

Christ's Kingdom

- **Vs. 36a/c.** When we hear wrd kngdm, imd thnk: monrch/king, rules over natn – a cntry that has bndry lines. This kngdm has castle/palce where kng sits throne. There: soldrs, fight defend kngdm; taxes, supprt kngdm; ctznns in kngdm: love kng (if prtcts) or hate (if abuses). This what we think: kng/dom.
- And this what ppl J's day wanted J be: their earthly kng. When feed 5k: ppl **"intended come, make J kng by force" (Jn 6:15)**. Wanted kng that gave free food; and free hlth care. Think all healing mrcls J perfmd; they wanted a kng who'd heal them. And wanted a kng to fight Roms, return natn/Isrl to glory days Dvd & Slmn. They wanted J be their earthly kng.
- But J didn't come reign over earthly kngdm. Didn't come sit castle, levy taxes, cmmnd soldrs, defeat Roms, or conjure up meals & mrcls. **Vs. 36a/c.** J is our almighty, etrn, hvnly Kng. **"Kng/kngs, Lrd/lrds" (Rev 19); "ruler kngs earth" (Rev 1)**. And rules in our hrts by faith. And so Luth tchrs have histrcly recgnzd in Bible 3 kngdms over which Xp reigns, or 3 areas of J's ruling actvty as Kng: pwr, grace, glory. P: J ruling unvrs w/almghty pwr. Gr: J ruling in hrts of bels by faith. Gl: J's ruling in glory/hvn. In today's Gos, as J on trial before PP, on GF, about be crucfd, J explains nature of his kngdm and what means that Xp is our Kng.

His Kingdom of Power

- Rule over unvrs w/almghty pwr. Planets orbit; atmsphr oxygn/temp human life; plnts/anmls grow & live. See in creatn; also in way daily provides – brains, bodies – "let these gifts...blessed." In contrl.
- Mircls: calmng storm; walkng wtr; healng diseases; curng blndnss; raisng dead – pwr over nature. And when heals us, again using his pwr. When kid, sang: "My God is so great!" That's kngdm/pwr.
- But greatst display of Xp's pwr takes place on cross: not in what you see, but what don't see. What see doesn't look glorious at all; see: crimnl exctd. J even: **vs. 36ab**. And don't see any srvnts dfndng J! No, pwr of J on cross lies in what don't see. When being arrstd, J: legions angels (Mt 26:53). That's pwr/CTK! But don't see. One step further: when J on cross, what don't see: J had this all planned out, ev little detail, from very beg. When A&E fell into sin, God promsd send Sav. And thruout hstry, J was in control of events on earth, rise/fall natns, hstry mnknd so that his death & res'd occur just as planned. He's in control. Entire OT hstry God's ppl shows God protctng line/Sav so that Xp come, live, die, rise to save us. Ex: M&J Egypt Herod boys. Or: on cross, J could come down any time; had pwr to annihilate PP & Rom soldrs. But in both, in control situtn; and w/almghty pwr made evthng work accrdng to his plan of salvation.
- But we don't always see that – don't always see his pwr in his plan. And bec don't see, often questn/doubt him. Lord, why would you let this hap; why allow this trgy: this war, death, terrorism, pandmc, injstc, natnl calmt? Or make persnl: God, why allow this disaster in my life; why putng me thru this pain; why letting me suffer? TN, cousin, 44. Why? Can't always see his plan, pwr behind plan. So we wonder, questn, doubt God. But it's then that we have go back to cross & empty tomb and look again at Xp's plan & pwr. On cross you see pwr of Xp your Kng, who was in control whole time, had ev detail planned out, so you/I could be frgvn & saved. Today, J still has pwr & plan for your life & mine. J is a Kng in control; cross is proof. This is Xp's kngdm/pwr.

His Kingdom of Grace

- How J rules as Kng in hrts/bels. Could call: kngdm/faith. J is Kng of Ch, not denom, but HCC, Com Snts. So evone who bels in J as Sav has Xp reignng in hrt by faith. That's kngdm/grace. J once: **"The kngdm/God does not come w/your carefl obsrvtn, nor will ppl say 'Here it is' or 'There it is,' bec kngdm/God is w/in you" (Lk 17:20-21 NIV84)**. And how get w/in you? As Luths we know: kngdm begins/grows w/in us thru MofG: Gos W&S. Thru Gos (good news msg God's love for us & his fogvnss our sins thru Xp's life, death, res), which recorded for us in Scrptr/Wrd, and gifted to us physcly thru Scrmnts (B/LS) – thru Gos W&S (MofG), Xp our Kng reigns w/in us. His Gos brings his kngdm here, into hrts. That's kngdm/grace.

- And J told prbls re kngdm/grace. Like mustard seed: tiny, grows huge. Or yeast: just little, whole batch dough, change whole life. Or sower/seed. Gos falls on rocky/thorny soil when rejctd; but produces great crop when falls on good soil, receivd in faith by bels.
- Diff btwn kngdm grace & pwr: all ppl are in kngdm/pwr; J rules evone/where! But only bels: in kngdm/grace. Salvtn is by grace thru faith. When HS converts you, works faith in hrt, he brings you into kngdm/grace. And whole reason J left hvn & came here to earth: bring as many ppl as pssbl into kngdm/grace. Says here before PP: **vs. 37c-Reason**. Truth: Gos. J came to proclaim Gos to bring as many ppl as pssbl into kngdm/grace.
- But now listen what says nxt: **vs. 37d** (lit, hear my voice). Remem Jn 10: “My shp listen my voice.” There’s invttn here: Listen me, bec I want you be on side/truth, in kngdm/grace. J is inviting PP to bel Gos. Pilate, you’re smart man; you know I’m not crmnl; I speak truth; you need listen me!” Pilate, of course, rejects the invttn. Famously in nxt vs: “What is truth?” But this invttn is still here, for you/me. **Vs. 37d**. I know you know truth; you bel Gos. Just don’t take Gos granted! That’s the great temptn for those of us already in kngdm/grace. Don’t take Gos for granted. Treasure MofG: come to worship, don’t skip church, hear/bel Word of Xp, persnlz your Bap, priortz Com, listen his voice, and make J most imp part your life – nothing more imp than J! He’s brought you into kngdm/grace.

His Kingdom of Glory

- And smday he’s going bring you to kngdm/glory: glory/hvn. It’s very sim to kngdm/grace bec only bels in hvn. But we’re not there yet. Smtms talk re ch miltnt & triumphnt. Ch miltnt is bels on earth, who still have to fight good fight faith. Ch triumphant is bels who now in hvn. They triumph w/J in kngdm/glory.
- Just imagine what’ll be like (hvn): to see J, be w/God, see angels. Often Bible describes hvn what won’t be there. No: hunger, thirst, pain, sufng, sadness, sin, guilt, shame, heartache, pain, death, doubts. Only glory of J.
- And that’s the gift of Xp our King. He proms that whoever bels in him as Sav will enjoy eternal life w/him in glory/hvn. What more could we ask for? In Xp we have evthng.
- Today Pilate asks J: **vs. 33b**. Not kind of king you’re thinking re, Pilate. And even though those wrds’d be mockingly posted above head on cross (INRI), nvrthls: J is the Kng. Perf king, of hvn & earth. Rules unvrs in kngdm/pwr. Rules in hrts of bels by faith in kngdm/grace. And smday he’ll bring us to kngdm/glory in hvn.
- To him who is, was, is to come; A&O; CTK, be glory/honor, now/forever. Amen.

John 18:33-37

³³ Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” ³⁴ “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”

³⁵ “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?” ³⁶ Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

³⁷ “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

