

CHAPTER 3 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: “AN UNMATCHABLE KING”

Seek First: How the Kingdom of God Changes Everything, by Jeremy Treat

1. Many Christians focus on Jesus as the Savior. And that He is! But how often do you think of Jesus as the King of kings? Do you have a clear idea of what that means not only for the world but for you? What thoughts or questions do you have about what it means?
2. On p. 50, the author states, “Jesus didn't come to make the world a better place. He came to make the world new by grace. Like rays of sun that pierce through the dark clouds, the healings and miracles of Jesus our God's reign breaking in on earth as it is in heaven. Each miraculous act is a microcosm of what God's power will one day do for the whole universe” (p. 50).
 - How do the miracles of Jesus help you to see the kingdom “in advance?” In other words, how do the miracles of Jesus show us not a magician, but a King displaying his kingdom power?
3. Reflect on the following quote: “The cross is the greatest display of Christ's reign as power controlled by love.... The cross is the throne from which the king of the world rules with grace... The cross did not derail Jesus and his kingdom work. Jesus is king *on* the cross: forgiving sin, defeating evil, and establishing God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. The cross is neither the failure of Jesus's messianic ministry, nor is it a prelude to his royal glory. It is the apex of his kingdom mission. The splendor of God's royal power shines brightest through the sacrificial death of the Son of God. The cross is the crowning achievement of Christ kingdom mission” (pp. 52-54).
 - What do you find helpful about this description of Jesus and the cross? What thoughts or questions does it provoke in your mind?
4. The author says that the “substitutionary atonement is not only a pardon but an exchange. Christ takes our sin; we receive his righteousness. He takes our shame; we receive his honor. He takes our guilt; we receive his perfect record. The innocent was condemned as guilty so the guilty could be declared innocent.—the Holy Spirit. It's for good reason that the early church called this ‘the sweet exchange’” (p. 56).
 - How does it help you to think about Jesus not only forgiving us of our sins, but also giving us his perfect righteousness? What difference does it make to think that God sees us as perfectly righteous as Jesus because of the ‘sweet exchange’?
5. The author states, “Jesus died for our sins. But Christianity rises or falls on whether or not Jesus still has a heartbeat” (p. 57). And also, “The resurrection means the Christianity isn't based merely on a historical figure but on a living savior....(p 59).
 - How have you grown in seeing the absolute necessity of Jesus being physically raised from the dead? In other words, how is the resurrection of Jesus not simply a nice add on, but absolutely essential truth without which we have no Christianity, no good news?
6. Reflect on this statement: “...when Jesus rose from the grave, the new creation broke through into the middle of the story. The bodily resurrection of Christ is the beginning of a worldwide resurrection.... The resurrection of Christ is the beginning of the renovation of the cosmos” (p. 60).
 - How does this truth give you hope about God's purposes with this creation?