

Walking with Jesus: Jesus is King and Lord

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[0 : 01] Let's share our prayer together today. Heavenly Father, we humbly bow in your presence. May your word be our rule, your spirit our teacher, and your great glory our supreme concern.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. I wonder if you've ever found yourself driving along and inevitably stuck in a queue of traffic and the car in front has a sticker in the window or perhaps on the bumper which is maroon coloured.

Don't follow me, follow and the name of a football team. You get them in blue and you get them in black and white and you get them in other colours.

Now, in Scotland and certainly in Edinburgh, if you're behind a car and it's got its maroon sticker and it's don't follow me, follow hearts, you know what that means.

You know who hearts is and all about it. If it's a blue one and it's got don't follow me, follow Stranraa. Did you think I was going to mention another blue team?

[1 : 19] Maybe St Johnstone or Falkirk or Dundee? You know what that name means and who you're following.

But if you were to drive your car to somewhere where they play football that's a wee bit faster and actually looks like football, maybe in Italy or Spain or Germany or somewhere, eventually someone's going to ask you, who is this heart you're following?

Who is this Stranraa that you're encouraging me to follow? What is that all about? As disciples of Jesus, we follow Jesus.

We walk with Jesus. And we encourage others to follow Jesus for themselves. Don't follow me, follow Jesus.

Someone, someday, will ask you, who is this Jesus you are following?

[2 : 21] Who is this Jesus you are encouraging me to follow? What does it mean to walk with Jesus? Now, sometimes we know the right answer to a question.

But we can't explain why it's the right answer or how it works. Almost all of us who use computers know that if we move the squiggly thing and we click the button, something's going to happen.

But we've got no idea how that works. And we couldn't begin to explain what happens when we click here and this wee thing flashes there and something else opens up.

We just don't know. In our passage this morning, the disciples are asked the most important question.

Peter steps forward and gets the right answer. But does he know what the answer means? Jesus said to the disciples, but who do you say I am?

[3 : 31] Peter answered, the Christ of God. Jesus has already asked them, what do other people say about me? Sometimes we find it easy to talk about other people, to talk about someone else's faith.

But Jesus won't let the disciples away with that one. Who do you say I am? You're the one who's walking with Jesus.

You are the one who is following Jesus and encouraging others to follow Jesus. Who do you say this Jesus is whom you are walking with and following?

And Peter knows the right answer, the Christ of God. Jesus is the anointed one. Jesus is the king in God's kingdom.

Jesus is the one sent from the eternal presence of the Father who is returning to that presence of the Father. Jesus is the one who is reigning from the right hand of the Father.

[4 : 41] There is only one king. There is only one Christ. And he is Jesus. This is absolutely the right answer.

But what does the answer mean? I'm sure you remember the Disney film The Lion King. There's a scene near the beginning where the young Simba sings about how great it's going to be when he gets to be king.

No one is going to say do this or be there or stop that. He is going to be free to run around all day, free to do it his way.

Is that what it means to be a king? You get to do whatever you want and no one can say no. Answerable to no one.

Earlier this week our King Charles submitted himself and his family to, quotes, the full, fair and proper process by which this issue is investigated in the appropriate manner and by the appropriate authorities.

[5 : 58] In this, as I have said before, they have our full and wholehearted support and cooperation. Let me state clearly the law must take its course. Thank God what it means for our king to be king is that he will submit to the proper authorities authorities and the proper rule of law.

Being king, it turns out, is not what Simba thought it would be. So Peter knows the right answer. Jesus is the Christ.

If we were asked, we would probably have got that answer right as well. But the follow-up question comes, what does it mean for Jesus to be Christ?

What does it mean for Jesus to be your king and my king? What does it mean for us to walk with the king of all kings?

How would we do with that question? Do you think we would still get the right answer? Once again, thanks be to God, Jesus immediately goes on to teach his disciples, all of his disciples, just what it means for Jesus to be king.

[7 : 21] Jesus is the Christ of God. That means Jesus will be crucified and raised from the dead. Jesus said, the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, be killed and on the third day raised.

The cross of Christ is the triumphal throne from which Christ the king reigns. The empty tomb is the highway of victory upon which Christ the king marches.

Jesus is not the Christ of God apart from the cross and apart from the empty tomb. The primary work of the king, any king, is to save his people.

And Jesus does this above all else on the cross and through the empty tomb. King Jesus saves his people by his sacrificial death.

There is a penalty which we are due because of our sin, our rebellion against God and our rejection of him.

[8 : 36] A penalty we cannot pay. But in his broken body and his poured out blood, Jesus pays that penalty on our behalf.

because of our sin, our rejection of God, our enemy has power in our life. Jesus in his death and resurrection breaks the power of our enemy over us and sets us free.

The work of the king is to provide for his people. King Jesus opens the new and living way for us to come into the presence of God our Father that we might receive all the blessings of his grace.

The work of the king is achieved by King Jesus on the cross and through the empty tomb. When we see Jesus achieving the works of the king in his death and resurrection, we know that this is what it means for Jesus to be the king.

If you're walking down the street, maybe about three o'clock, ten past three, and you see someone at the side of the road with a yellow jacket on, sometimes with a skipped hat, with a yellow peak, they're holding a hole and it's got a big circular disc at the top, you might guess that they're a lollipop person.

[10 : 13] When you see them walking into the middle of the road and stopping the traffic, you might be absolutely certain that they're a lollipop person. We recognise who someone is by the things that they do.

that's how we recognise Jesus as the Christ. We don't get to make up our own ideas of what it means for Jesus to be king.

Even Jesus doesn't get to decide what it means for him to be king. He submits to the saving purposes of God the Father and sacrifices himself for us and our salvation.

There is no Jesus who is not crucified. There is no Christ of God who is not sacrificed for us and our salvation.

The only king there is is the risen king. This is what it means for Jesus to be king. this is who we follow and walk alongside.

[11 : 25] More than that if Jesus is king and we are following him this means we have to follow where Jesus leads. We have to go where Jesus goes.

If Jesus the king goes to the cross we go with him. Jesus said to all if anyone would come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

I wonder if you have noticed these past few weeks we have been reading in Luke's gospel under this heading Walk with Jesus. I wonder if you have noticed how often the theme of humility has come up.

The disciples of Jesus must display a genuine humility. Walking with Jesus is not about self-promotion or self-service.

We come to King Jesus empty handed. We have nothing in ourselves to commend ourselves to Jesus. There is no reason why Jesus would call us to follow him except that he loves us.

[12 : 43] Christian humility is self-denial. Taking up your cross is not about putting up with a disagreeable neighbour or some colleague at work who you just don't get on with.

They are the cross I have to bear. In our common speech we have devalued treated with disrespect and contempt the cross of Jesus and what it means to bear our cross.

The only people who take up a cross are those who are carrying it until they die on it. Taking up your cross means that you are carrying the instrument of your execution until someone nails you to it.

Taking up your cross means denying all your hopes, all your dreams, all your future, all your choices. It means giving up your whole life for Jesus.

This is the only way to follow Jesus. Or you can keep your life. You can even gain the wealth and riches of the world.

[14 : 05] But if you do, you will lose everything. Everything. The only way to save your life into eternity is to submit to death on a cross together with Jesus.

As the Apostle Paul will write, I have been crucified with Christ. And there is nothing to which we can compare this.

Christ. No one else calls you to sacrifice yourself for them. Only King Jesus calls you to lose your life with him so that you can receive it back again as God's renewed and redeemed child.

child. We all, not any one of us, have any cause for self-congratulation or pride. The only way we are made right with God is through the cross of Christ. When we walk with Jesus, we identify ourselves with his cross. Jesus the King is crucified, and we who walk with him are crucified with Jesus.

[15 : 25] This is what it means for Jesus to be the Christ of God. This is where your King will lead you. Oh, but it's worth it. It's worth everything.

Give up everything with Jesus. Come, die with him, your dying saviour. there's even more.

If we're going to follow Jesus or walk with Jesus, we need to own up to what we're doing. You can't follow Jesus faithfully and then deny that this is what you're doing.

Jesus said, whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory, and the glory of the Father and the holy angels. I mentioned earlier that come September and even during the General Assembly I'll be wearing my friend of the guild badge, and I'm happy to do that.

In 32 years of ministry I've known wonderful guild members in every one of those congregations, and I am not once going to answer the question which one was the best home beaker.

[16 : 42] I have a badge, that identifies me, which I will wear. Perhaps you have a badge, or a college tie, or a scarf, or something you wear which identifies you with a club, or a group, or an association.

King Jesus calls all who will follow him, not to wear a badge, not to wear the team colours, but in your life, in what you do with your hands, in what you see with your mouth, in what you look at with your eyes, in where you go with your feet, to identify with him and his mission of grace and love for all people.

You need to own up and be public about walking with Jesus. us. And so the question is, are you ashamed to be known as someone who follows Jesus?

If it comes up in conversation, questions of faith or church or Jesus, do you suddenly go quiet? I don't have much to say about that.

Are you prepared to let people know what you do on a Sunday morning? Are you prepared to let it be known that you give your money to care for the homeless and the poor and to welcome the refugees?

[18 : 14] That you give up your time to cook meals on a Friday night to support Bethany or whatever it is you're doing as you answer Jesus' call to service?

Jesus is not ashamed to know you and own you and call you his own. We need to be unashamed about Jesus, to live up to him, to publicly acknowledge that Jesus is our king and everybody's king and we are following him.

we follow Jesus today. Jesus is the Christ of God right now but not only right now for every right now that there ever will be.

Our hope for tomorrow is in this. Jesus is and always will be the king. Jesus said I tell you truly there are some standing here who are not going to taste death till they see the kingdom of God. The very next passage, we didn't read it today but the very next passage is the transfiguration when the glory of Jesus was displayed before his disciples. This is a display of the glory of the king in God's glorious kingdom.

[19 : 37] In the immediate context this is what Jesus means by some standing here will not taste death till they see the glory of the king. Jesus is the king in God's kingdom and one day, one glorious day, every eye will see him, not in that poor lowly stable with the oxen standing by.

We shall see him displayed in glory, clothed in splendour, crowned with every crown. And this not only someday in the future, whenever Jesus works in power among us, whenever Jesus enables us to care for the poor, to bind up the broken hearts of those who need comfort, whenever the mission of God is advanced through us and among us and for us, the glory of Jesus the king is seen then and there.

I've got a friend who was walking one day on the hills near Braemar and they happened to come across a group of men in tweed suits and the stockings and rifles over their arms out walking on the hills and they thought nothing more than to join in conversation with them as you do on the hillside. After about half an hour or so, it turned out one of them was the then Prince of Wales, now King Charles. While it is possible to mistake someone in hunting tweeds on a Scottish hillside, you cannot mistake the person who is seated on the throne with the crown, who is arrayed in the royal robes at the state opening of parliament.

Today our hope is in King Jesus. We cannot mistake him. he is the one enthroned in glory and splendour.

[21 : 41] Our hope in King Jesus will be fully achieved. It will never disappoint us. As he is in glory, so we shall see him in glory.

And we will rejoice at that sight. And so we keep on with Jesus. We don't give up walking with Jesus. We pray that we will walk with our eyes wide open and see the glory of the King as we walk with Jesus.

Yes, we walk by faith and not by sight. Yes, today we see in part only and not fully. Yes, today we do not fully understand these things.

But we do not walk with Jesus in ignorance of who he is. By grace God our King makes Jesus the King in God's kingdom known to us.

He is the only King there will be in God's kingdom. We walk with Jesus by revelation, by grace, by mercy.

[22 : 49] We get to walk with Jesus the King. This is our joy and our hope. This is our today and our every tomorrow. And so walk with Jesus Jesus.

And don't give up. Walk with our crucified and risen King. Let's pray together. God our Father we give you thanks and praise for your goodness and your grace.

We thank you that you have made Jesus known to us when we could not know him ourselves. we pray that you would make Jesus known to us more and more each new day.

That as we follow Jesus we would follow him more fully and walk with him more dearly until Christ comes or calls us home.

Amen.