

It Is Written

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HE MUST REIGN!

By Ken Green

“For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet” (I Cor. 15:25).

What an awesome text! It demands the “Hallelujah Chorus” to even begin to do it justice. It declares most obviously that Jesus reigns now. Most people think of His reign only in terms of the future. But He reigns! And He shall continue to reign until all enemies are conquered, diminished, and removed.

But when we consider the condition of creation and the rebellion of humanity, the crown of His creative and redeeming work, we are moved to ask: in what manner and by what means does Jesus reign?

HE REIGNS THROUGH THE UNIQUENESS OF HIS MESSAGE.

As we reflect upon history it appears that ideas rule the world. Basically, there are not many ideas that have reigned in the societies, cultures, and governments of the earth. There are only a few with minor variations that have captured and continue to capture the imaginations of mankind.

The message of divine atonement for sin is unique. It is incomparable. It goes down to the deepest roots of human need. It has changed the cannibal. It has renewed the prodigal. It has subdued the rebel. It pierces the heart, finds its path into the guilty conscience, and sheds the light of pardon and peace that passes understanding. No music is so sweet and no power so mighty as the message of the gospel: “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

The world is full of messages. Most of them are bad news. The gospel is good news. It proclaims that the God who was dismissed by the human race has returned with an offer of mercy and a determination to save Adam’s seed. This message is far greater than that of the pantheist who speaks of the immanence of Nature. It declares the immanence of grace. It tells us that God has not forsaken us. He wants to help us. It proclaims that there is eternal life. Every other message stops at the grave. The message of Jesus has brought “life and immortality to light.” Death has lost its sting. The grave has lost its victory.

HE REIGNS BECAUSE HE IS THE FIRST PERSON IN HISTORY TO WIN VICTORY OVER DEATH.

He has no rival and no peer. He is the first and, so far, the only, to triumph over the grave. He is “the first fruits of them who have fallen asleep” (I Cor. 15:20). He was not a ghost or phantom who appeared on earth for forty days: “Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have” (Luke 24:39). The events are recorded by intelligent and sober witnesses. All the great advances in science and technology pale in comparison to the resurrection glory of Jesus Christ.

HE REIGNS BY MEANS OF HIS CONTINUED, ALTHOUGH INVISIBLE, PRESENCE IN THE WORLD.

The dead cannot have the influence that He continues to exercise. Our world is dominated by powerful personalities. Many are evil and unworthy as was Hitler, Stalin, Mao. They filled the headlines — until they passed from the scene. Jesus continues to grab the hearts of mankind for He lives and

reigns.

That a high level of morality is possible without faith in the living God and His Son I will not deny. Pagans such as Seneca and Marcus Aurelius with their philosophical virtues readily demonstrate this reality. Yet, such placed beside Paul with His descriptions of the beauties of his new life in Christ, shows that there is no comparison.

No one but Jesus could have fashioned Paul. He said it himself: "It is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me..." (Gal. 2:20). While philosophy has occasionally succeeded in making an admirable moral character of a respectable subject, only Jesus has accomplished such with the lowest and most debased of mankind.

Christ starts the same way with every person. He starts with a new birth. He has not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. He is come to seek and to save that which is lost. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him. This is where He reigns supreme.

Is He successful? John says it is a multitude which no man can number, out of all tribes and peoples and nations and languages. Can any power on earth match that? Where can human ideas and philosophies produce such a multitude whose voices are as the sound of many waters?

The message and operation of Jesus Christ is the one thing that has remained triumphantly unchanged throughout the years and centuries. It has never needed to be remodeled or updated. The old story of the cross is still the same blessed story. Nothing has ever been repeated so often and so long.

Since it was first proclaimed, human theories of all kinds have undergone mammoth changes. Science has repudiated its dogmatisms. Social and political ideas have evolved and continue to evolve. The world has been trying to make all things new but can never quite find the answer.

God's answer has never changed. It is the same message. It stands alone and unique. Jesus is King. He reigns. Men have tried to change the message rather than letting it change them.

Jesus must reign to the end. He came once. He is coming again. He has pledged Himself to complete the work of redemption. All the world shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory. It will complete the triumph of His reign. "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ" (Rev. 11:15).

A Difficult Commandment

By Kyle Campbell

The recent actions of a friend got me to thinking about a difficult commandment. This person is divorced and has started dating someone. The circumstances of the divorce, to my knowledge, do not follow the instructions of Matthew 19:9 ("And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."). If this person remarries (and about 75% of people do), the Bible says they would be condemned unless they repent.

This breaks my heart, for my love for them is as strong as any of my friends. The disciples remarked that this commandment was difficult in vs. 10: "His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." Jesus went on to say that some will have to make themselves "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." They will have to live a celibate life or be reconciled to their mate (1 Corinthians 7:10-11). If they do not, they would be in adultery (Romans 7:2-3). With these admittedly difficult commandments, the Lord reinforced the sanctity and importance of the marriage vows. Choose your mate carefully, and work tirelessly to make your marriage strong and permanent!