

Jesus The King

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[0 : 0 0] Hey church, good morning. It's 1030, so I'm going to go ahead and get us started. Normally I would just jump right in, but since we're separated this morning, there are a few announcements that we need to cover.

First of all, I just want to thank our deacons again for the way that they manage our property and for their diligence this morning in checking on our church and determining that we are in fact an ice skating rink in our parking lot, which is what prevents us from gathering together.

I also want to remind you all that the new members class is going to start next Sunday, February 5th. If you're interested in that, please do email me. It's mcapone at cmpca.net.

I know many of you have already, and if you haven't heard back from me, that's because I'm just backlogged from being at a bunch of regional church things this past week and then also being gone for a couple weeks after Christmas.

But do know that I'm tracking with you all, and I hope to see you 9-15 next Sunday, February 5th. We're going to meet right by the piano at the front of the sanctuary. Also a good reminder for next Sunday is next Sunday is the last day to bring back physical baby bottles if you're taking part in the baby bottle campaign for the Life Network.

[1 : 1 3] And I'm told that we are leading right now. We're leading all the other churches in terms of percentage raise. We've already raised two-thirds of the goal that they have given us, and we're at \$400, so we want to stay in the lead there because, of course, our goal is to crush all the other churches.

Just kidding, mostly. Finally, I wanted to remind you that this is the last Sunday of the month, and one of our challenges when we're separated like this is that we're not able to take an offering, and even though our worship service is canceled, our mortgage is not canceled, and our utility bills have not been canceled.

So if you can just remember any gifts you would have given today to remember to go online, you can do that at our website, which is cmpc.church. We'd be very grateful for that.

Finally, I do want to mention in the life of our community that Burke Ivey was born to Paul and Lakin Erickson this past Wednesday, and they're all doing well but can continue to use our prayers for health and strength and recovery.

I think I have everything. With that, let's jump in. And, of course, you're here with us this morning, which is an interesting choice because if you're at home and you're online, you can choose from any church in the country.

[2 : 3 0] You can choose from some of the best preachers alive and dead, and instead you're here with a few folks on a Facebook Live, and you're listening to just a normal guy. And so the question is why, and the answer is that we're a community.

We're here together. We're going through a book of the Bible together. And so our interest is in belonging to one another, which we do. So in that spirit, I'm just going to ask you all to consider if you're on Facebook, and you can leave a comment to do that, to share where you're watching from, to welcome one another and greet one another.

I know it's a small consolation to do it online when we are not able to be together physically, but it does give us that small sense of community, and it also reminds me that I'm not crazy and just talking alone to a camera in my family room.

So I appreciate you all doing that. With that, we're going to jump right in to our passage this morning. You know that we're going through the Gospel of Mark, which tells the story of Jesus in his life and his death and his resurrection.

And we're going to have a little bit of a throwback this morning. So you'll remember in the first eight chapters of the Gospel of Mark, I kept asking you over and over these two questions. Who is Jesus and how do we respond to him?

[3 : 47] And that question is actually going to make a comeback this morning. Even though we've moved into Passion Week, Jesus is going to force us once again to wrestle with the question of his identity.

If you've been with us the last few weeks, you know that we've finished up this series of three questions that Jesus has been asked, and now Jesus decides it is time to turn the tables a little bit.

It's time for him to ask a question. And he asks a question about the Messiah, of course, who he is. And as we wrestle with this, we wrestle with who Jesus is and how we respond to him.

There's just a couple of simple things that we see in this passage. As Jesus reminds us that he's the king, first of all, we see encouragement for the hurting, and we also see challenge for the hard-hearted.

It's encouragement for the hurting and challenge for the hard-hearted. Encouragement for the hurting, that Jesus is the king, that he's coming back, he's going to make all things right, and challenge for the hard-hearted, that Jesus is the king.

[4 : 47] He's not just an advisor or a comforter, but he's actually one who's able to command our obedience and our lives. And so it's with that that I'm going to invite you to turn with me to which we are continuing in Mark chapter 12, and we're starting in verse 35, and we're going to read through verse 37.

So I invite you to open up your Bible or your phone or computer, whatever you have with you. Remember, regardless of what you open, that this is God's word. And God tells us that his word is a lamp to our feet, and it's a light to our path.

So God has not left us alone to stumble in the dark, but instead he's shown us the way to go. And so that's why we read now Mark chapter 12, the son of David.

David himself in the Holy Spirit declared, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. David himself calls him Lord.

So how is he his son? And the great throng heard him gladly. I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word.

[5 : 59] Our Father in heaven, we thank you this morning for the gift and the wonder of technology, that we're able to come together virtually from a distance, even as we're separated physically because of the weather and the snow and the ice.

We ask that you'd help us with the challenges that that presents, as it presents distraction and disconnection, that you'd be with us, that you'd help us to focus on your word, what you have to say to us.

And most of all, you'd show us Jesus. We ask these things in his name. Amen. You'll remember from the past several weeks that we're finishing this series of three questions over three weeks that come up against Jesus.

We started out with Drew. I preached on the question about paying taxes to Caesar. That was an attempt to trap Jesus. And then the next week, we had that question about a woman who had seven husbands and what that had to do with the resurrection.

And we talked about the reality of there being no marriage in heaven. And then last week, we had the third and final question pointed to Jesus, where he was asked, what is the greatest commandment? And Jesus says, actually, there's not just one, there's two.

[7 : 08] Love the Lord your God with your whole self and to love your neighbor as yourself. Now in this section, Jesus decides it is time to stop the stump the chump series.

In fact, we saw in verse 34 last week, no one wanted to ask him questions anymore because it wasn't fun anymore. And Jesus decides it's time for him to ask a question.

It's his turn to turn the tables. And so that's what we come up against here in verse 35. Jesus poses this very strange question. And to understand it, I want you to think about it this way.

Imagine I came to you and I said, I am two things at the same time. I am my dad's father. And I'm also my dad's son.

I'm both. And if you think about it, you realize that there's no way that that could happen. I would have to actually be my own grandfather. I want something that's mutually exclusive, two things that can't go together.

[8 : 07] That's the conundrum that Jesus is giving to the religious leaders here. He's telling them, hey, there's two things that we agree about. I believe in you believe in the Old Testament.

How can those two things go together? Because we know that there's this Messiah that we're expecting. And we believe two things about that Messiah. First, he says this here in verses 35 and 37, that this Messiah is going to be the son of David.

So verse 35, he said, how can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? Then verse 37, so how is he his son? So fact number one, the Messiah, who we know to be Jesus, is David's son.

But there's also fact number two, inconvenient, David himself, verse 35, in the Holy Spirit, declared, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

So the Messiah is not just David's son. He's also David's Lord. So it's similar again to me saying, hey, I'm not just my dad's son, I'm also his father.

[9 : 12] Now, one of the disadvantages we have of being separated this morning is if we had been in worship, I would have already read to you Psalm 110 as our Old Testament reading, which is what Jesus is quoting from here.

If you look in your Bible, and I encourage you to read Psalm 110 later this morning, you'll see that it's marked, at least in the ESV translation, as a Psalm of David. So David's the one speaking here, and we have the first verse of Psalm 110 in verse 36.

So when it says, the Lord said to my Lord, what he's saying is, God the Father said to the Messiah. And so that first Lord is God the Father. The second Lord is the Messiah.

And so the critical word there is my Lord. David is saying the Messiah is my Lord. And that's what Jesus is honing in on here is to say, okay, we all agree that the Messiah is going to be David's son.

We're told this over and over in the Old Testament. We also all agree that Psalm 110 is referring to the Messiah. And in that Psalm, we're being told that the Messiah is not David's son, but his Lord.

[10 : 17] So we have two things that cannot possibly go together. You've asked me, Jesus, many hard questions. And here I am to ask you a hard question. How can you, in fact, resolve these things?

How can I be my dad's father and my dad's son? Of course, this is ridiculous, but you've agreed to it. You're the experts in the law. So you tell me. You want to ask hard questions.

Now it's time for you to answer a hard question. Now it tells us here the crowds were glad to hear Jesus, and they're glad to hear him because they can tell, again, just his insight and knowledge of the scriptures as an intelligence.

He's doing something that I'm sure is satisfying for them, which he's putting the religious leaders on their heels. These men who keep coming and pretending as if they know everything. And Jesus is actually saying, look, there is a very simple problem that you don't know how to solve.

This problem, though, is one that we know the answer to, and it's this. This can be resolved, that Jesus, the Messiah, can be both David's Lord above him and his son under him when we recognize Jesus' full identity, that Jesus is both God, he's both divine, and he's human.

[11 : 36] And when we understand that Jesus is 100% man and 100% God, we can untangle this riddle that Jesus presents to the religious leaders. He can be David's Lord in his divinity.

In Jesus' divinity, we know he was already there at the beginning. John chapter 1 tells us, in the beginning was the Word, referring to Jesus, and the Word was God. So as Jesus functions in his divinity, according to his divine nature, of course, he is David's Lord because he pre-exists David.

In his human nature, however, he comes after David chronologically. He is born after David is born.

When, because Jesus is both 100% God and 100% man, because he's both human and divine, that is the way and the only way that these two things can come together.

And so Jesus here is showing that the Old Testament has revealed all along that this son of David is going to be more than a man. He is going to be God himself.

[12 : 47] Jesus existed as God before he became man. He now exists as God and man, 100% one, 100% the other. That is the answer to the riddle.

That is how this gets resolved. There is no answer, by the way, to how I could be my dad's father and his son because that's impossible. But Jesus can be David's son and David's Lord because he's both human and divine.

And so Jesus is saying something indirectly to these religious leaders. You think that I am just this good teacher. I'm just a chump for you to stump. I'm just someone who can answer questions very well, but in fact, I am much more than a teacher.

I am the Psalm 110 King. I am more than just a man. I'm God himself. I am the promised Messiah, the one who is going to rule over the nations.

I'm not your answer, man. I'm the King of the earth. I am so much more than you realize and give me credit for.

[13 : 59] This is the reason I'm able to trap you in your own questions. I am more than you have bargained for. And so that's the simple, the clear explanation of what's happening in this passage.

Jesus is letting them know, hey, you don't realize who you're dealing with. And you don't know as much as you think you know. I'm 100% God. I'm 100% man.

And so we've seen what this has to do with the teachers of the law. It's again a rebuke of them. Remember last week was a rebuke as Jesus was saying, look, you care about these technical questions, but you don't care about love, which is actually the heart of the law.

And Jesus is rebuking them again. You care about solving these riddles, but you don't even realize who I am. You talk about the becoming Messiah, but then when he shows up, you miss him.

The question for us though is, what do these three verses have to do with us in 2023? We're not the religious leaders. We understand the answer to the riddle in a way that they did not.

[15 : 00] And so this needs to shape and form us as well. And I'm just gonna tell you two simple things. First of all, it's going to encourage us. And second, it's gonna challenge us.

It's gonna encourage us. And it's going to challenge us. In its encouragement, Jesus is reminding us of basic and simple things, not easy things, but simple things that we've talked about over and over.

If we had read Psalm 110, in fact, you see it here in verse 36 quoted, it says, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. And that's an idea, this image of Jesus sitting and the nations, he's using them as his footstool.

Jesus has the greatest rulers and powers of this world as his Ottoman. That's what it means to be the Psalm 110 king. In verses five through seven of Psalm 110, we see he's shattering the nations of the earth, that Jesus acts as this great king.

He comes as this great judge to bring judgment and justice to the earth. And so the encouragement is this. In a world that is filled with abuse, in a world that's filled with imperfect rulers, we find in Jesus a pure authority.

[16 : 17] In a world that is filled with limited authorities, temporary authorities, we have an authority that's permanent and powerful.

And so the encouragement is that if and when someone who's in power uses that to exploit you, to abuse you, to take advantage of you, we know from Psalm 110 that that will not be the last word.

We know that's not the end of the story, and it's not the end of your story. Jesus, as the Psalm 110 king, uses all the powers of this earth as his footstool.

Jesus, as the Psalm 110 king, is going to put everything right. That's the personal encouragement for you.

There's also a global encouragement. Nations and rulers, we watch them every day doing terrible things that God detests. We see them oppressing and attacking.

[17 : 32] And Psalm 110 reminds us, one day God will bring all of that to an end. Jesus is going to have the last word.

It will not go on forever. And so there's an encouragement there for us to look forward with hope, knowing how the story is going to end, and a pulling away that we don't look to others to ultimately solve our problems.

We don't look to ourselves. We don't believe that it's our job to make everything right, because that's a crushing burden that a human is not meant to bear. But instead, we have hope in the midst of darkness.

We have light that we can look forward to in the midst of sadness. As we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, to use the words of Psalm 23, we know that he is with us.

We know that mercy and goodness will follow us all the days of our life. You can imagine the crowds here being delighted to hear Jesus, because Jesus is challenging these abusive authorities.

[18 : 42] He's revealing who they truly are. He's asking a question they can't answer. So we can imagine them having hope, perhaps for the first time, perhaps in a long time, saying, okay, there's something more than what we see.

That's our encouragement as well, as we look around in a world filled with exploitation and violence and sin. We can be reminded that Jesus is the Psalm 110 King, and we can take our hope from him, and place our hope in him.

It's not just encouragement, though. Remember I told you there's also a challenge. If Jesus is the King, he knows better than you what's best for you.

There's a man named Bill Wilder, who's a Bible teacher, and he defines perfect authority in this way. He says, A perfect authority is an authority that loves you more than you love yourself.

Perfect authority is one that loves you more than you love yourself. Now that's a little bit different than someone who loves their neighbor as themselves. That was what we saw last week. This is an even higher standard than that.

[20 : 01] It's not loving your neighbor as yourself. This is loving someone more than they love themselves, which reminds us that authority is actually not the problem. We think about authority often as this dangerous and harmful and damaging thing.

And we think about it that way, because in this world, it often is. But it's not authority that's actually the problem. It's misused and abused authority. It's authority by rulers who care more about themselves than they care about you.

In his book, *You Are Not Your Own*, Alan Noble makes this observation that others abuse us, but that we also abuse ourselves.

We don't love ourselves enough. We don't know what's best for ourselves. We think that we have our best interests in mind, but we're actually falling so far short of that.

And so the answer is not that we care for ourselves and protect ourselves against all odds. The answer is not that we prevent others from being in our lives. The answer is we need a ruler, an authority, a leader, who cares more about us than we care about ourselves.

[21 : 12] And as he points out, there's only one ruler who fits that description. It's only our Lord Jesus who can care equally about his glory and our good.

It's only those two things that are not in conflict, that what is good for us is also what glorifies God. And so we have this perfect authority who's not going to use or exploit or abuse us.

Jesus is not selfishly interested in. Your good and his good are the same. That gets back to what we talked about last week, that love is the fulfillment of the law.

If you want to be a maximizer of love, you follow Jesus as king. You obey his command. You listen to what he has to say. And so the challenge then is this.

Who is Jesus to you? Is Jesus merely a good advisor who has some wisdom? You know, if you meet with a financial advisor, they probably know much more about investments and savings and financial instruments than you do.

[22 : 24] They can give you advice and direction. But who has the last word over your money? Well, it's you, right? The financial advisor is only that.

She's only an advisor. Someone to consider, not necessarily someone to submit to or to obey. If Jesus is the king, which he is, and he knows better than we do what's good for us, which he does, he is more than an advisor.

He's someone we submit to and obey. Maybe you think of Jesus merely as a comforter. He's there to remind you that you're loved. And don't hear what I'm not saying.

Jesus is, in fact, a comforter. We see that throughout the Old Testament and throughout the New Testament. He does love you and comfort you. He's just not merely that.

Jesus is also a king who calls you to obedience in uncomfortable places. That's why he says, Mark chapter 8, verse 34, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and follow me.

[23 : 39] After me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Which is a way of saying that Jesus is more than an advisor. He's more than a comforter. He's the king of the world.

And so he calls us to obedience and sacrifice. What's a comfort to us is also a challenge. It's two sides of the same cord. It's a comfort that Jesus loves us more and better than we love ourselves.

And it's a challenge because it means he knows better than we know. Jesus commands our best for us, even when we don't see it, understand it, like it, want it.

Remember last week, the law is love. We protect and preserve and promote love when we obey the law. So because Jesus is the king, we love our neighbors as ourselves.

Even harder than that, we love our enemies. Because Jesus is the king, we know our resources belong first to him and not to us.

[24 : 48] They were merely stewards of the things that he's given us. There's one man that said that the early church turned the ancient world upside down because in the ancient world, people were stingy with their money.

And generous with their bodies. And Christians did the opposite. They were generous with their money and stingy with their bodies. They did the opposite of what the culture told them would bring them satisfaction and joy because of King Jesus.

Because Jesus is king. We rest one day in seven. Whether we, in our limited wisdom, believe that's best or not, Jesus as the king has told us, Hey, I love you more than you love yourself.

This is what is good for you. This is what I command you as the king. We submit to him. We obey him. We obey him. Because Jesus is the Psalm 110 king.

That's our great encouragement. And it's also our great challenge. The 1988 film Stand and Deliver tells the real life story of a math teacher named Jaime Escalante.

[25 : 58] And Jaime teaches calculus and he becomes a teacher in the East Los Angeles public school system. In the late 70s and the early 80s, he starts teaching math to these underprivileged students.

And he's convinced that this is the way to raise them out of poverty, to give them a future and a hope, to give them an opportunity to exceed what they would otherwise be limited by.

And against all odds, he gets these students to pass the AP calculus exams. Now, there's one student that we meet in the movie whose name is Pancho. Pancho is a mechanic and he loves to work on cars, but he struggles with math.

And so at one point, he comes to his teacher. He comes to Escalante and he says, Look, I'm out of this. I've got to put school on hold. My uncle has offered me this job. I can be a forklift operator on Saturdays and Sundays.

In two years, I'm going to be in the union and I'll be making more money than you do as a teacher. Jaime tries to tell him, Look, that's great in the short term.

[27 : 00] It is not good in the long term. He takes him on this drive in one of his cars and he says, Wouldn't you rather be designing these things than fixing them? And then they come up to this turn and they're not sure which way to go.

And he just keeps driving straight until Pancho finally yells at him, Turn right, turn right. And so he turns right and where they find themselves is straight into a street with a dead end. And so he has to slam the brakes as hard as he can to get the car to stop before they smash into the curb and the dead end sign.

And he turns to Pancho and he says, You see the turn, but you do not see the road ahead. You see the turn, but you don't see the road ahead.

Which is a way of saying, Your perspective is so limited. You see what's good in the here and now. You want what's going to satisfy in this moment. But there's a bigger and a broader world out there.

There are long-term consequences to your choices. There are sacrifices that you can make now that will lead to flourishing in your future. You have to trust that I am wiser than you.

[28 : 06] That I have had more experience than you. That I know how all of this is going to play out. In the end, Pancho listens to his teacher, returns to his math class, and looks to the road ahead and not just the turn.

Brothers and sisters, we obey our King Jesus. We listen to him because we only see the turn. He sees the road ahead.

We have a limited perspective. He has an eternal perspective. We are creatures. He is the King. And so we trust him.

We trust him because he always sees that road. So I've shared with you the encouragement from this passage that Jesus is the King who's bringing justice to this earth.

He's the King who cares about us more than we care about ourselves. I've also given you the challenge, which is that if he loves us more than we love ourselves, we trust him. We obey him, even when we don't like it.

[29 : 15] None of that matters, though, if we don't see and fall in love with Jesus. It's not logic that compels our hearts. And so as we prepare for worship every week, I pray for us that we wouldn't just be encouraged and we wouldn't just be challenged.

That most of all, we would see Jesus. That we would grow in our love and our affection for him. We'd grow in our reverence and our awe for him. And those things would flow into our obedience to him.

And so what do we need to see for our affection to grow, for our love to grow? Well, we need to see what we've already talked about, that Jesus is the one who cares about us more than we care about ourselves.

Jesus is the only authority that his interests don't conflict with our interests. Jesus is the king who's come to die.

Jesus is the king who doesn't just love his neighbor as himself. He has love that leads to him sacrificing himself. That's the love that leads us to trust him and obey him and follow him.

[30 : 26] I have this saying that I mention from time to time. I've never mentioned it in a sermon before, but I say it when we're talking about interactions of people. And I'll say, sometimes it doesn't matter what is said, it matters who says it.

Which is to say, most of us, maybe all of us, have one or two people in our lives who have earned the right to say hard and strange and difficult things to us.

That if anyone else were to say it to us, we would be tempted to respond in anger and frustration and walk away. But because that person has invested so much in us, because we know that they care so much about us, we're willing to stay there and listen.

Maybe for you, that's your spouse. I hope so. Maybe it's a friend that you've been with for many years who's shown their deep love for you. Maybe it's a mentor who's poured into you.

But I would venture to guess most of us, if not all of us, have someone that it doesn't matter what they say, it matters who says it. And that's what we see here in Jesus in this passage, that Jesus, because of his great love for us, is the one to whom we can and should listen.

[31 : 41] Because he loves us more than we love ourselves, we rest when he tells us to rest. Because he laid down his life for us, we give when he tells us to give.

Because he has loved us, we love when he tells us to love. Jesus takes the golden rule to the next level.

We see here, verse 36, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

And so we know that Jesus is the one right now in his physical body, as a man, who is sitting at the right hand of God the Father. And as he sits there, he's interceding for us.

He continues to speak for us and to advocate for us. He continues to be the Psalm 110 King. He's the Psalm 110 King who brings justice, where there needs to be justice.

[32 : 38] He's the Psalm 110 King who leads us and directs us and guides us where we need to be led and directed and guided. And so who is Jesus? Jesus is the great and mighty King.

How do we respond to him? We hope in his justice and we submit to his rule. Let's pray together. Our Father in heaven, we thank you again for this blessing that we can gather together even as we're separated.

And we ask most of all that you would grow our love and our affection for your Son and our Savior, our Lord Jesus, that we would see and know his power and his love and that because of that we would hope in him, we'd follow him, we'd obey him.

We thank you that we don't have to worry this morning about whether we've earned or deserve these things, but instead we ask them in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Now normally we would end our time together by singing a final song.

We're not going to be able to do that together over Facebook Live, so I am going to leave you with a benediction, which is a good word from God from Numbers chapter 6. The Lord bless you and keep you.

[34 : 00] The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace now and forever. So go in the grace and peace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Thank you all for joining us online and I look forward to seeing you next Sunday if not before. Thank you. Thank you.