week and I never get to the end all I want tonight dear friends is to show you the wonder of Jesus love not as a poor pathetic beaten Jewish victim but as a king in all his splendor and his glory facing the power of the world apparently defeated and yet conquering would a king's matter in modern history next to nothing I'm not a royalist so I need to be careful they're insignificant unless you're a tourist but this king is a matter of great urgency and vital importance to us Pilate eventually got himself hauled off back to Rome he didn't upset the Jews as much as the Samaritans and the Samaritans put an official complaint in and they dragged Pilate back to Rome to stand before the emperor and answer for it the result was that he was removed from his role in Palestine and then went to live in the south of France everybody would like to live in the south of France wouldn't they no he went to live in the south of France and you know what no he didn't finish his days sipping sangria would be Spain wouldn't I don't know what Frenchmen sip red wine or something he committed suicide why would I tell you that because I want to put it to you not to have Jesus as king tonight is to commit suicide may God deliver us and may we who've been delivered thank God for delivering us in Jesus name amen hallelujah lord what a saviour you are we thank you that the one who was dead is now living and because he lives we live also we thank you that you paid our penalty and that you've given us everlasting life you rose on the third day to pronounce to the world your victory and triumph over death and sin and the devil and we pray that those who are your citizens this night those who are in the kingdom of God by your grace we might live as redeemed and delivered people who will one day be freed from every every weight that pulls us down to enter into the courts of heaven and cast our crowns before you declaring your worth have mercy oh lord on any who are still not in the kingdom oh that they should go home tonight and settle this matter forever in Jesus name amen amen amen amen amen