

Why Is America So Mad?

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

Psalm 2. Psalm 2.

Psalm 3.

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Psalm 3. Not just a political figure, he's a husband. Erica Kirk will never kiss her husband again. Their two children will never again feel their father's embrace.

[1 : 38] I just still see the scene of his daughter interrupting Fox and Friends or whatever the show is to give her dad a hug on national television. Not only that, but as long as they live, they'll deal with the shock and horror of how their father died and her husband died.

Like you, I'm dismayed. I'm saddened to live in the country with people that assume it's permissible to attack and kill those with whom you disagree. Devastating random acts of violence have become too commonplace and increasingly commonplace, but there's been a growing number that have been politically motivated, politically charged, not least of which the two attempted assassinations on our president.

Like you, I'm angry. There's been much eye-rolling among those who did not like Kirk.

MSNBC fired one of its political analysts for comments they deemed inappropriate, insensitive, and unacceptable. MTSU fired their assistant dean of student for tweeting, looks like Charlie spoke his fate into existence.

Zero sympathy. But there's been more than eye-rolling. There's been celebration. Kirk got what he deserved. Good riddance.

[3 : 04] Kirk lost the gun debate. Can Erica be next? Those are the things being tweeted in our country. So I'm angry. I'm angry at that.

I think we should be angry. Possibly like you, I am hopeful. At other times, a political outrage. Millions have gone to the streets and burned and looted and rioted. But this week, it appears that millions were mainly praying.

I was praying. I believe in prayer, just like Eric wonderfully presented to us. I'm hopeful in what I see in Gen Z. They're attending church more than any other generation alive.

Oh, you know, I think we get older, we start criticizing the young. Well, they're attending church more than us. I also know that good times create weak men and hard times create strong men.

And I want a congregation and a country full of strong men. I believe they're rising up. So what do we do? How do we respond? What do we say? What's the answer?

[4 : 08] There's so much chatter right now. So many people speaking, political leaders and pundits, podcasters and influencers, not to mention the countless worldviews and philosophies of life and values that we are inundated.

But what are the words we're to live by? David Pallison helps us understand the world in which we live when he says, false views become codified and organized into worlds to live by.

A worldview, a popular philosophy of life, a cultural value, a view of God, an explanation of why we do what we do, a bit of advice, a political agenda.

All of them turn into words we live by. The Bible is not the only persuasive voice in the marketplace of ideas. What he means is in the marketplace where you live, you and I live, other persuasive cultural messages are eager to shape our hearts.

And there are many voices speaking right now, but there's only one voice that speaks words that we must live by. We must live by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

[5 : 15] So this morning, a bit atypical for us, if you've been here for any length of time, we're stepping out of the book of Job to consider a most relevant psalm.

Every song urges us, every psalm urges us to stand up and sing, to believe what we believe so much that we stand up and sing about it. Maybe our salvation, pain and trouble, steadfast love of the Lord, the greatness of our Savior.

Some songs are cheap. Anybody can sing happy birthday. But some songs are costly. This song will cost you to sing it.

Well, I'm going to read the psalm. Actually, if you would, would you stand with me? We revere the word of God from our King. Psalm 2.

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

[6 : 33] He who sits in the heavens laughs. The Lord holds them in derision. Then He will speak to them in His wrath and terrify them in His fury, saying, As for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.

I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me, You are my son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession.

You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Now, therefore, O kings, be wise.

Be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear. Rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for His wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are all those who take refuge in the Lord. This is the word of the Lord. Please be seated. In a word, where we're going is align your life with the campaign of King Jesus.

[7 : 52] Align your life with the campaign of King Jesus. In this critical psalm, a critical psalm in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, we're going to see how it's fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

And it calls us to live for Him, to pledge allegiance to our King. We're going to break it out in three points. The first is the nation's rage. The nation's rage.

It captures this scene where all the world rages and rebels against the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, this psalm is a royal psalm. You know, the psalms are often called, as you know, the Psalms of David.

That's what our Lord called the Psalms. Now, David did not write all the psalms, but he wrote so many of the psalms and led the people in the worship of the Lord. That shorthand, it is the psalm of David.

Littered throughout the book of Psalms are royal psalms, because David was the king. He was to be praised. He was the Lord's anointed as the Messiah and as the king over his people.

[8 : 58] And this psalm is one of those, and it's describing a coronation service. Now, we don't have coronation services. We declared independence from all that nonsense.

Nevertheless, this psalmist is remembering a coronation service in a time of trouble, to remind him who is the king. The first stanza arrests us with several questions.

You see it immediately. It jumps out. Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? It envisions nations and peoples rioting and rebelling, planning and plotting together.

Then it narrows to the powerful. It says, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers of the earth take counsel together. The kings and the rulers are listening and taking counsel, plotting and scheming.

This word plot is the same word used in Psalm 1 for the man of God who's blessed, who meditates, plotting, meditating on the law of the Lord day and night, and all that he does, he prospers.

[10 : 08] But that's not what these kings are doing, these people. They're plotting and scheming against the Lord. Trampling the law of the Lord in the Lord's land.

Not seeking to understand. Not seeking wisdom. Breaking out in rage and rebellion. We hear their quote. Look in verse 3. Let us burst their bonds. Let's break free.

Cast away their cords from us. But the scene is absurd. It's absurd. It's absurd. Nations and peoples don't talk.

Kings and rulers don't work together. We have G11 or G13 or whoever it is, you know. We try to do all these things. But nations don't ultimately work together.

They're all driven by self-interest. And the questions underline the absurdness of the scene. Why do the nations rage? Why do they plot? Why do the kings all together? Why do they meet together? What is all it about?

[11 : 10] What is going on? Who could know what they're doing? Who could know what motivates them? And yet inspired by the Lord, the psalmist says, they're raging, look in verse 2, against the Lord.

And against His anointed. Now we must pause for a moment. You see that in verse 2. L-O-R-D, all caps.

Most likely in your Bible. It's a way for the translators to refer not merely to the name of the Lord, but to the covenant name of God, Yahweh.

But they wouldn't write that. They would just write an abbreviation. So we're meant to see that this is the Lord. This is not a generic God.

This is the Lord. It's the name that the Lord gave to Moses. Said, I am who I am. This is the name of the one who has no needs, no limits, no rivals, no threat.

[12 : 12] The one above whom there is no one. And without which there is nothing. Everything comes from the Lord. And so the absurdity of this scene should be thrust before our eyes.

Who is rebelling against this Lord? Who's sticking the finger up against this one? And against His anointed, His king.

We're meant to laugh. Could anything be more ridiculous? What's with all this rage and rebelling?

Is anyone really going to prevail against the Lord? Psalm 1 and 2 form an introduction to the whole book of Psalms.

Psalm 1 zooms in on the individual who's meditating on the law of the Lord day and night. But Psalm 2 zooms out to the nations. What are they doing?

[13 : 13] There's one who's meditating. And there's nations raging. Every nation.

Every king. Every politician. Every citizen. If they were honest. Is saying, we don't want this man to rule us.

This psalm pushes us to take a step back and look at the politics of our age. Why is there so much anger and rage? Why is there so much division? Why there's so much hostility, hatred, and violence?

Why is it that every news station is just spin? So obviously spun. Some less spinners than others, perhaps.

But still feels like it's all a mess. Why is it that the United States seems to no longer be united by anything? Well, the reason is the rude attitude of every person is we don't want the Lord Jesus to rule us.

[14 : 15] We want to do things our own way. We don't want the Lord Jesus to rule us. We want to do things our own way. And this is where I have a concern. I'm a bit concerned that in the aftermath of Kirk's assassination this week, we might be tempted to mourn the violence, hatred, and the loss of civility.

We obviously should mourn. I mean, mourn that. People from the left and right said Kirk was harsh and spread hatred. Or people from the left said Kirk was harsh and spread hatred.

People from the right say the same things about many other people, too. But if we stop there and just mourn the language, I think we make a massive mistake.

We stop too soon. And it's wrong-headed. Samuel James, in one of his columns this week, I thought very helpfully and very insightfully, he wrote, In the coming days, many will write and speak of the brokenness of the American political culture.

They will rightly mourn our violence, our polarization, that just means our division, our different poles, different size. The loss of cross-ideological friendship, the loss of the left and right shaking hands and being friends.

[15 : 32] And the curated information islands of the social media age. Now that's a provocative phrase. I want to unpack it just for a moment. This idea that social media does not make you understand anybody else but you.

The algorithms are designed to lead you to understand no one else but people that are just like you. So just know that. And so we have curated information islands of the social media age.

I think that's very helpful. Yes and amen. But some of this could be misleading. It could imply that what's ailing us is meanness.

It could imply that what we really need is to rediscover civility and tolerance. This is not correct. And I agree with him. The truth is that it's precisely the embarrassment of our spirituality, the unwillingness to submit to transcendent truths that has turned our civic life so gangrenous.

So it's the unwillingness to submit to transcendent truths. That means truths that are always applicable in every generation and in every place.

[16 : 35] That's made it so gangrenous. What keeps people from shooting the necks of people they dislike? A commitment to individualism, free speech, or pluralism?

No. In the end, it's only the fear of God that preserves the center. In losing God, we're burying ourselves. I think that's so right. He's helping us see the problem is not in America that we just need to be more winsome and get along.

The problem in America is not unkindness. The problem is ungodliness. The problem is God has been written out of the situation. There is no fear of God.

I know that's overstatement, but there's little fear of God. There's so much open rejection of God and bold refusal to let God rule what we think, what we say, our life choices, our sexuality.

There's a unified voice saying, let us burst the bonds. There's nothing restraining us anymore. So if a boy wants to become a girl, he can become a girl.

[17 : 43] Or the semblance of one. Que sera, sera. Everybody do what's right in their own eyes. There's no overarching truth. That's the reason we cannot say, let us all get along.

It's not tone that's leading to hostility, hatred, and violence. It's truth. Years ago, D.A. Carson pointed out how our culture has lost an understanding of tolerance.

You know, tolerance used to be that I insist that those who disagree with me have no less rights to speak freely of what they believe.

I insist upon it. That's what tolerance means. I tolerate them. You know, sometimes we say that to our little sister or little brother, you know. But this is actually a noble thing.

I tolerate someone else to have that. But now tolerance has morphed to mean that we insist that all beliefs are equally valid and true. And it's wrong to say that any belief is wrong or untrue or evil.

[18 : 50] How can that work? I mean, how can you tolerate anymore? His book famously is called The Intolerance of Tolerance. Because that's what it becomes.

Charlie Kirk was not killed for how he said what he said. He was killed for what he said. Welcome to the new America. It's dicey.

But it's not going to work for you just to start whispering a little bit more. Not if you're going to stand for the truth. It won't work for us to just be kind and winsome.

Christianity is built on claims of truth. Christianity is built on truths that are true and mean other things are untrue. It's always been that way.

I mean, it's what led to so much persecution in the early church. And you remember last year we studied Revelation. The letters to Revelation. It led to the persecution in Rome.

[19 : 51] It was fine. I've said this a lot. It's fine with addition. So if you worshipped all these gods and you promised to... Or you worshipped to God and you promised to worship these gods too. And you just kind of threw them in a pantheon together.

They were fine with that. But they were not fine with you worshipping one God and saying all the others are untrue. That's what led. So when they called people to recant, they were calling them to turn from this one God.

Because that one God was saying all the other gods are untrue. And Jesus said no one comes to the Father except through me. You don't have to shout claims of truth to be hated.

All you have to do is have an open dialogue about them. But it won't just work. I mean, so it will not work for us to just try to be kind. Nor will it work for us to just proclaim the gospel. And not what the Bible teaches other places.

It will be turning away from proclaiming the whole counsel of God. Our command is, you know, if you just focus on proclaiming the gospel and you don't proclaim all the other things, you won't have any gospel in the end.

[20 : 51] Because all these other things uphold the gospel. So we proclaim the authority of the scriptures. We proclaim the authority of God to dictate things in this universe.

We proclaim so many truths about sin, about humanity. We proclaim all these things. Because if we stop proclaiming them, we stop telling the truth. Especially when they're embattled and they're being disagreed with right now.

Martin Luther helpfully said, If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God, except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at their most attacking, I am not confessing Christ.

However boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved. And to be steady on all battlefields besides is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.

And so this is not new. You know, this sermon, stepping out of this series, is a bit new. But we have steadily proclaimed what the scripture teaches about creation, about human nature, about the dignity of human life, about sin, about the need for a savior.

[22 : 06] We've steadily proclaimed it. Because we want to be found rightly handling the word of truth when the Lord comes. There's another reason we cannot say, Let's all get along.

Political violence is not a bug in the system of progressivism. It's a feature. The progressive ideology, thinking, is built on critical theory, which sees the world as oppressed and oppressor.

It trains people to view those they disagree with, not as wrong, but evil. Do you see? Not as opponents, but as oppressors. Evil oppressors.

And that's what's hijacking. That's what's changing. It's not that people are angry. People say angry, unkind things. But one of the things that's hijacking it is the critical theory that's underneath it.

What do you do when you're oppressed? You rebel. You revolt. You attack. Because you're facing evil.

[23 : 14] And that's the narrative. I mean, that's the teaching that's brought to you by all your major universities. Enroll today. What's wrong with America?

We don't want anyone to rule us. We want to do things our way. In that respect, there's nothing new under the sun. And we must begin with ourselves.

It would be, obviously, the focus of this message is in response to everything going on. But we do begin with ourselves. If we don't, we're a hypocrite.

We give no alternative to the world. We must take our soul to task. We confess where we have thrown off the Lord's laws and let them go to do what we wanted to do.

So the nations rage. Point two, the Lord's answer. The Lord's answer. Jesus is the undisputed king of everything and everyone.

[24 : 14] And these verses return to the coronation service. This is it. You know, the people have said, we'll do whatever we want. The Lord answers. He has other plans.

He sits in the heavens and laughs. You know, many people grow up with a sentimental view of God. A God that's got his, you know, his, his, his, you know, just a nice, warm, fuzzy grandfather in the sky that pats you on the back and gives you a sucker afterwards.

But that's not the view of God here. When the nations assemble their troops and lay out their plans, the Lord laughs at their puny armies. He laughs derisively at them.

This is not the smug snicker of someone who thinks they're better than you. This is the big belly laugh of something that is truly puny and pathetic. I remember one thing that's nice when you get old, when your kids get older, is they begin to see how silly they looked when they were younger.

You know, one of the things we've loved is, our kids are a little bit beyond this these days, but when they got beyond the temper tantrum, bang my fist on the ground, kick my feet stage of life, but then their sibling was still in it, they would die laughing.

[25 : 26] Did I do that? It's so silly, so dumb, so ridiculous. Well, that's kind of the way the Lord's laughing in these verses.

He sits in the heavens. Now, we know He doesn't sit down. He's a spirit. That's a way of referring that He sits in rule. He is the King.

Kings sit down. The servants stand and bow. He sits in the heavens. He's not a puny little king ruling over a puny little empire. His kingdom is in the heavens, and He rules over this world.

Psalms 18 tells us. And then He speaks to those raging and rebelling. Look at verse 5. Then the King will speak in His wrath and terrify them in His fury.

What are they afraid of? They're afraid of the awareness that this King is putting a King over them. I will set my King on Zion, my holy King, or my holy hill.

[26 : 34] And then the Lord gives Him blessings. You see that in verse 7. He recalls, I tell of the decree, You are my Son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, I'll make nations, your heritage, the ends of the earth, your possession.

All things will be in your hands. And so it begs the question, who is this King? Who is the one to whom the Lord says, You are my Son?

Now we know the story of the Bible. We know it's King David. Who's the great King in the Bible? It's King David. And David, at the height of his kingdom, he said, I want to build a house for the Lord. And the Lord said, You will not build me a house, though I'm thankful for the gesture.

I will build you a house. What he meant by that is not a literal house of timber and wood and whatever. He said, I will build you a house in the sense that I will continue your kingdom forevermore.

A son of David will sit on my throne forever. Then he said, He shall be to me a son, and I will be to him a father.

[27 : 39] That's the verse that's quoted right there in verse 7. You are my son. Today I have begotten you. And so, sure enough, after David came, Solomon, he was David's son. He built a house for the Lord.

He built the tabernacle or the temple. And then he was the greatest king of Israel. But then, like David, he died. Some thought the message of this king, the promise of this king had failed.

And if you trace it throughout the Old Testament, this idea of sonship, which we did in the class this morning, if you want to go listen to it, but this idea of sonship, it began to grow that this king, this son, would be someone greater than an earthly king because he would be almighty God, everlasting father, Isaiah 7.

And so we see when Jesus arrives on the scene, he is announced as the son of David, as the true king who will reign forever. So all that we know about God, the Lord is saying to us, I am the Lord and I have decreed that Jesus is the king forever and ever.

That's what these verses are saying. That's what we're to take away. We saw this in Ephesians. He's been exalted far above all rule and authority and power and dominion above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come, and one to come.

[28 : 56] All things are under his feet. He is the king. This is a precious comfort to the people of God throughout the years. You know, Christians get all tangled up with the revelation, but at the end of the day, the main thing he's trying to say is Jesus sits on the throne now.

His coronation service, it was an odd one, but it began at the cross. And then he ascended. And now he sits at the right hand of the throne of God on high.

He's in complete control. That's what they're meant to convey. The church is being persecuted. Yep, the number of martyrs is not yet complete. But Jesus is still the king.

It's the same message here. You know, there's another comfort to this rule, though, for us. Another aspect of our hope that I don't think we think about a lot is Jesus will come again and right every wrong.

You see that. Look in verse 9. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. The imagery of a potter's vessel is fascinating.

[30 : 12] In Egyptian culture, the name of each city under a particular king was written on it with a little pot and placed in the temple of the king's god.

And when the people rebelled, the king would smash that pot announcing that judgment was coming. And so it is, as it were, the Lord is saying and reminding us that the pot has been smashed.

Judgment is coming. Now, we don't think about that because we think we deserve judgment and we do deserve judgment. But through Christ, we found salvation. Mercy has triumphed over judgment.

But nevertheless, for the evil in this world, we are praying for judgment. Albeit carefully. You know, this past week, we remembered the horrors of 9-11 when the two planes crashed in the World Trade Center and killed thousands of Americans.

I'll never forget, I was a junior in college, about to go to my structures class, and my mom called and told me what had happened.

[31 : 21] I watched the second plane hit, 9.50 or something. 24 years ago today, President Bush visited Ground Zero and I'm sure if you were raised in those years, you remember that scene.

He's standing with a New York City police chief holding a bullhorn, speaking to all the first responders trying to find people in the rubble. He said, and I quote, thank you all.

I want you to know that America today is on bended knee in prayer for the people whose lives were lost here, for the workers who work here, for the families who mourn here.

The nation stands with the good people in New York City and New Jersey and Connecticut as we mourn the loss of thousands of our citizens. He's standing there with a bullhorn and someone, you know, it's kind of just not really an assembly, it's just people spread out and someone says, I can't hear you!

I can't hear you! Bush said, I can hear you! I can hear you and the rest of the world hears you and the people and the people who knock these buildings down will hear all of us soon.

[32 : 42] Now, as we sing these songs in troubled times, as we cry out in agony and heartbreak and fear, as we read that the Lord has smashed in pieces the potter's vessels as if the Lord is saying, I hear you!

I see you! I know how crooked this world is, how it's kicked you around, I'm coming to make all things right. End time.

So while these verses produce a precious comfort, they also provide a political campaign for us. Look where the Lord says He put His king.

Look down there in verse 6, He said, I set my king on Zion, my holy hill. Now, Zion is just a puny stretch of 11 acres on the south end of the kingdom or the mountain of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. How would a king on Zion's hill rule over the earth? How would His kingdom go to the end of the earth?

[33 : 51] How would the nations be His heritage and the ends of the earth His possession? How would His kingdom go there? How would the nations be His?

How would they come under His saving rule? And this is where we find our political campaign now. The kingdom advances through preaching the gospel.

While we wait for justice, we proclaim the gospel of mercy and forgiveness. Wonderfully, the Bible, if you read the Old Testament, it would lead us to expect that there was going to become a day of the Lord, one day in which all things are brought to an end.

So Hosea says, prepare to meet your God. And anybody that hears that phrase should be terrified. But Jesus, when He came, said, God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.

helping us understand that He's going to come once in mercy before He comes again in judgment.

[35 : 11] One of the best illustrations I've ever heard of the gospel and the message we proclaim to the world goes a bit like this. Once upon a time in a far off country, there was an ancient king who was simultaneously the most loving and the most just king that ever existed.

Eventually, it was discovered that someone was stealing from the king's treasury. So someone was stealing from this loving and just king and stealing from his treasury.

So the king issued a decree. He said, the penalty will be ten lashes visited publicly on the person that has been stealing from the king's treasury.

The theft continued to happen and all the kingdom was in an uproar about it and so the king issued a second decree. Forty lashes would be visited on the person who was stealing from the king's treasury.

Forty lashes, as you know, was a death sentence. So the king was committing to killing the person who was stealing from his treasury.

[36 : 22] As weeks went by, it was discovered that none other than the daughter of the king was stealing from the king's treasury. Questions began to ripple through the kingdom.

How could the most loving king who ever existed kill his own daughter? Some thought he would pardon her, but how would he be just if he pardoned her? If he just let go of her sin and forgave her of her sin, how would he be just?

Others thought he would punish her, but how would he be loving? If he punished his own daughter and made her suffer? The king examined it and said, the law is clear.

Sin has taken place. Justice must fall. The sentence must be passed. The king's own daughter was brought before the entire kingdom to be punished.

She was brought to the front and laid over the executioner's table, chained to the table, chained to the table, a rope to the table, the back of her shirt ripped open so that the executioner could slam her with 40 lashes.

[37 : 31] And just as the executioner lifted his whip at the first lash, the king stood up and yelled, Stop! silently, the king walked forward, bent over his daughter and wrapped her body with his body and turned to the executioner and said, Now hit her!

The executioner said, King, I cannot hit her without hitting you. The king said, Now hit her!

And 40 lashes fell on the back of the king over the back of his daughter. And the king died and the girl went free.

While we await the return of the king, we await the righting of every wrong, we have a political campaign, we proclaim that there's a king who rules over all, who's above all, rules over all, there's a king who's done everything that was necessary to clear the way to God, a new and living way for all who are far off.

Because he's just, he cannot just pardon sin, he can't just sweep it under the rug and forgive it like we do in the south, but because he's loving, he has, loving, he has undertaken the punishment on himself.

[38 : 57] All we like sheep have gone astray, the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He who knew no sin became sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

And so we call people, prepare to meet the king and prepare by bowing the knee to Jesus Christ. Every knee will bow before him in the end and every person will give an account and every person after death will experience judgment unless they flee the wrath to come in Jesus Christ.

So we have a campaign, we have a message, we have a platform. Thirdly, the people's choice. Our culture's all about choice.

And the final stanza calls us to make one. He barely addresses the crowd throughout this psalm, but then he pouts them with commands in verses 10 through 12.

says, O kings, so he's addressing these kings that are plotting and scheming. He says, Be wise. Be warned, O rulers of the earth.

[40 : 16] Before he tells them their choice, he tells them to choose wisely. Why? Because decisions have consequences. Be warned. Make sure you learn what you need to learn.

He says, Serve the Lord with fear. Rejoice with trembling. Now we don't think about those words being able to coexist together, but when you are serving the Lord of lords, you serve with fear.

You rejoice with trembling. Wonderfully, no longer trembling for fear of wrath, but nevertheless trembling because you are holding the hand of the king of the universe.

So serve him in fear. Rejoice with trembling. Submit to him. C.S. Lewis, until we have faith, it says, Die before you die.

There will be no time after. So part of coming to this king is laying down your life and turning away. Rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son. Kiss the king.

[41 : 23] Submit to him. Give homage to him. Give your life to him. You know, when we think about politics and we think about the Bible, we often go to what the Lord said in Mark 13, one of the few verses that he addresses the Bible, or addresses politics.

Romans 13, Mark 13, other places. Jesus said, Render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God's what is God's. You know, often we kind of separate it. You know, God's got his thing.

Caesar has his thing. God has some, you know, 10%, you know, and Caesar has a rising percentage, you know. But the context is very different.

They asked Jesus, should we pay taxes? And Jesus says, you know, give me the coin. And he says, whose image is on it? They answer Caesar's.

He says, okay, render to Caesar what is Caesar, and to God's what is God's. What he's saying, though, is every coin is made in the image of Caesar, but every person is made in the image of God.

[42 : 31] I don't want your 10%. I want your life. That's what he's saying. Submit to him. Submit completely. That is, man, talk about a word, a winsome word for our culture.

You belong to God. Submit to him. If you're a Christian, you belong doubly so to him. He created you in his image. He redeemed you in his blood. You are not your own.

So we can stop the charade. So the choice is yours. You know the words. You know the tune now. You know what these words mean. Will we stand up and sing to the king?

Will we let our light shine? Will our salt lose its taste? Align your life with King Jesus.

Father in heaven, thank you for the word of God, which is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing the division of soul and spirit, joint and marrow, unable to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart from afar.

[43 : 45] Because no creature will be hidden from your sight, but all will be naked and exposed to him to whom we must give our due.

Lord, help us. Search us and keep us. See if there's any unking way in us and leave us in the way everlasting, we pray in Christ's name.

Amen. You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

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