

# The Strength of Choosing the Right King

*Building Core Strength*

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**Bible Text:** Luke 19:28-20:18

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## **Faith Church**

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Well, I don't know if you have noticed, but we are in a presidential election cycle. Has that caught your gaze yet? You probably ought to be thankful that we don't live in one of the battleground states where the political ads are even more prevalent, but we are certainly getting our share.

And what Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are essentially saying to every voting American is, "I am the one who is best qualified to be your leader. Follow me and you will receive protection. Follow me and you will receive provision. I will take you and I will take us to a better place. All you have to do is choose me."

Well, on the one hand aren't you glad that we have the privilege to choose our leaders? Thank the Lord for the freedoms that we have in our country. And while the debates will be vigorous and the process tiresome, at least we are able to choose. And then in just a few weeks now we will have a free and a fair election and hopefully we won't have to do deal with any hanging chads. Do you remember that? And then after that there will be an inauguration ceremony where our president will be sworn in for the next four years of office. And the way that event, that inauguration, the way that is organized and carried out will say a lot about the kind of leader that we have selected, about how much money is spent, the kind of entertainment, the inaugural address. You can tell a lot about a leader by how he rides into town, so to speak.

Ken Hughes illustrated that idea well in his commentary on the gospel of Luke. On December fourth, 1977 in Bangui, capital of the Central African Empire, the world press witnessed the coronation of his imperial majesty Bokassa I. The price tag for that single event, designed and choreographed by French designers Albert Brice was 25 million dollars. at 10:10 AM that morning the blare of trumpets and the role of drums announced the approach of his majesty. The procession began with eight of Bokassa's 29 official children parading down the royal carpet to their seats. They were followed by Jean Bokassa II heir to the throne dressed in a white admirals uniform with gold braid. He was seated on a red pillow to the left of the throne. Catherine followed, the favorite of Bokassa's nine wives. She was wearing a 73,000 dollar gown made by of Paris strewn with pearls she had picked out herself.

The emperor arrived in an imperial coach bedecked with golden eagles and drawn by six matched Anglo Norman horses. When the marine band blared the sacred march of his majesty Emperor Bokassa I his highness strode forth cloaked in 32 pound robe decorated with 785,000 strewn pearls and gold embroidery. White gloves adorned his hands, pearl slippers his feet. On his brow he wore a gold crown of laurel wreaths like those worn by Roman counsels of {?} symbol of the favor of the gods.

As the sacred march came to a conclusion Bokassa seated himself on his two and a half million dollar eagle throne, took his gold floral wreath off as Napoleon 173 years before had done, took his two and a half million dollar crown that was topped with an 80 carat diamond and placed it upon his own head. At 10:43 AM, December fourth, 1977, the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a new emperor.

That is quite an inauguration, wasn't it? By the way, Bokassa's reign only lasted two years. He was overthrown in a coup after having 200 children murdered when their parents complained about the price of their school uniforms. Maybe he should have spent less on the coronation, just saying.

Do you know that the Bible specifically predicts the inauguration of the Messiah? Did you know that? In fact, 700 years before it occurred, the prophet Zechariah said this.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

I wonder if that inauguration ever occurred, at least on some way, shape or form. What an odd way to predict that a king would be inaugurated. I wonder if that ever happened. And I wonder what that tells us about selecting the right king.

With that in mind, please open your Bible this morning to Luke chapter 19. And if you don't have a Bible with you, just pull out that one from under the chair in front of you and turn to the back section, to the New Testament, to page 64. That will bring you to Luke chapter 19 this morning.

Now our church's theme this year is building core strength. And a verse we reminded ourselves of over and over is this one from Psalm 138:3. I hope this is becoming more and more true of you every day. Every week I hope this is becoming more and more of you. This is what it is like.

“On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Zechariah 9:9-10.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 138:3.

That is what we are talking about this year. I hope that is also true of our church. And, friends, selecting the right king is going to have a dramatic impact on whether that is going to be true.

See, our presidential candidates are saying, "I am strong. If you follow me, we will all be stronger together."

And Bokassa I spent all that money his nation surely didn't have to waste, because he wanted to create the illusion of strength. Well, the Messiah, the one prophesied in the Old Testament would cut off the bow of war and speak peace to the nations whose dominion would be from sea to sea.... there is always a relationship between being strong—is that what you want to be? Is that what you want our church to be? There is always a relationship between being strong and having chosen the right king and joyfully following him. Keep that in mind as we read is passage together.

I am in Luke 19 beginning at verse 29.

After He had said these things, He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it.'" So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them.

As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

They said, "The Lord has need of it."

They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it. As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road. 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, shouting: "BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

Jesus entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling, saying to them, "It is written, 'AND MY HOUSE SHALL BE A HOUSE OF PRAYER,' but you have made it a ROBBERS' DEN." And He was teaching daily in the temple; but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him, and they could not find anything that they might do, for all the people were hanging on to every word He said.

On one of the days while He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders confronted Him, and they spoke, saying to Him, "Tell us by what authority You are doing these things, or who is the one who gave You this authority?"

Jesus answered and said to them, "I will also ask you a question, and you tell Me: Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?"

They reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." So they answered that they did not know where it came from.

And Jesus said to them, "Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

And He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey for a long time. At the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, so that they would give him some of the produce of the vineyard; but the vine-growers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. And he proceeded to send another slave; and they beat him also and treated him shamefully and sent him away empty-handed. And he proceeded to send a third; and this one also they wounded and cast out. The owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' But when the vine-growers saw him, they reasoned with one another, saying, 'This is the heir; let us kill him so that the inheritance will be ours.' So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What, then, will the owner of the

vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these vine-growers and will give the vineyard to others." When they heard it, they said, "May it never be!" But Jesus looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."<sup>3</sup>

We are talking this morning about strength of choosing the right king. And with the time we have remaining this morning let's organize is passage around three reasons to follow the lordship of Christ, the strength of choosing the right king.

First of all, Jesus has offered to be your king. I mean, fundamentally, every person in this room has to decide who are you going to choose to be in charge of your life. Friends, the results of that choice are going to be reflected in the way you live every day. That is not an overstatement at all. For example, as soon as you wake up, your mind starts working. And I know you might say, "Well, not until I have my first cup of coffee, it doesn't." Well, I didn't say it starts working well. I just said it starts working. And do you realize the content of those thoughts is a reflection of who is in charge of your life and where you are going to seek provision that day and where you are going to seek protection that day and where you are going to seek satisfaction and joy that day and where you are going to seek direction that day. And that at some point, depending on your marital and family status, you are going to start running into people and the nature of those interactions will reveal volumes about the identity of your functional king who is both guiding and empowering the way you relate to the other people in your life. Then it won't be long until you face temptation. If you haven't already at that point in the day, you will. And whether or not you stand firm or give in is going to say a lot about the identity of our functional king.

You can literally think through every detail of every day and see this issue being played out in hundreds and hundreds of ways and choose your king wisely.

Well, what are some of the reasons in this text why you have opted to choose to follow the lordship of Christ. And here is one reason, because he is a King who knows the future.

He tells two of his disciples:

"Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it.'"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Luke 19:28—20:18.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 19:30-31.

And what happens? The two men obediently go. They do what Jesus said, though it sounds a little odd. How would he know that? And the events unfold exactly the way the King had predicted.

Friends, that is somebody worth following, a King who knows the future, a King who has your eternity in your hands.

Can you imagine if Barack Obama or Mitt Romney had clearly demonstrated in the past four years or whatever time frame you want to use that they knew the future, that they knew exactly what the unemployment rate would be today or exactly what a gallon of gas would cost today or exactly what was going to be happening in Afghanistan or Iran or Syria or you pick the hot spot. There would not be any question about who was going to win the next election. We would all say, "That is the guy we want to follow."

And this passage demonstrates yet again Jesus is a king who knows the future. And no one else and nothing else could possibly make that claim. You can trust him with your eternal destiny.

Last week I mentioned the article that was in Sunday's newspaper about our school's athletic program and I just continue to marvel at the clarity with which our coaches and young people spoke about the centrality of our school's mission—to develop lives that are truly Christ centered. And I really like the way that article ended. It was with a quote from a young lady, Muriel Netherton who is a junior who plays on our girl's soccer team. And here is what she said to our community. I absolutely love it when a teenager talks like this. She said, "We want to win. We want to be competitive. We want to have good programs and stuff." That is the way high school girls says that. "And good programs and stuff, but it is only for this life." Did you hear that? "It is only for this life. From our perspective, we have eternity in mind so that takes precedence. We want to be competitive. We want to honor God in that way, to try our hardest, but we also want to be a witness, because that is what really counts, that is what really matters in the end."

How can you have a teenager talking about that, about having eternity in mind, about what really matters in the end? It is when she is following a king whom she honestly believes knows the future. She has taken Jesus up on the offer to be her king. Way to go, Muriel, huh?

He is also a king whose divinity is unquestionable. I think the details of this passage just take our breath away. And they ought to bolster our faith. And when you look at what is going on around this world... As Titus prayed, another young man from this community lost his life in a field of battle this week in order to promote and protect our freedom. This is a dangerous place and I realize events like that impact families in this church directly. And you look at the fact that one of our ambassadors is killed, one of our country's ambassadors was killed in a foreign country. It is amazing how dangerous this world is and how shaky peace is. And choosing the right king is more important today than ever. And this passage is filled with reasons to make Jesus your king.

Earlier I mentioned Zechariah 9:9. I mean, who would have predicted this?

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble.”<sup>5</sup>

What kind of king is that? Who would have predicted that? He is mounted on a donkey. Say what? Even on a colt, the fall of a donkey. And yet the people who were present in Luke chapter 19 they had no trouble making the connection between what had been specifically prophesied hundreds and hundreds of years before it occurred and what was taking place on this particular day. This is the Son of God. This the rightful Messiah. This is the one who deserves to be my king, because even the details of his life are being fulfilled though they were predicted hundreds of years before, right now before my eyes in living Technicolor. Who else could you say that about?

I realize you may be attending our church right now and be somewhat skeptical about the claims of Christ on your life. And that is fine. I mean, we would assume that when someone is beginning to investigate the Word and beginning to think all this through, I hope you will ask serious questions. I hope that you will understand that this is a significant decision that needs to be made carefully.

Well, this passage gives you wonderful reasons to believe. I mean, if Jesus Christ is not the divine Son of God, how else can we explain these explicitly fulfilled prophecies? We don't have time to talk about all of them, but another very important Old Testament passage is Daniel chapter nine verse 25.

“So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem...”<sup>6</sup>

We know exactly who made that decree and we know exactly when that was done.

“... until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.”<sup>7</sup>

How many is that? Seven and 62, do your math, 69 weeks.

“...it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off...”<sup>8</sup>

Who would have ever predicted that about the Messiah, that he is going to be cut off. What does that mean?

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<sup>5</sup> Zechariah 9:9.

<sup>6</sup> Daniel 9:25.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel 9:25-26.

“...and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.”<sup>9</sup>

Daniel was speaking about weeks in terms of periods of seven years. And so Scripture taught that 69 weeks—or do the math, 483 years later—after the Persian king Artaxerxes decreed to rebuild Jerusalem, the Messiah would be cut off and have nothing. And what is about to happen to Jerusalem or to Jesus in these days are going to fulfill that prophecy perfectly.

The people who were there begin quoting from Psalm 118, one of the most significant messianic psalms in the entire Bible quoted in the New Testament more than any other psalm.

“BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.”<sup>10</sup>

They knew that that psalm was talking about the Messiah and that is why they were quoting it on this particular day, because they saw him as their rightful king.

This act of laying down their coats or from other gospel accounts waving their palm branches, were all Old Testament references to the coming of the Messiah. And I realize we in America in this culture might not be able to connect the dots all that well. I could tell you the religious leaders of the day, they were on it like right now. They understood exactly what Jesus was saying. They understood exactly what that band of disciples were saying about his coming kingship in complete fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and promises about the Messiah which is why the Pharisees told Jesus to tell his disciples what? Shut them up. Stop them from saying that.

And what did Jesus say back? “Even if I could shut them up, the rocks would start crying out. Even a rock gets this and can connect these dots.”

Our King’s deity is proven by the way the details of his birth, his life, his death and his resurrection perfectly fulfill Old Testament prophecy. If there has never been a time in our life where you trusted Christ as Savior and Lord, where you accepted him as the one who is capable of paying for your sin and the king who is willing and able and qualified to take charge of your life, I would encourage you to do that today.

He is also a king whose provision is marvelous.

Do you remember? Go back to Christmas. I know it is hard to think about Christmas at this time of year. But think about Christmas. What was it that the angel said on Christmas night?

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<sup>9</sup> Daniel 9:26.

<sup>10</sup> Luke 19:38.



“Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”<sup>11</sup>

And now that concept has come around full circle to the point that his followers could not help but say:

"BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"<sup>12</sup>

And I understand that not everybody on that particular day who was saying that fully understood the import of their words, because some of them would later turn on Jesus. But there was certainly a committed band of people who believed this and they were seeking to find their peace in their king. And every time you and I find peace in Christ in the midst of trying times—and I know that many of you did that specifically this week—you were saying that you chose the right king.

Now it is important to know from Luke one and his friend Theophilus to also understand how Jesus is qualified to be your king. And so he picks out three specific instances that occurred during this particular period of time, just to speak to the issue of Jesus' qualifications. One of the reasons he is qualified to be your king is because of this marvelous compassion. Even though the Pharisees are mocking him out on behalf, officially, of the nation of Israel, they had clearly rejected Christ as their king. The Bible tells us that when he approached Jerusalem he still saw the city and he what? He wept over it. He had marvelous compassion. He wasn't a king who selfishly orchestrated a 25 million dollar coronation ceremony. Nor did he come to crush his enemies and consolidate his power. He is a compassionate king. He saw the city and he wept over it. That is why, by the way, many people in this room have chosen to become followers of Christ. That is why many people in this room have sought to follow the lordship of Jesus even this past week in their life, because they have never gotten over the fact that Jesus loves them. And one of the first verses many of us learn from the Bible is:

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”<sup>13</sup>

One of the first songs some of us learned in Sunday school long, long ago:

Jesus loves me, this I know.

You feel like kind of belting that one out? I do, too, but I am going to spare you.

And when you couple that—put these two ideas together that we have been talking about, the fact that Jesus is omniscient, the fact that he is all knowing meaning he knows everything you have done in the past. Quit trying to hide it. He knows everything you

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<sup>11</sup> Luke 2:14.

<sup>12</sup> Luke 19:38.

<sup>13</sup> John 3:16.

have done in the past. He knows everything you are going to do today and he knows everything that you are going to do in the future and he still loves you. That is one really amazing thing. He is willing to provide for us, because that is what kings do. He is willing to protect us because that is what kings do. Not because of who we are, but in spite of who we are. He gets to Jerusalem and he weeps over it. Don't you want to join this throng who said:

"BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD."?<sup>14</sup>

We had a great commissioning service last Sunday night for Corbett and Kelly White. Corbett is one of our seminary students and Corbett and Kelly have surrendered their lives to missionary service and we have the privilege of being the commissioning church for them. They are on their way as missionaries to Germany. What in the world would motivate two young people to give up their lives and go to a poor country, away from their family, away from their friends, away from everything that is familiar to them in order to be a missionary in Germany? Here is the answer, because they have never gotten over the fact that the king loves them. And they want to share the love of Christ with other people who might not yet know him. And they want to give their lives to that.

You say, "But aren't they worried about provision?"

No, because they have the right king. Aren't they worried about their safety in a foreign country where there are so many things going on that are anti American and anti Christ? No, because they have decided that the safest place in all the world is the center of the will of God. And they have chosen Jesus as their king. And now they are going to joyfully follow him exactly where they believe he is leading.

I had the opportunity last Sunday night to chat a little bit after the service with Corbett's parents, dear people who are members over at Covenant. We were talking a little bit, because, you understand when parents have kids who go off as missionaries those parents are sacrificing, too. The brothers and sisters are sacrificing, too. It is a family affair for sure. And I have talked with them about that a little bit. And what he said was, "Listen. We are just delighted that our kids love Jesus. We are just delighted that they want to follow him. And if they are following Jesus, they are following him to a good place. And we are going to rejoice in that and, sure, there will be some things that are hard."

And I was quipping with him later. I said, "You know what? I guess it is better to have a son who is across the ocean following Jesus than to have a son who lives right next to you who is a fool and who has rejected Christ."

And I am not saying, by the way, those are the only two options, but I can understand a father and who understands that, yes. It is going to be hard for my kids to live that way, but their King will provide for them. And I am so glad that my kids want to dedicate their lives to telling others about a King who loves them.

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<sup>14</sup> Luke 19:38.

He is also qualified to be your king because of his principle purity. Please put these two ideas together. This is very, very important. And Luke doesn't devote as much space to this event as some of the other writers of gospel, but he wants to be sure that we understand that as our king, yes, Jesus values love, but he also values purity. That is why he cleansed the temple. He said:

“MY HOUSE SHALL BE A HOUSE OF PRAYER,’ but you have made it a ROBBERS’ DEN.”<sup>15</sup>

And what was especially upsetting to Christ was that the temple was supposed to be a place where people could come and be connected to God through prayer and sacrifice and study. And some, who purported to represent God were, instead, charging exorbitant exchange rates in order to make money in the process. And that, too, illustrates why many here would say, “I want Jesus to be my King,” because there is this perfect balance between truth and love. And I want Jesus to be in charge of my life.

Many of you are probably thinking already about a verse in Scripture that calls upon those of us who have said that Jesus is our King to try to live with that perfect balance.

“...but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body...”<sup>16</sup>

All of us, we care about truth, we care about purity. We don't want to say we are representing God. And when people from our community come they get something other than that. We care about truth. And we are going to follow it even when we don't feel like it. We are going to follow it even when we don't like it, because we have decided that Jesus Christ is our King.

“...even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”<sup>17</sup>

We have all sorts of people here today who could say there were specific times this past week where I chose to tell the truth not because it was easy, not because there wouldn't be any consequences if I did so, but because Jesus Christ is my king. And if he values purity like this, if he values truth, I want to as well.

Others can say there were times this week when I wanted to be unloving, but I held my tongue, because I have surrendered my tongue to my King.

There is others who would say, well, it is hard to know the balance. In the middle of a situation if I am in some sort of a tussle with another individual, should I be focusing on truth or should I be focusing on love? What exactly is the balance in the middle of that

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<sup>15</sup> Luke 19:46.

<sup>16</sup> Ephesians 4:15-16.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

situation? And for many of us we would also say: When I am not sure, I run to the King and I cry out to him humbly, “I don’t know exactly what ought to be said. I don’t know what exactly ought to be done. So, King, Jesus, please lead me. Please guide me. Please empower me. Please endow me with wisdom so that I can strike the proper balance between these areas.”

I would ask you this morning who is your king. And when it comes to the day to day choices that you make, is it clear to those around you that Christ is in charge of your life?

He is also qualified because of his powerful teaching. The third little vignette is all about teaching.

And He was teaching daily in the temple; but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him, and they could not find anything that they might do, for all the people were hanging on to every word He said.<sup>18</sup>

Can you imagine that level of scrutiny. Yet they couldn’t find any way to undermine his teaching. And that is because the teaching of our King has the ability to change another person’s life. That is why Jesus would pray before going to the cross, “Sanctify them, change them.” The King can change us.

“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”<sup>19</sup>

We had a couple of great examples of that last Sunday night as well when David {?} one of our church members who just won a gold and bronze medal in the Olympics and Adam {?} his coach and also a coach of the diving team over at Purdue, both of them members of our church gave their testimonies last Sunday night. It was wonderful.

I want to repeat some of what they said. I realize that many of you weren’t there to hear it. And even for those of us who were, it has helped me just to remind myself of what they said.

Adam started. And he said, “I have come to believe that the most powerful, awe inspiring, exhilarating event that makes God and his grace shine the brightest is not in winning an Olympic gold medal.”

Don’t you it when a coach would say that? “I don’t believe that God’s glory and greatness is most visible in beating the unbeatable Chinese on the biggest stage in the world, but rather God’s magnitude and strength and supreme power is most visible in a changed life. Upon reflection of all that has happened not just in the past month at the Olympic games, but in the past four years, it leads me to a whirlwind of thoughts, memories and emotions primarily regarding the gospel and God’s grace in changing lives including mine.

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<sup>18</sup> Luke 19:47-48.

<sup>19</sup> John 17:17.

“About three years ago my wife and I were approached to serve in the college ministry. It was a natural fit for {?} and me because of my job as the Purdue diving coach. What I didn’t expect was how much joy and growth I would experience in investing in the lives of others.

“For me, my full time job is a diving coach, but my calling is to live out the gospel and invest it in others 24/7.”

There is someone who understands who his King is.

“Therefore I am not a diving coach who happens to be a Christian, but rather I am a Christian who happens to be a diving coach. In a society that idolizes athletes, the sporting world can become very dark. At some point in time, student athletes who are living for the wrong things often despair and engage in destructive lifestyles when they experience the severe mercy of dissatisfaction. As I served in the college ministry, I began to realize how much I didn’t know about helping students. I took the counseling training as well as sitting under pastor Oakland’s teaching on discipleship. {?} and I began to pour our lives and gospel into many students God brought our way.

“One of the first to respond to the gospel was David. When one looks at David and sees all that this young man has accomplished and done, I believe that God is most glorified in how he has taken a life of total despair and darkness and self and how his grace has turned it into a life of growth, love and joy. That is what is amazing about this story and that is how I believe that God’s glory is most visible to a dying world around and in us.”

Aren’t you glad for a diving coach? Aren’t you glad for a member of our church who has clearly figured out who his King should be and is looking for opportunities every day to demonstrate his allegiance to the king?

And I would encourage you to be thinking about the platform that God has given you of influence and ministry. And is it as equally apparent that Jesus has first place?

And then David came up and he said, “Through Adam’s faithful friendship I came to know Christ.”

I love that sentence. I love that.

“I began to be disciplined in my walk with Christ. I also sought out biblical counseling here at Faith. Slowly and not always consistently, I began to live and realize my purpose for God was to love others and love him, not living for my purpose or my fame or my pleasure. That was the biggest mistake I had made in 2008 at the Beijing Olympics. Over the last four years I have had my spiritual peaks and valleys. This summer, knowing what I was going to be facing at the Olympic games, I really wanted to grow in trusting God’s plan for me.”

That is his King.

“God did not promise me a gold medal. But he did promise me that whatever happens he is working for my good and his glory. From an athletes perspective I love this part. The Olympics are the highest pinnacle in an athlete’s career. Athletes train their entire lives for these two weeks. Specifically in the sport of diving and my event in particular, the Olympic games boils down to a whopping 8.52 seconds. A diver performs six dives in competition format. A dive takes approximately 1.42 seconds. So that means I spent four to five hours a day, five to six days a week at approximately 300 days a year training for 8.52 seconds. That just seems wrong to me. Talk about pressure. And on top of the pressure add the fact that millions of people are watching those 8.52 seconds. Talk about anxiety. To add even more to that, expectations to perform are high because of the amount of work put into training. Talk about worry. But where does Jesus fit in to all of this?

“Christ is the entire reason. Before I could truly believe in God’s sovereignty over my life, I had to first acknowledge the reason that my existence was for him and from him and believe and trust in the truth from his Word. The Bible is a story about true perfection in Jesus. My response of anxiety, stress, fear, nervousness and exhaustion over the things of this world and the praise of man are precisely the reason that Jesus was nailed to the cross.

“Christ lived a perfect life. He gave himself up for me so that I could be free from the bondage of exalting myself in those moments. Jesus took the rebellious responses of doubt, fear and anxiety and absorbed it all into himself to break the chains of my slavery and call him Lord of my life and ultimately take the focus off of myself and put him on the throne who has redeemed me from eternal destruction.

“They Olympic games provided many opportunities for me to hold captive my thoughts and to turn them into truth.”

Friends, that is exactly what we are talking about this morning, believing that Jesus is qualified to be your King and finding ways to put that into practice every day.

Well, I don’t really even have time to do anything other than take a whack at this parable, but it teaches, in essence, Jesus ought to be your king. There is a story about a man who planted a vineyard and rented it out to vine growers and went on a journey for a long time. And the scandal was that the owner sent three different slaves to receive a portion of the crop and every time the vine growers beat them and sent them away empty handed, just like the vineyard belonged to them and they didn’t want a king.

And finally the owner of the vineyard said, “What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Perhaps they will respect him.”

And as I pointed out as we were reading, that is what this entire message is about. Are we going to joyfully submit to our king because we respect him?

And I want to encourage you to look for opportunities this week. Sure there will be tough times. Sure our emotions will be raging about all sorts of things. No question about it. But are we going to respect Christ as our rightful King and build our life on his cornerstone? And when we choose to do that we are going to find peace in the middle of it and we will be a bright light to a lost and dying world.