TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader / Opening Prayer by: Robert Ward
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Daniel Balch

#300 Praise Him! Praise Him!
#63 I Will Call Upon the Lord

Scripture Reading by: Parker Balch
#376 He Paid a Debt

Communion Devotional by: Ken Coleman
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#886 On Jordan's Stormy Banks
Sermon: "A Tale of Two Prayers"
Luke 18:9-14

#988 I'll Be List'ning
#969 Don't You Want to Go to That Land?
Closing Prayer by: David Smith

Our small groups will meet tonight.
Bobby Rader's group will meet at 5:00 p.m.
at the building.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Oct. 13, 2024

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

Jesus' Lordship

We are in the midst of a series of articles considering Biblical principles that should orient us politically. Last week, we saw the Jewish conviction that God was king. But the great, prophetic hope of 1st-century Israel was that God would come and inaugurate a new age, liberate his people, and establish his kingdom. For Christians, that event transpired in Christ.

We cannot comprehensively discuss the kingdom of God here, but we can observe a few points. First, note the very terminology used to describe this new order. The *kingdom* of God. *Christ* or *Messiah* – designations for God's anointed king. Jesus is revered as *Son of God* and *Lord* – terms also applied to the Roman Emperor. These are chock-full of political significance, yet the nature of the metaphor is frequently ignored. God has asserted his rule decisively through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The proclamation of Jesus as king means that God reigns in a new, concrete way in the world.

Secondly, filling out the meaning of that first assertion, God's reign creates a people. In Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the primary meaning of "kingdom" refers to the exercise of kingly authority – so we are talking primarily about the "reign of God." But by definition, this reign must have some domain in which to function; so "kingdom" has the secondary meaning of realm. God seeks and actually creates a people over whom to implement his rule. God's people are a kingdom ruled over by a king: Jesus.

That has enormous implications, because kings shape their kingdoms. We must look to Jesus to see how the king rules. While we could consider the issue much more broadly, with our limited space, we will simply examine his attitude toward the civil authorities.

Jesus' view of power, of what it means to be King, is inseparable from being the Suffering Servant (**cf. Is 53** and others). He rejects the dominant political views of his day - the Zealot option of establishing God's rule through violent revolution; the Essene withdrawal from the world to form an insulated holy community; the stark *realpolitik* of the Sadducees conniving with Rome – for a radical vision of power characterized by non-coercion, self-denial, and service. This is getting to very familiar ground for us, and there is no need to elaborate the story of the cross in this context. Yet its implications are seldom if ever spoken of as a political reference point. This is perplexing, because the issue is how God's rule is accomplished in Christ—**this is politics! The cross is God's political manifesto.**

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Rickey Lucas is having pain throughout his body. The Dr. will be trying some form of blocker to reduce/control his pain.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Oscar Cantu, Jennifer Stelly, Dr. Hugo Thomas, Veronica Valant, Steve Ward, Geri Cryer, Gloria McKelroy, Yalonda Jackson, Cassandra Valent, Linda Frank, Scott Overton

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific, Mani Pagidopali in India

Upcoming Activities

No Elders, Minister meeting this week.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Oct. 17th at 8:-00 a.m.

Homecoming is Sunday, Oct. 27th

Congratulations

Congratulations to River & Hailey Lucy on the birth of their daughter, Lylah Mae Lucy. She was born, Thursday, Oct. 10th and weighed 8lbs 5oz and 20 inches long.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

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When Peter confesses, *You are the Christ, the Son of the living God* **(Matt 16:16),** this is not primarily a metaphysical statement we have trouble wrapping our heads around, the way we often treat it today. It means that Jesus is the kingly deliverer they have been waiting for. The "Son of God" is King (**Ps 2:7).** These titles are not devoid of preconceived content, so when Jesus lays out what it means to be King it shocks his disciples: *he must go to Jerusalem…and be killed* **(Matt 16:21**). The "must" is *dei* in Greek, a word that indicates divine necessity: this is God's plan for accomplishing his purpose. The disciples have their own expectations for the Messiah, and Peter is unable to comprehend it. But Jesus rebukes him for seeing the issue in terms of human political expectations rather than God's perspective.

Jesus does not countenance compromise in his role as God's King. Both Sadducean collusion and Zealot revolution are playing by Caesar's rules, whether through collaborating to obtain earthly power or attempting to overthrow him with his own weapons. The distinguishing feature of his radical message is not that the one true God stood in opposition to pagan power, gods, and politics – all of that was typically Jewish. Rather, it was that the kingdom comes through peace, through love – through the cross.

This is the secret to God's power. And this is what it means to be a disciple of Christ. *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me* **(Matt 16:24).** We have watered down this call in our day to some vague sense of putting God first. But this was an incredibly powerful symbol in a world where crucified rebels were a common sight. To follow Jesus is to renounce self-interest, the key to worldly power, even facing the real potential consequence of death.

Jesus himself, of course, models this behavior in his own willing surrender to death at the hands of the authorities. His submission is a revolutionary sign of God's rule contrasted to the politics of the world. The evidence here could be multiplied. There is the deliberate, counter-cultural triumphal entry into Jerusalem, not on a war horse with a procession of slaves and defeated leaders, but on the foal of a donkey, fulfilling **Zech 9:9-10**: he forsakes the war horse and retires the battle bow, seeking peace. In instituting the Lord's Supper, he makes clear that God's kingdom comes through his self-sacrifice and forgiveness, not domination and insurrection. In the Garden, he faced the temptation to rally legions of angels and disciples to his side, seizing power, instead of the way of suffering obedience to God.

We are faced with a challenge: what does it mean to claim that Jesus is Lord? Jesus was not just a teacher whose views happened to have some political implications. He is the divinely mandated King whose mission is a new vision of establishing God's rule, God's politics. His call creates a new people who live a new way of life, shaped by the cross.

Bryant Perkins