

# Matthew 27:62 - 28:20

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Thanks, Chris. And do keep the sheets open in front of you. We're actually just going! to be looking at just the last three verses of it. I wanted it all read, but we're just! going to focus on the last three verses. And you'll see on the front cover, I'm calling this series Resurrection Colors. And today's talk is Jesus the Risen King. What do I mean by Resurrection Colors? Well, with Easter not too far in the rearview mirror, it'll be good for us to think for a few weeks about the resurrection of Jesus. And in fact, the resurrection is a really important teaching in the Bible. It's actually the reason Christians gather and worship every Sunday. It's because the resurrection of Jesus is so central to the Bible. The Bible is insistent that if you want to understand the world that you live in, not just the Christian faith, but the world you live in, you need to know that Jesus Christ is risen. And it's not just that he resuscitated back from death, like many stories in the Bible, but it's more like Jesus went into death and he came out the other end. He went beyond death. And while the Bible does spend a little bit of space trying to back up this assertion, it's actually far more interested in showing you what it means for Jesus to be risen. What it means for Jesus to have gone through this resurrection. And if you were with us just a few months back now, we did an overview of the Bible. I did it in seven weeks. We looked at different parts of the Bible.

And I used the image of a tree to describe what it's like to read the Bible. You might have even got sick of it. A number of times I used it. But it is a really useful image and I'm going to use it again today, but in a different way. I explained that when you read the Bible, it's like watching a plant grow and it starts as a seed and then it grows to maybe a little stalk and then a big trunk and you've got flowers and leaves and everything at the later stages.

You've got all this kind of variety later on and less at the beginning. And throughout the whole thing, it's the same DNA. So it's one thing and then by the end of it, you've got loads of variety. Well, so it is with the New Testament. When you get to this later stage, explaining this final stage, you've got loads of different colours. They've got loads of variety. And so we've got four different Gospels, not because they disagreed on what happened.

We deliberately have four Gospels to give us a variety of perspectives and colours on Jesus' life, death and resurrection. So we've got lots of different colours. And so we're going to look at the different colours of the resurrection. So over four weeks, we're going to look at the four different Gospels and what they say about the resurrection and see what kind of colours we get. So what we're going to do this week, we're going to look at Matthew's Gospel.

And you might remember from an even earlier series we did in Matthew 13, that Matthew often emphasises the fact that Jesus is King. So from the beginning of Matthew's Gospel, we've got his genealogy, which emphasises the royal line that Jesus came from. And all throughout the Gospel, we've got Jesus saying, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. We have those series of parables we looked at about what the Kingdom of Heaven means, what it means for Jesus to be King. And here we've got the same emphasis at the end, Jesus as King. It's all throughout. Because here in these last three verses, that is what Jesus is saying the resurrection is about. He says, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. That is his announcement at the end. He's saying the resurrection was not just a happy ending to the story. It was in a sense his coronation as King. There's obviously a sense in which Jesus as God has always been King. He has always had all authority. But he is saying now that having become man, he has earned this status of King. He has earned all authority. A man has now got to the top position, has managed to earn this position of King of all things. And so he has now gone from preaching the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand to saying, I now have all authority. The Kingdom is here. Mission is accomplished. So that's the announcement he gives. All authority has been given. And then he gives a commission to his officers, his apostles, the eleven that are remaining.

[ 4 : 37 ] He gives this commission to go and announce this good news to the whole world, all nations, and to get people to follow the King as disciples. And he gives them two basic steps on how to make disciples. The first one is to baptise them. So go and make disciples of all nations.

First of all, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He's saying bring people into the community that acknowledges that I am King. Bring them to acknowledge this. Excuse me. It's a community that belongs to God. He is associating his Kingdom with the Kingdom of God. And he's saying the name that you put on the people who come into this community is the name of God. And here for the first time he reveals the name of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And this is the first point when we can look back and see, ah, it now makes sense.

Now we understand who God is. So he baptised them. He brings people into the Kingdom, is what he's telling his apostles. And then teach them. Teach them what? Teach them to keep or observe or obey everything I have commanded. So bring them into the community and teach them to keep everything.

And so first by God's great mercy and kindness, bring them in and then raise them to be followers of the King. And then he concludes his announcement with a promise. I am with you always to the end of the age. You'll see that in verse 20. Now here's how one writer summarised what it means for Jesus to be King. The Kingdom comes when the Gospel is spread. Hearts are changed. Sin and error overcome. Righteousness cultivated. A living communion with God established. The Gospel is spread. People hear the news that Jesus is King. And so hearts are changed as they hear it. Sin and error are overcome.

People come to obey Jesus. Righteousness is cultivated. They live more like him. And a living communion with God is established because he is with us everywhere. Now most of that is pretty straightforward.

[ 6 : 57 ] I hope you'll agree. But I think the tricky thing for us to see this is the so what? I'm not one of the 11 apostles. So what on earth does this have to do with me? So I want to think just with the rest of our time on just a few things to highlight the so what of this announcement that Jesus is the risen King. And I want to do that by asking you some questions. So you've seen that Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So what are you living for if not for him? What are you living for if not for him? If you've known me for even a short while you will you'll probably find out that I'm a big fan of the West Wing.

It's just got some amazing writing in it. And there's a brilliant scene in a debate where the president is running for re-election and nobody knows how it's going to go because sometimes he's great and sometimes he's not so great. And then he finally gives the clinching argument that just completely wins the debate. And during this speech he gives he says I'm the president of the United States not just the president of the people who agree with me. Well Jesus here says he is the king of heaven and earth. That's pretty much everything isn't it? He's not just the leader of Christians. Not even the leader of Christians worldwide. Not just the founder of a big religion. He is the king of everything. He is what everything is about. Whether or not everything agrees. It means that your life is about Jesus. It means your life is not actually about you. And now we live in an egocentric world that is trying to persuade you at every point to be offended by that idea that your life is not about you. It wants you to think that anyone who says that your life is not about you is being unkind to you. That you can make your life about you. Go ahead. But I think if my life were just about me it wouldn't really be much to write home about. It would be cruel to put that kind of pressure on me to live a life that is worthy of being all about me. Just look at these sort of big superstar celebrities with their entourages where they are they buy into this idea that their life is all about them. It's no wonder they go crazy.

That they get these breakdowns and end up getting drunk driving or arrested somewhere or whatever it is. Because they're surrounded by people who make their whole lives about them. They're convinced their lives are about them. And it's just too much pressure to bear. And so Jesus comes along and says no your life isn't about you and that's great news for you. Your life is about me is what Jesus says. So what are you living for if not for him? The king of everything. Jesus here is offering what one writer has called the freedom of self-forgetfulness. The freedom of obeying the king of everything. That is what it means for Jesus to be risen. It means that your life is about him. So what are you living for if not him?

He called his apostles then to make disciples of all nations. He called people to get the world to follow him. So who are you following if not him? Who is guiding you? Who is setting the agenda for your life?

Or what is setting the agenda for your life? This is the king about whom your life is. You exist for this king. It's not just you can opt into living about this king. Your life is about this king. And so who is directing your life if it's not the king who you live for? You might think you're better off without him. The world around us would love for you to believe that you are better off without him. But how can it be possibly better to live for anyone other than the king who is the king of all things? He calls his apostles to baptize everyone. It's not just go and put a badge on everyone. It's bring them into the community.

[11:30] Put the sign of Jesus' followers on them. He's inviting people to come home. And so where do you belong if not here? We are made to belong somewhere. We are made for someone. We are made to belong with a community. And so where do you belong if not here? Who is defending you if not him? You might think I don't need defending. I'm fine. I don't need any protection. I don't need a king to keep, to take care of me.

Well I think you'll all agree we sometimes even need defending from ourselves. So we're not doing that well are we? We do need somebody to whom we belong and who will take care of us. So where do you belong if not here? Jesus is announcing very simply that he is the king, that your life is about him. He's not just offering for your life to become about him. Your life is about him. He is the one who will teach you the truth. He is the one to whom you can belong and who can be with you forever.

And so who do you live for if not for him? Who are you following if not him? And where do you belong if not here? If you'd like to learn more about what it means to follow Jesus as king, to belong to him, then we've got some Mark's Gospels, Matthew's Gospels on the back table. Do take one and read it.

Read what it means for Jesus to be king and come and belong to his people. He doesn't call people just to follow Jesus on their own. The whole point of the baptising is to come into the church, the community of people who belong to him. As wonderful as it can be to come here every Tuesday and make friends here, this isn't the church. This is just a nice gathering of people to whom everyone is welcome to come and hear some teaching. But the church is where Jesus is gathering his people for them to belong to him. So if you're not part of a church, where do you belong if not to Jesus? Let's pray to close.