



Life Group Sermon Study Notes

“Tale of Two Kings: Christ the King”

Sr. Ps. James Lowe – November 1, 2020

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- Where would you travel if you knew there was a chance you had to stay there for up to a year?
- If you had to choose one car to drive forever, what would you pick?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Philippians 2: 1-11

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Being a citizen in America offers great privileges that millions elsewhere would love to experience. Yet, many American citizens feel they are getting the short end of the stick from the laws and policies of our nation, to the point that there is an uproar. Their hope is in the right person/party getting into office so that things will get better. Then, you have those who think that regardless of who gets into office, hope for better is not likely. Needless to say, there is strong ambiguity and anxiety about the future. Ps James explores how Christians should hope for the future through the lens of Paul’s letter to the Philippians.

The city of Philippi was in an ideal location for trading. The Philippians possessed a special status with Rome that gave them Roman citizenship status. At that time the Roman government was hostile to Christians. Within this context, Paul brings the gospel of Jesus to a syncretic religious city and a core group of believers was established. Paul was a spiritual father to them. As time passed, he wrote them a letter to address the disunity in the church and fear of oppression from outside.

Paul was imprisoned when he wrote the letter and used that experience to give them perspective on how to view opposition. Paul stated that through imprisonment the gospel was advanced throughout the entire palace guard. He had such a revelation of the worth of honoring the gospel that he courageously embraced life or death. Paul teaches us that we can have a revelation of God that brings us to a place where we defend the gospel when life is not ideal for us.

Paul in Philippians 2 continued to exhort the saints by elaborating on Jesus humility and exaltation. Jesus is the example for all believers of what it looks like to prioritize our heavenly citizenship. Jesus is God. He came to earth in the flesh. He could have come and lived a glamorous life, but he decided to make himself nothing. He didn't come as handsome, rich, or privileged. He came as one who valued faith, obedience and submission to the Father. He didn't neglect his earthly duties. He gave unto Caesar what was Caesar's, but ultimately, he did the will of the Father. He envisioned humanity and willingly paid the price for our sins by living a sinless life. In humiliation he died on the cross for the sins of all who would accept him as Lord and Savior. He knew that humiliation would lead to exaltation. In other words, he would be resurrected. Jesus lived to be exalted by God and didn't give into the temptation to be exalted apart from God's ways. Our suffering does not justify selfish ambition or disregard for others. It's an opportunity to trust God and be a witness to the hope found in Christ.

Ultimately, Paul challenged them to pattern their lives after his as he follows Christ's example. That challenge is the same for us today. He goes on to mention prioritizing living life as a citizen of heaven knowing that is where Christ lives. It matters how we treat others. The motives that affect our actions, words, and social media posts should always be examined. . We have a responsibility as earthly citizens to participate in the process that governs the well-being of all. Yet, we must not get so caught up in the system that we forget the governing ways of God. Jesus is our forerunner. The path of humility is the path we should take. It profits us nothing to gain the world but lose our soul. Whether we exalt Christ now or not, we all will confess him as Lord in the age to come. We should always make sure our faith lies in God's system and help others to do the same.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- How have you dealt with the tension surrounding the election when you encounter people who have different political views than yours?
- How would you explain to someone what it looks like to practically prioritize our heavenly citizenship over our earthly citizenship?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as other requests you may have.

- Thank God for the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- Ask God for a greater revelation of the hope we have in Christ.
- Ask God for the courage to share the gospel.