

Jesus as Judge, King, and Truth

John 18:28-38

By David Harrell

Preached on: Sunday, August 2, 2015

This morning we come to John's Gospel yet again, chapter 18. We will be looking at verses 28 through 38 where we will see Jesus portrayed as Judge, as King, and as Truth. I hope that you have prepared your hearts to worship the Lord this morning because it's easy for us to come to church on a Sunday morning after enduring all of the stuff of the world the last week and have Christ on our lips but not really on our hearts. It's easy to just kind of play Christianity. This is the thing to do on a Sunday morning and if we're not careful, we can have all of our externals in place, all of our doctrine right but like the church at Ephesus that concern the Lord, we might have left our first love. It's so easy for our passion to know Christ intimately to somehow disappear, for that excitement that we once experienced when we first came to Christ, to somehow fade away. For that desire and determination to serve him and to know him and to worship him, for that to just evaporate and it's not because we made that choice but it's easy to happen because our flesh will naturally drift towards ungodliness and selfishness, not the opposite direction. So therefore, our Christianity can become nothing more than a cold, mechanical orthodoxy.

You might recall that when our Lord confronted the church at Ephesus there in Revelation 2 on that very issue, he basically told them that they needed to remember, repent and return. "Remember from where you have fallen. Repent of it. And return back to me." And certainly it is the passion of my heart, it is my sacred duty before the Lord to help you do that as well as me do that to remember from where we have fallen if in fact we have, to repent of that and to return to the Lord and we have a wonderful opportunity to do that this morning as we look at this text. Here we have really a triumvirate, if you will, of hope in Christ as we see him portrayed in these 3 powerful works that he does as Judge, as King and as Truth.

So let's transport ourselves some 2,000 years back. It's very early on a Friday morning. The Lord Jesus has been arrested in the garden. They have placed wrist and leg irons on him. They have taken him to Caiaphas the high priest and while there, he was interrogated and he was tortured by the scribes and the elders and the chief priests and all the council that had assembled there in that room. Like hissing serpents, they took their turn spewing venom at the Son of God. We're told that they mocked him. They spat in his face. They struck him. They even blindfolded him and then slapped him saying, "Prophecy to us, you Christ. Who is it that struck you?" Now, Jesus' trial before the high priest was of a religious nature and there he continued to press even more forcibly upon them that he was who he claimed to be, that he was the mediatorial King of Old Testament prophecy, the Messiah of Israel. But that wasn't enough to justify a death penalty in the eyes of Rome so now they must take him to the Roman governor, Pontius

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Pilate, where he must be tried and this will be a trial not of a religious nature but more of a political nature.

So, get the scene in your mind: a bloodied and bruised and shackled Jesus, having endured all of that perversion of justice is now being led from Caiaphas to the Praetorium. Notice verse 28 and this is where we will begin, "Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium." Luke's account indicates that others began to join them, that there was ultimately a multitude that gathered there and the Praetorium was really the headquarters of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, who had held that position for about 10 years. We know from other historical evidence and even from Scripture that this was a very superstitious, weak, vacillating kind of man, easily manipulated, but he covered his inadequacies very well as many times people will do by being arrogant and cynical and cruel. And John says, "and it was early." It was probably about sunrise now on that Friday morning because Jewish law forbade trying capital cases at night and certainly the legalistic Sanhedrin would be scrupulous in trying to obey every technicality of the law to continue to silence their own conscience and convince themselves even more of their own self-righteousness and the just cause that they were pursuing, namely the killing of this man who claimed to be there Messiah.

John goes on and says, "and they themselves did not enter the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover." An amazing statement. You see, Gentile homes were considered to be unclean for a variety of reasons, especially the defilement associated with coming in contact with a dead body which would render them unclean for 7 days and thus prevent them from participating in the Passover meal later that day. You say, "Well, did the Gentiles have dead bodies in their homes?" Well, the Jews believed that the Gentiles did bury aborted fetuses in their homes and, at times, they would dispose of the fetuses in the drainage systems that would be underneath the rocks. You see, they weren't as civilized as we are. They didn't have a Roman taxpayer-funded Planned Parenthood that would gladly murder the helpless babies and butcher them and sell their body parts for profit so they had to dispose of them in their own way.

But I want you to notice John's penchant for irony. You will recall that there is a lot of irony in John's Gospel. Isn't it interesting that the Jews go to such great lengths to avoid being defiled under the law to preserve their own self-righteousness yet they appealed to the law to justify the killing of the one, the only one, who could make them righteous. Moreover, they are fastidious about ritual purity in order to please God while at the same time they are rotten corpses trying to kill God. D. A. Carson adds another observation, he says quote, "The Jews take elaborate precautions to avoid ritual contamination in order to eat the Passover. At the very same time, they are busy manipulating the judicial system to secure the death of him who alone is the true Passover."

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So, they will not enter the Praetorium lest they be defiled. Can there be any greater example of straining out a gnat from your cup of tea and then swallowing a camel? You know, we see this still today even in the sphere of evangelicalism, folks who scrupulously avoid violating some perceived religious law and yet they are blind to their own sin. I think of the man who will never work on Sunday and will not eat in a place that serves alcohol and yet he treats his wife like a slave and he cannot control his temper. Or I think of the woman who is adamant that no woman should ever dishonor the Lord and use birth control methods and that women should homeschool their children and that they should never work outside the home and yet they are cold and divisive and contentious and unsubmitive to their husbands. Folks, we all have to guard against this kind of hypocrisy that we see even here with these ancient leaders of Israel, men whose consciences had been silenced by pride and seared by self-deception. And like so many legalists today, their consciences had been trained to obsess over external religious trivia and therefore ignore internal matters of the heart. You will recall Jesus called them hypocrites who tithe mint and dill and cumin. These were the smallest of herbs that they would scrupulously try to make sure they got just the right amount to give to the Lord and yet God goes on to say there, "You have neglected the weightier provisions of the law, justice and mercy and faithfulness." You see, you must remember that legalism always provides the illusion of spirituality. It trains the conscience to obsess over things that do not matter and ignore the things that do. That's how it works. It's a very dangerous thing.

So this is what's happening with the Jewish leaders. Verse 29, "Therefore Pilate went out to them." I have to say, this is both comical as well as instructional. Just imagine the scene: you've got all of the Jews out here basically on the colonnade not getting too close to where Pilate lived but he's got to come out to them to address them. As I studied this, I could see that he goes in and out at least 4 times so he's running back and forth in this scene, out to the Jews, back inside where Jesus is where he can be interrogated privately. And this is really a dramatic picture of sinful man that doesn't know what to do with Jesus. Like each of us, he's got to choose either between the false testimony of the world or the true testimony of Christ. Pilate must either bow to popular opinion or he must bow to Jesus as Savior and Lord. Does that sound familiar? We all have to deal with this.

Now, the other Gospels tell us that Pilate knew that the Jews were motivated by jealousy and contempt for Jesus, nevertheless, he begins this legal proceeding by asking, "What accusation do you bring against this Man? Verse 30, "They answered and said to him, 'If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you.'" Well, obviously they are trying to say to him, "Well look, take our word for it, this is a bad guy. We really don't want a trial, we just want you to sentence this guy to death." And it would appear that they came up with a more substantial accusation. Luke elaborates on their

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charge in chapter 23, verse 2, he says, "And they began to accuse Him, saying, 'We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.'" Well, of course, all of that is a vicious spin on what Jesus really said. Some of it is half-truth. Some of it is a total lie. Of course, we're all familiar with this. We watch our politicians doing this all the time.

So, again, here's the picture: it's early in the morning; a mob of angry Jews accompany their leaders; they are leading a bruised and bloody, chained, shackled Jesus to the Roman authority where they are going to insist that he basically rubberstamp their verdict. Well, obviously this didn't sit well with Pilate so in verse 31 he says to them, "'Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.' The Jews said to him, 'We are not permitted to put anyone to death,'" and then John adds this, "to fulfill," in other words that statement was to fulfill, "the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die." You see, if the Jews kill someone for this kind of an offense, they would stone them but the Romans would use crucifixion and Jesus had already predicted that this would be his form of death. You can read about it in John 12, for example, that he would be lifted up from the earth that he might draw all men unto himself and so forth. But this is also a profound statement in that it demonstrates to us afresh that God is sovereignly in control of all these things. None of this is catching him by surprise. He has ordained the end from the beginning. This is part of his plan. He is orchestrating this entire scenario to accomplish his purposes. It's interesting, about 2 weeks earlier, Jesus said in Mark 10: 33, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again."

So Pilate needs to determine if Jesus has broken the law, the Roman law and is therefore a threat to Rome so verse 33, "Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, 'Are You the King of the Jews?'" I say it that way because that's how it is in the original language. In all 4 Gospels, the pronoun "you" is emphatic, "You? Are You the King of the Jews?" I mean, you can just sense his frustration as well as his contempt. "You don't look like a King." That's the idea.

Now, what happens next, dear friends, is really fascinating and here we witness the calm majesty of the Son of God even in the midst of his humiliation. I would suggest that first we see Jesus as Judge. You say, "Well, is Pilate the one that's judging Jesus?" Well, yes and no. In truth, I can see Jesus judging Pilate. You see, this agitated milquetoast of a man is trying to escape from the responsibility of having to deal with Jesus. He's got to choose between what he knows is right and what he knows is terribly wrong. By the way, can you imagine what it would have been like to be that person, to be Pilate, and you're

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interrogating the Son of God even though you didn't know it? You, being least holy, trying to find fault with the one who is most holy? It's just an amazing thought.

And as this trial develops, what's interesting is we see Pilate increasingly distressed, increasingly agitated, even afraid. Permit me to get ahead of the story for a moment: later in the proceedings Matthew tells us, "While he," referring to Pilate, "was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, 'Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.'" Though the text doesn't say this but I would imagine Pilate's response was, "Great. This is just what I needed to hear. I'm already frustrated with this whole situation. I'm already intimidated with this guy. I don't know what's going on here." We know that he eventually declared to the Jews, "I find no fault, no guilt in Him." Then he reminds them of their custom that at Passover they would often release one prisoner and he basically says, "Do you want to release Jesus here, the King of the Jews?" They would have no part of that. They wanted Barabbas instead of him. So in his frustration and in his fear, he does what we sometimes will do and that is violate his conscience and he has Jesus scourged. Then he brings him out to them again in chapter 19:4, he says again, "I find no guilt in Him." But yet they go on to cry out, "Crucify, crucify!" Then Pilate said to them, "'Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.' The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God.' Therefore when Pilate heard this statement," catch this, "he was the more afraid."

So it's building here. This is the drama that is beginning to unfold. What a dramatic illustration of the immeasurable danger of violating your conscience, of trying to be a friend with the world, of being confronted with the reality of who Jesus is and yet doing everything you can to get away from your responsibility to him. Later Matthew says, "When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves.' And all the people said, 'His blood shall be on us and on our children!'" And here, Jesus as Judge, gets the confession that he will use to pass sentence on Pilate as well as Israel. So this is the direction this tragic injustice is taking Jesus.

So Pilate says, back to the text here, "'Are You the King of the Jews? You the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered," verse 34, "'Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?'" How quickly the accused takes charge here. There was a question before him but it was not one that could be answered with a mere yes or no. If Pilate was asking based on his own initiative, in other words, with respect to Jesus being a King in opposition to Rome, then the answer is no. Jesus had no army. He wasn't leading any kind of insurrection against Rome as the King of Israel. In fact, earlier that

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week the masses wanted to make him King and he declined that. But with respect to what others may have told Pilate about him, that he was the Messiah of Israel their true King, then the answer would be yes.

So here we can see how the divine Judge was presiding over this trial and actually judging the human judge as well as his accusers. He's making Pilate think. He's painting him into a corner. And he's giving him every opportunity to confess and repent and receive mercy and grace. As you think about it, how silly it is for we as finite beings, as fallen beings, to somehow think that we have the authority and the wisdom to judge the sinless, infinite Son of God. I cannot imagine a more vivid illustration of arrogance.

So exasperated and afraid, back to verse 35, "Pilate answered, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?'" In other words, "I don't understand. I don't even care about your Jewish politics and your theology. These are charges that your own people have brought against you." So Jesus here is really painting him into a corner. He's in full control and he's even gotten Pilate now to indict Israel. I can just imagine what that room must have been like, filled with the majesty of our glorious Savior, even in his purposeful, voluntary state of disgrace, and yet it will be by his disgrace that he will ultimately be able to lavish upon us his matchless grace.

But notice next the Judge also presents himself as King secondly. Verse 36, "Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world.'" In other words, "My kingdom does not originate in this world system, this sphere of spiritual and moral darkness in rebellion against me." And indeed, the messianic kingdom cannot be created by human effort. It cannot be entered by human merit. It is a spiritual kingdom created by God and only those who have been saved and transformed by his redeeming work through the Lord Jesus Christ can enter it. Right now, I might add, that his kingdom is thriving in the world. It is a spiritual kingdom where he reigns in the hearts of men but one day that spiritual kingdom will also include an earthly millennial kingdom. One day he will return to establish his messianic reign. In Revelation 11:15, John will later write, "The seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.'" And later on in Revelation we see how the King of kings, the Lord of lords returns in all of his glory and with unrivaled omnipotence he rules with a rod of iron. He has no need for an army.

Well, this is what we have to look forward to but obviously Pilate is clueless about all of this. He had no idea that he was interrogating the uncreated Creator of the universe, the one who could have been his Savior but would ultimately be his Judge and Executioner.

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But on that day, Jesus was not a threat to Rome. In fact, he even spoke of his Jewish kinsmen as his enemies so his kingship in the realm of his rule was no threat to Rome. Then he goes on to say, "If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." I find it so sad, here you have the nation of Israel rejecting the Messiah's offer of the kingdom on earth for which they had long waited and long prayed. They rejected the high spiritual requirements their King laid down as essential for entrance into the kingdom. In fact, John the Baptist told us about this in Mark 1:15. He heralded saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." But they would have nothing to do with any of that. It's interesting, however, had he lowered the standard and given them what they wanted, they would have tolerated his claims of deity. As Albert J. McLean stated so well, quote, "This would have been no stumbling block if Christ had given them their own fleshly desires. The world will deify any leader who will give to the people enough bread and circuses while making no high moral and spiritual demands upon them, but they will reject the true God if he asks them to receive what they do not want." They could not see their sin. They could not see therefore their Savior.

What he was preaching did not fit their theology so Jesus says, "'My kingdom is not of this realm.' Therefore Pilate said to Him," verse 37, "'So You are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.'" Folks, can't you see the Lord's mercy at work here even with Pilate? "Pilate, you're asking me all of these questions. Do you really want to know the truth? It is for this reason that I have come. I will give you the truth. Do you want to know what the truth is?" But most men, like Pilate, really don't seek the truth. They merely seek an affirmation of the lies, the cherished lies, they already believe.

Well, all of this must have been profoundly puzzling to Pilate to think that this man is going to give his life for what Pilate perceived to be utter nonsense. And yet through it all, Jesus maintains his regal majesty during this mock trial and the one to follow as he sovereignly controls all that is happening. I also find it interesting, a day will come when these roles will be reversed. Here we have Pilate seated and the Lord standing. One day the Lord will be seated on a great white throne and Pilate will be standing before him guilty and condemned. I hope that isn't true for you.

We see Jesus as Judge, Jesus as King, finally, Jesus as Truth. He came into this world as God Incarnate, the King of Glory and he came to testify to the truth. You see, this was his kingly mission. Jesus has already said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but through me." You see, Jesus as John has made very clear, was the

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self-disclosure of God. He was God Incarnate, the Incarnate Word. He came to proclaim the truth of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. He came to preach about eternal judgment and how to avoid it. Matthew tells us that he came to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom, the unfathomable riches of his love for sinners, of his forgiveness and mercy and grace for all who will trust in him. But Pilate would have none of this. He rejected all of Jesus' regal claims. He rejected all of his authority and wanted nothing to do with Jesus' version of the truth.

So Pilate says to him in verse 38, "What is truth?" You know, we see the same kind of cynicism today, just like the skeptics down through the ages. Let me give you an example of this. I think about the utter chaos in our country, all of the wickedness. Imagine if a presidential candidate stepped forward and said, "I'm going to run on a Gospel platform. Folks, I stand for the absolute universal truth that has been revealed to us in the word of the living God and his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The word of God, the Bible is inspired. It is infallible. It is authoritative and it is all-sufficient. And I want you to know that the truth is the foundation of my platform and the truth is that God is our Creator, he is a holy God, we are a sinful people and the only way that we could possibly be reconciled to a holy God is through faith in his beloved Son that he sent, the Lord Jesus Christ, because we are sinners by nature. We have an innate inability to conform to the moral character and desires of God. We have all violated the law of God. We all stand guilty before his bar of justice but God, for his own glory, with great love for sinners, sent forth his Son to this earth to live a perfect life and therefore according to his eternal plan, the Lord Jesus Christ bore the guilt and the curse of the sins of all who trust in him. In fact, we read that, 'He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in him.' Folks, this is the good news, the glory of the Gospel, that we as sinful people can be reconciled to a holy God and with that as the foundation of my platform, I ask for your vote." Can you imagine that? I mean, you talk about making headlines. I mean, you'd certainly get some attention. But the world in which we live would respond the same way Pilate did and yet that was the platform Jesus held.

You know, even in my lifetime as I think about truth, I have seen a bit of a progression. I remember when I was young and as I kind of look at some of the history, at first you see truth being debated. People would reject the truth of the Gospel by arguing about it philosophically and theologically. But then it moved from that, from being debated, to being slighted. It was trivialized. It was made to appear as something unworthy of serious consideration, that the only people that would possibly believe that stuff were these knuckle dragging Neanderthal Christians that live in a cave somewhere and have a low IQ so you really can't take these people seriously. But then, especially in my early college days, I noticed that it was accepted in the realm of postmodernism. Not as absolute universal truth but one of many truths because what happened is truth moved from the

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realm of the objective into the realm of the subjective and so what happened is there is no such thing anymore as absolute truth and of that we are absolutely certain. So truth is what you want it to be. It is subjective. It is relative. It is pragmatic. Whatever works is true. And so for a long time you could say, "Well, you know, I believe in the Gospel. I believe in the Bible." "Oh, well that's great. I'm glad you do. How nice. I'm glad that's truth for you. It's not truth for me but I'm glad that's truth for you."

But folks, we are now rapidly moving into an entirely new and frightening stage. You don't see truth debated much at all anymore or even slighted, certainly accepted at some level but we're moving into the realm where truth is hated. It is hated. If you pray publicly in Jesus' name, you violate the rules of political correctness and are shunned. If you claim Jesus as the only way of salvation, you are attacked as a bigot. Have you noticed that every symbol of Christianity is being removed from public property? If you speak the truth about homosexuality, it's considered hate speech and you are discriminating against a protected minority. If you speak the truth about abortion, you're part of a war on women. Isn't it interesting, our culture in the last few weeks has been more concerned about the death of a lion than the death of millions of babies that have been butchered and their body parts sold for profit. Inconceivable. It's getting to a point where if you speak anything that might confront the culture with the truth of the word of God, you are somehow violating not only society's but government's version of the truth and you become a target of those who hate the truth. Of course, this is what Jesus warned us, right? He said that, "The world will hate you because it hated me. Stop trying to be friends with the world and be popular. The world is going to hate you. Stand up for the truth."

Friends, let me be real clear: there is such a thing as objective truth, universal authoritative truth. It is the truth that God has revealed to us in his word and in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and what God says is true whether you believe it or not or whether you even know it or not, even as there are inviolable, fixed laws in the physical order of the universe such as the law of gravity and those laws never change, there are also fixed inviolable, objective laws in the realm of morality and they have been presented to us by the same God, our Creator God, who has made the physical as well as the spiritual.

Well, filled with pride, he's not going to have any of this truth business and so he tries to escape and he says, "'What is truth?' And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, 'I find no guilt in Him.'" You see, he could see that Jesus wasn't a threat to Rome but he certainly feared that he was a threat to him because he had been confronted with Jesus as the Judge, Jesus as the King, Jesus as the Truth.

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Well, we know that Pilate is going to try and silence his accusing conscience by asking the Jews if they would release Jesus as was their custom at Passover. They're not going to have any part of it. He's going to have Jesus scourged which is an unimaginable torture that we will get into when we come to that part of the text in days to come. Then he's going to allow his soldiers to place a crown of thorns upon his head. He's going to allow them to adorn the Lord Jesus with purple robes of royalty and then they are going to mock him saying, "Hail, King of the Jews," while they take turns striking him in the face. What a picture of man's depravity. What an indictment against all who reject Christ. Friends, I hope that is not you. I hope you are not so foolish as to bow your knee to the world but rather that you would fear God and bow to the Lord Jesus Christ because some day you're going to bow to him. You will either bow to him as Savior and Lord or as Judge and Executioner.

Well, dear Christians, may I leave you with 3 very practical considerations that emerge from this text? Very brief but I hope very practical to you. 1. Learn well the lessons of conscience. Inform your conscience with the truth of the word of God and it will hold you to that standard. If you lower the standard by filling your mind with the things of the world, that's where your conscience is going to hold you and then be careful to never violate your conscience by choosing what is popular over what is right. Don't train your conscience to obsess over things that don't matter and end up ignoring the things that do matter: the things of the heart, moral purity, righteousness, love, faithfulness, justice, mercy, grace. We could go on and on with this. Even as I was warning you earlier as we were coming to the Lord's Table, you know, ask yourself: does my conscience bother me over the fact that there is a brother or sister in Christ in my church family that I just hate? I don't want anything to do with them. I slander them every opportunity I get. I malign them. I just don't want any part of them. Does your conscience bother you with that? And if it doesn't, there is something terribly wrong. But if it does, you need to say, "Oh God, thank you for giving me this warning. I need to deal with this as you would have me deal with this," and then you go and you seek restoration and reconciliation. That's just a very practical way of learning this lesson of conscience.

Secondly, learn well the lessons of kingship. If Christ is your King, you should be serving him. Are you? Where are you? I hope you are. I hope that you are joyfully submitting to his rule in your life revealed in the word. And I might even add, a rule that is mediated by the elders that Christ has placed over you, in authority over you. Then for us to live in light of his return. Folks, learn well the lessons of kingship. If he is your King, are you longing to see your King? Are you longing to see him face to face? Are you looking for him? Are you praying, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"? I hope you are.

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Then finally, learn well the lessons of truth. It's going to be debated. It's going to be slighted. It's going to be accepted as one of many but it's coming and it might even be here, the truth is now hated. But folks, never, ever, ever be ashamed of the Gospel. Why? Because it is the power of God unto salvation. Contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

And I close with what Paul said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 1, beginning in verse 8, because Timothy was waffling on this as we all have a tendency to do. He says to him, "Timothy, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Let's pray together.

Father, thank you for these eternal truths. Thank you that they are absolute, they are universal and therefore we can count on them. And I pray that what has been spoken here today has been true and that that truth will bear much fruit in each of our lives. I pray especially for that person that may be living without you, that has pretended maybe for years to be a Christian but really knows nothing of Christ. I pray that today you will overwhelm them by the power of conviction and that your Spirit would bring life to that spiritual corpse and that today they might experience the miracle of the new birth so Lord, we commit them to you. So we thank you, we give you praise. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

We pray you have been edified by this presentation. You have been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at otcr.org.