

# DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

## King of Kings and Lord of Lords

### Lesson # 17

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One of the most prominent doctrines of Christ is His kingship. The Word of God is clear, Jesus is the King of kings. However many professing Christians today want to downplay or deny Jesus' absolute sovereignty, rule of creation, and position as King of kings. They want a Jesus who is nice, manageable, tolerant of sin, only loving, never judgmental, wrathful, or demanding. They want to call Jesus Lord and yet not do what He says. Such belief and behavior requires them to invent a Jesus of their own imaginations, not the Jesus of the Bible. This is a serious error. The consequences of denying Jesus as Lord and King are eternal. You can't have Jesus as Savior without having Him as Lord and King. He is both. Therefore to receive Jesus the Savior is to receive Jesus the Lord and King of kings. They are one and the same. In this lesson we will survey the doctrine of Christ's kingship and lordship so that we are not deceived by current trends which seek to replace the true Savior, Lord, and King with an imposter.

## I. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### A. Authority

1. *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*: "[Authority is] the power or right to do something, particularly to give orders and see that they are followed. The word "authority" as used in the Bible usually means a person's right to do certain things because of the position or office held by that person. This word emphasizes the legality and right, more than the physical strength, needed to do something."<sup>1</sup>
2. *The New Bible Dictionary*: "The authority of Jesus Christ is also an aspect of kingship. It is both personal and official, for Jesus is both Son of God and Son of man (i.e. the Messianic man). As man and Messiah, his authority is real because it is delegated to him by the God at whose command he does his work (Christ applauded the centurion for seeing this, Mt. 8:9f.). As the Son, his authority is real because he is himself God. Authority to judge has been given him, both that he may be honoured as the Son of God (for judgment is God's work), and also because he is the Son of man (for judgment is the Messiah's work) (Jn. 5:22f., 27). In short, his authority is that of a divine Messiah: of a God-man, doing his Father's will in the double capacity of (a) human servant, in whom meet the saving offices of prophet, priest and king, and (b) divine Son, co-creator and sharer in all the Father's works (Jn. 5:19ff.)."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1995).

<sup>2</sup>*New Bible Dictionary*, (InterVarsity Press, 1996, c1982, c1962), 106.

## B. King

1. *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*: “There is scarcely a grander or more widespread image used in the Bible than king. Impressive in physical appearance, honored and respected by his people, the king was the dispenser of protection, justice and mercy and a symbol of power and authority. In the Bible two royal images are found – God as king and humans as kings. It is important in the Bible’s theology that the latter reflects the former and that ultimately, the two merge into one.”<sup>3</sup>
2. *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*: “a chief ruler, one invested with supreme authority over a nation, tribe, or country.” – Webster. In the Bible the word does not necessarily imply great power or great extent of country. Many persons are called kings whom we should rather call chiefs or leaders. The word is applied in the Bible to God as the sovereign and ruler of the universe, and to Christ the Son of God as the head and governor of the Church.”<sup>4</sup>

## C. Kingdom

1. *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*: “The dynamic reign of God as sovereign over creation. Although the roots of the term lie in the OT, the Christian understanding arises more specifically from Jesus’ proclamation of the inbreaking of God’s rule. Hence the kingdom is God’s divine, kingly reign as proclaimed and inaugurated by Jesus’ life, ministry, death and resurrection, and the subsequent outpouring of the Spirit into the world. In this sense Christ is reigning now, and the kingdom of God has arrived. At the same time the church awaits the future consummation of the divine reign. This “already” and “not yet” dimension of the kingdom of God implies that it is both a given reality (or the divine power at work in the present) and a process that is moving toward its future fulfillment or completion.”<sup>5</sup>
2. *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*: “The sovereign rule of God, initiated by Christ’s earthly ministry and consummated when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ (Rv 11:15).”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>*Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000, c1998), 476.

<sup>4</sup>*Smith’s Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997).

<sup>5</sup>*Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 71.

<sup>6</sup>*Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 775.

## D. Lord

1. *Easton's Bible Dictionary*: “[The Hebrew word] *Jehovah*, has been rendered in the English Bible LORD, printed in small capitals. This is the proper name of the God of the Hebrews. . . [The Hebrew word] *adon*, means one possessed of absolute control. It denotes a master, as of slaves (Gen. 24:14, 27), or a ruler of his subjects (45:8), or a husband, as lord of his wife (18:12). . . Greek *kurios*, a supreme master.”<sup>7</sup>
2. *Moody Handbook of Theology*: “Jesus’ designation as Lord is an important study inasmuch as the “title *Lord* occurs at least 144 times plus 95 more times in connection with the proper name *Jesus Christ*.”  
Lord designates His deity (Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:9). . . Lord designates power (Phil. 2:9). . . Lord denotes divine sovereignty. To preach Jesus as Lord is to proclaim His sovereignty (2 Cor. 4:5); to bow before Jesus is to worship Him and thereby acknowledge Him as sovereign God. Christ’s sovereignty over all Christians is especially emphasized in Romans 14:5-9 and in titles like “Our Lord Jesus Christ,” “Our Lord Jesus,” and “Jesus Christ Our Lord.”  
Lord denotes Jesus’ kingship and rule. Lord should also be understood as a variant of “king”; the two titles are actually interchangeable. In this sense, Lord emphasizes Jesus’ kingship over Israel and the church as well as His lordship over the whole world (cf. 1 Tim. 6:15; 1 Cor. 15:25).”<sup>8</sup>

## II. THOUGHTS TO PONDER

- A. John MacArthur: “A magazine article inveighing against lordship salvation began with the question “Must a person make Christ Lord as a condition for salvation?” No less than ten times in the brief two-page piece the author spoke of “making Christ Lord, of one’s life.” That terminology has become so familiar in our generation that some Christians are tempted to think of it as biblical. It is not. Scripture never speaks of anyone “making” Christ Lord, except God himself, who “has made Him both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). He *is* Lord of all (Rom. 14:9; Phil. 2:11), and the biblical mandate is not to “make” Christ Lord, but rather to bow to his lordship. Those who reject his lordship or give mere lip service to his sovereignty are not saved (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3; Luke 6:46-49). We observed from Jesus’ words in Matthew 7:22 that many who verbally or intellectually admit the lordship of Christ will be turned away from heaven because they do not do the will of the Father in heaven.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>*Easton's Bible Dictionary* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996, c1897)

<sup>8</sup>*The Moody Handbook of Theology*, (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1997, c1989), 107.

<sup>9</sup>John MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus : What Does Jesus Mean When He Says "follow Me"*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Academic and Professional Books, Zondervan Pub. House, 1997, c1988).

- B. *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*: “In the first Christian sermon Jesus’ lordship is made central to salvation (Acts 2:21). It appears that the public confession of Jesus as Lord was the approved focus and expression of Christian faith, and the basis of membership in the apostolic church (Acts 16:31; Rom 10:9; 1 Cor 12:3; Phil 2:11). Thus, it could become more a formal statement than a sincere expression of belief – hence, the warnings in Matthew 7:21 and Luke 6:46.”<sup>10</sup>

### III. KEY SCRIPTURES ON CHRIST AS KING

#### A. The Scriptures Predicted Jesus as King

1. **Gen. 49:9-10** “Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? 10 “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
2. **Numb 24:17** “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel, And shall crush through the forehead of Moab, And tear down all the sons of Sheth.
3. **Psa. 2:6-12** “But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.” 7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. 9 ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ” 10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. 11 Worship the Lord with reverence And rejoice with trembling. 12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!
4. **Isa 9:6-7** For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.
5. **Jer 23:5** “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.

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<sup>10</sup>*Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, Tyndale reference library (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 821.

## B. Jesus Acknowledged as King During His First Coming

1. **Mt. 2:1-2** Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 2 “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?”
2. **Jn. 1:47-49** Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” 48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.”
3. **Lk. 19:37-38** As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, 38 shouting: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. . .
4. **Jn. 18:37** Therefore Pilate said to Him, “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.”
5. **Jn. 19:19** Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, “JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

## C. Jesus Presently Rules as King of Heaven and Earth

1. **Rev. 3:21** ‘He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.
2. **Re 17:14** “These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

## D. Jesus’ Return as King

1. **Zech. 14:3-4, 9** Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. . . 9 And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one.

2. **Mt. 24:29-31** “But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. 31 “And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

#### E. **Jesus’ Reign as King**

1. **Jer. 23:5-6** “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 “In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The Lord our righteousness.’
2. **Dan. 2:44** “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.
3. **Dan. 7:13-14** “I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. 14 “And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.
4. **Rev. 11:15** Then 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.”

#### IV. **ERRORS ABOUT JESUS AS LORD AND KING**

- A. You can believe in Christ as Savior but do not have to accept Him as Lord.
- B. You can be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ but you don’t need to obey Him.
- C. Jesus is a loving, compassionate Savior, not a King who demands things from us.
- D. Jesus will be King, but is not ruling now as King.
- E. Jesus’ rule on earth is only spiritual through the church.

- F. Jesus will not return as King of kings to rule the earth for 1000 years.
- G. If you do not want Jesus to be your King, He will leave you alone so you can be your own king.
- H. We must make Jesus Lord in order to be saved.

**V. APPLICATION OF CHRIST AS KING**

- A. We must acknowledge Jesus as Lord, Master, Supreme Ruler, and King in order to be saved.
- B. If we believe Jesus is Lord and King then we must also believe that we are slaves who must obey Him.
- C. We can rejoice and rest assured knowing that Jesus is now ruling heaven and earth.
- D. We should live every day for the Lord knowing that Jesus' coming as King of kings is imminent.

O Worship the King, all glorious above,  
And gratefully sing His wonderful love;  
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,  
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

O tell of His might, O Sing of His grace,  
Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space!  
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,  
And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.

Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?  
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light,  
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,  
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,  
In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail:  
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,  
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Sir Robert H. Grant, "O Worship the King," *Logos Hymnal*, 1st edition. (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995).

