

Jesus is King (Luke 1:32-33)

Big Idea: Jesus is the promised King who is the culmination of God's plan to set this world right.

Think back over the past year. By the time we reach 11:59:59 p.m. on December 31, you will have lived almost 9,000 hours this year, over half a million minutes. And yet for most of us, this past year will be remembered by just a few minutes, the one or two big things that happened: a birth, a loss, a milestone event, a key memory that will be remembered after the rest of the year has been forgotten.

That's how it is. You and I have collectively lived a lot of years now, but a few moments really matter. A few moments bubble to the top as more significant than all the rest.

The Promised King

That's how it is in history too. Some events, some milestones matter more than others. One of them is found in 2 Samuel 7:8-16, in which God says to David:

And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth ... And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever. (2 Samuel 7: 9, 16)

This is called the Davidic covenant. In the history of God's dealings with humanity, he made a few key covenants:

- a covenant of creation with Adam
- a covenant of preservation with Noah
- a covenant of promise with Abraham
- a covenant of law with Moses
- and, as we're going to see with David today, a covenant of kingdom

Somebody calls them God's self-written job descriptions.

When God makes a covenant he reveals his own job description and signs it. In almost every case he comes to the covenant partner, lays his job description out and says, "This is how I will work for you with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my strength if you will love me as I am, cleave to me, and trust me to keep my word. ([John Piper](#))"

This is one of those key moments. If you were to trace the history of God's dealings with humanity, you'd have to include this as a key moment. This is one of the most important passages in the whole Bible. It includes a number of provisions, including that David's house, throne, and kingdom would be established forever. David wanted to build God a house, but instead God says that he will build David a house that will last forever.

Why is this moment so important? Because the whole theme of the Bible is God making a promise. We made a mess of this world, and the whole theme of Scripture is about God's promise to create a people for himself. God refused to write all of humanity off. In Genesis 12, God appears to Abraham and launches a plan to reverse all that has gone wrong in the world since he expelled Adam and Eve from Eden. Adam and Eve's disobedience brought sin and chaos to the world; God promises to bring blessing to the world through Abraham.

As the Bible unfolds, God keeps this promise. He creates a nation from Abraham. And his promise to David is a key part of God keeping that promise. The promise that God made to Abraham becomes even clearer as we read his promise to David. How would God bless the world? He would create a kingdom, with a good king, and that kingdom would last forever.

- God promised to make Abraham's name great. Now he promises to make David's name great.
- He gives them a place. "And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them..." (2 Samuel 7:10)
- He gives them peace. "...so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies" (2 Samuel 7:10-11)
- Best of all, he promises a royal household that will never end. "And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever" (2 Samuel 7:16).

God's promise to David is a key part of God unfolding his plan for the rescue of the entire world. You can understand how upsetting it was, therefore, when there was no longer a king on the throne after 587 BC. The people were scattered. Even when people came back from exile, there was no king. There were minor governors, there were various priests, but no king to fulfill God's promise.

And to be honest, even before 587 BC the kings were a bit of a disappointment. Whoever said "All power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely" was right. A king with too much power becomes a tyrant. The kings from David and Solomon

down proved to be a disappointment. They ended up with a bunch of defective kings and then no king.

So people were disappointed. They kept track, though. They knew who descended from what line. The first-century historian Josephus talks about the careful records maintained in the temple. They kept looking for the fulfillment of God's promise. The prophets kept talking about the fulfillment of this Davidic promise, though. They kept talking about a king who would come who would not disappoint. For instance:

*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.
(Isaiah 9:6-7)*

That's just one example. There's Jeremiah 23:5, Ezekiel 37:24-28, Hosea 3:4-5, Amos 9:10-11. I don't expect you to remember all those. I just want to highlight the importance of God's promise to David.

Why? Because it's how God promised to restore the world. It's part of God keeping his word to set this world to what it should be.

Jesus the King

And so when an angel appears to Mary and says the following, it's a big deal:

...you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. (Luke 1:31-33)

You know the genealogy – the part that we think is boring, “the son of so-and-so, the son of so-and so...” It's there as part of Jesus' credentials: he comes from the line of David. When the angel says that Jesus is going to reign on the throne of David forever, he's saying that Jesus is the King that everyone's been waiting for. When the angels announce in Luke 2, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord,” they're signaling who Jesus is: born in David's city, and Christ – which means anointed King – and Lord.

But this King is different – not a king who is corrupt, a king who's a tyrant. He's a King who knows everything, a King who's perfectly just, a King who can never be deceived, a King who transforms men and women by his grace, a King who lays down his life before being raised in victory.

This has got to be one of the biggest hyperlinks in the Christmas story: the promised King has come. The next part of God's promise to set this world right is being fulfilled. Jesus is King.

So What?

What does this mean for us? What difference does it make that Jesus is the long-promised King?

There are lots of things we could say, but let's stick to three.

We can be confident.

I know someone who says a phrase I love: "God is on his throne, everything is going his way, and he loves me."

Think about this. As David McLemore [writes](#):

- **"God is on his throne"** means a King is ruling and reigning. He is immovable and irreplaceable with glory and honor. We are not left alone. Despite what we may be tempted to think, this world has order and meaning. Everything matters—even what you're enduring right now.
- **"Everything is going his way"** means nothing is surprising to God. Nothing is outside of his control. History may be long and bloody, your life may be filled with suffering and tears, but it all bends toward restoration and redemption. We can trust his hand because we've seen his heart.

- **"And he loves me"** means our King cares. He will never leave us nor forsake us. He will be with us always, until the end of the age. When we're not sure what to make of what we're facing, this truth re-centers us on the gospel. Jesus died to have us. God loves you...

I love this. There's no other King like him – a King who dies, a King who comes to serve, and yet make no mistake about it, a King who reigns.

In a world that seems out of control, we can have great confidence because there is a King on the throne, everything is going his way, and he loves me.

But here's the second application.

We must submit and obey.

We tend to think of Christianity as a lifestyle choice. It's not. If Jesus is King, Christianity is about bowing before our King in unconditional surrender.

If you're a Christian on your own terms, you may not be a Christian. If you try Christianity but you have some non-negotiable, some areas in which you won't submit, you haven't really understood what Christianity is all about.

Everybody serves something. Our natural inclination is to stay on the throne of our lives. The hardest thing is to bow the knee before Jesus. If he's the King, he calls for our unconditional obedience. He's not King over part of our lives; he is King over everything, and he demands our all.

The mission of the church today is to submit ourselves to the Son of David who right now rules invisibly from heaven until he puts every enemy under his feet. And our mission is to announce the good news to people in every neighborhood and every nation that they can be happy subjects of Christ's kingdom for-

ever if they transfer their allegiance from the kingdom of this world to the kingdom of Christ. ([John Piper](#))

Finally, long for his Kingdom.

Revelation 11:15 says, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” And if that’s not good enough, Revelation 22:5 says that believers will participate in his eternal reign. “They will reign forever and ever.” Staggering. We’ll get to reign with him.

That’s why Jesus taught us to pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). I can’t wait for that day!

Jesus is the promised King who is the culmination of God’s plan to set this world right. So be confident: God is on his throne, everything is going his way, and he loves me. Obey him. And long for his kingdom.