

# What if... Jesus is Lord?

Message for Sunday, July 5, 2020  
by Bruce Fraser

## 1) Jesus is Lord

We started looking last week at the central theme of Jesus' message, the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom exists wherever people follow Jesus as their king; that is, they obey him.

We see this in the Lord's Prayer:

**Matthew 6:10, King James Version:**

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

A creed is a statement of faith. Sometimes in our worship we say together one of the creeds. One of the earliest creeds of the Christian church is found in Paul's letter to the Romans.

**Romans 10:9, New Living Translation:**

For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

The heart of that creed is simple: "Jesus is Lord."

The reason this creed was so important is that it declared that Jesus is the supreme ruler. In those days, the sign of allegiance to the Roman empire was to say, "Caesar is Lord." But the Christians refused to say that. They declared that Jesus is Lord.

But—and this is a big one—it's not enough to *say* that Jesus is Lord. We have to live it out day to day.

**Matthew 7:21-23, Today's English Version:**

"Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do. When the Judgment Day comes, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord! In your name we spoke God's message, by your name we drove out many demons and performed many miracles!' Then I will say to them, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you wicked people!'"

I'll say it again: We are part of the Kingdom of God when our lives are based on following Jesus.

## 2) The best kind of government

What kind of government is the best? Some of you might say democracy: where the people vote to choose who will govern them. That sounds

reasonable, although the clowns and chaos we often see in Parliament makes me wonder about that.

There actually is a better system of government than democracy. The very best form of government is to have a king or queen who is just and kind. But the problem with that is we live in a sinful, fallen world where people are not perfect, not even monarchs. And so we have nations where dictators rule countries as greedy and vicious tyrants, looting the wealth of the country for themselves, crushing any opposition with brutal violence. That's why Winston Churchill said, "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other forms that have been tried."

But I will say it again: the best form of government is a benevolent dictator: a king or queen who is humble, generous, loving, just, kind, sacrificial, altogether good, concerned more for the people than for him or herself. Jesus is that kind of king.

Jesus is the kind of king who would willingly leave behind his throne, and instead be born in a stable. He left behind the riches and glory of heaven, to live in poverty and humility. He left behind the place where he was worshipped, trading that in so that he could be mocked and mistreated and murdered. Jesus is the kind of king who cares more for others than for himself. Jesus is a king whom we can trust.

## 3) What kind of king is Jesus?

Some people are afraid of making a commitment to obey Jesus. They're afraid of Jesus. They think he will be a tyrant boss, making unreasonable and impossible demands.

Let's look at the life of Jesus and see what kind of a boss he was on earth. That will tell us what kind of a king he is like today.

**John 13:3, Today's English Version:**

Jesus knew that the Father had given him complete power; he knew that he had come from God and was going to God.

Imagine if you were in that position: you have complete power. You can do anything you want; you can have anything you desire. What did Jesus do with his power? Let's continue reading.

**John 13:4-5, Today's English Version:**

So he rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around his waist. Then he poured

some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.

Jesus is the Son of God. The universe is his to command. Legions of angels stand ready to answer his call. Yet what does he choose? —to be a servant! His goal in life was to serve the people around him, and he finally gave his life for all.

Jesus never asks us to do something that he would be unwilling to do himself. Rather than a tyrant who bosses people around, Jesus is a Lord who leads by example. And his example is to love and serve one another.

Another preacher, Fred Craddock, spoke about how we serve.

To give my life for Christ appears glorious. To pour myself out for others... to pay the ultimate price of martyrdom—I'll do it. I'm ready, Lord, to go out in a blaze of glory.

We think giving our all to the Lord is like taking a \$1,000 bill and laying it on the table—"Here's my life, Lord. I'm giving it all."

But the reality for most of us is that he sends us to the bank and has change the \$1,000 for quarters. We go through life putting out 25 cents here and 50 cents there. Listen to the neighbour kid's troubles instead of saying, "Get lost." Go to a committee meeting. Give up a cup of water to a shaky old man in a nursing home.

Usually giving our life to Christ isn't glorious. It's done in all those little acts of love, 25 cents at a time. It would be easy to go out in a flash of glory; it's harder to live the Christian life little by little over the long haul.

#### 4) The Kingdom of God brings life

I said earlier that some people are afraid of Jesus, afraid of what he's like. Another fear that many people have is that following Jesus will take all the fun out of life. It is the very opposite which is true. It is when we reject God and rebel against his ways that we get ourselves into misery. Following Jesus brings life and joy.

John 10:10, New Living Translation:  
"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness."

John 15:10-11, New Living Translation:  
"When you obey me, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father and remain in his love. I have told you this so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!"

Bertrand Russell, the famous British philosopher who died in 1970, might be one of those. He proclaimed himself to be an atheist, and wrote a famous essay *Why I Am Not a Christian*. As I said, his career was a professor of philosophy. He governed his life by reason and logic, and wherever his search for truth led him. At least that's what he wrote in his books.

Yet his private life showed a different kind of person. As a professor, he found an abundance of young female students who were willing to be sexual partners if it would help their marks. Not surprisingly, he went through four marriages. It sounds more like he was on a search for pleasure than a search for truth.

When Russell died, he said he was as one without any hope or joy.

Malcolm Muggeridge, also British, also lived during much of the same period as Russell (born about thirty years later). Muggeridge was an agnostic, also not believing in God. But at the age of 79, he became a Christian. He said could resist all the great books and all the great sermons. But when he saw Mother Teresa in Calcutta with the poor, he said, "If this is it, I've got to have it!"

Muggeridge trusted Jesus, and found him to be the source of life. You can, too.

#### Next Steps:

- Pray: Ask God to change your heart so you're more like Jesus. Besides helping you to grow, that also makes it more natural to follow Jesus.
- Follow Jesus' example of serving others—especially where there is no reward, no recognition, just the joy of giving love.
- Take a risk. Go outside your comfort zone. Do you think God is calling you to do something unusual, even weird, as part of loving and serving others? Do it.