

WHAT HAS THIS KING DONE?

Christ the King – Nov 25, 2018

John 18:33-37 Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?" "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?" Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Dear Christian Friends:

Have you ever heard of King Childebert III? No? How about King Dagobert II or Thierry IV? No? Well, surely you have heard of Chiladeric III. No? Well, no surprise. These kings were the last of the Merovingian dynasty of France. They lived from around the year 700. Historians have given these kings the name, "The Do-Nothing Kings." That's because they were kings in name only. They did no real ruling, governing, or commanding. These kings did nothing of any historical significance.

Today we observe the festival of Christ the King. Our gospel lesson shows us Jesus on trial before the Roman governor of Palestine. During a private interview with Jesus, Pilate asks Jesus, **What is it you have done?**

In a way we could answer Pilate's question by comparing Jesus to those "Do-Nothing" kings. Jesus did nothing that a king normally does. Jesus did not rule a physical territory. Jesus did not run a government. Jesus did not command an army. Jesus did nothing to challenge the Roman government.

But on the other hand, Jesus is not a "Do-Nothing" King. Jesus did everything. That is, Jesus did everything in obedience to his heavenly Father's plan of salvation. Jesus did everything to rescue us from the curse of sin, the doom of death and the clench of Satan. So, on this Christ the King

celebration we ask a similar question to Pilate's. **WHAT HAS THIS KING DONE?** And the answer? Jesus has done everything to be my glorious King, my loving Savior, and my eternal God.

Now, back to how Jesus did nothing wrong—we see that in our text. **Pilate...summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"** "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?" "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

Pontius Pilate was frustrated. He knew Jesus did nothing wrong. But his hands were tied. The Jewish leaders wanted Jesus dead. Pilate did not understand why. But Pilate knew that if he did not do what the Jewish mob wanted, then there would be riots. Then there would be rebellion. A rebellion meant no taxes going to Rome. No taxes going to Rome meant the end of Pilate's career, and maybe even the end of his life. And saving his own life was more important to Pilate than convicting Jesus--a man, that Pilate knew, had done nothing wrong.

Of course, Pilate wasn't the only one who knew that Jesus did nothing wrong. God, the Father, knew this. God has let us know this, too. It says in the book of Hebrews, **For we do not have a high priest (*That is, Jesus. Besides being our King, he is also our Great High Priest.*) who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.**

So, we have a perfect, sinless and holy King. Christ's heavenly approval rating is always one hundred percent. The opinion poll of God, the Father, always rates Jesus as perfect.

So, Jesus is the perfect, sinless King. Therefore, we can be sure of one great fact. Jesus has the power to be our true King. Now, a King's job is to bring prosperity to his people and to protect his people from their enemies. In his interview with Pontius Pilate, this perfect King shows us how he does both those kingly duties. Jesus says, **"My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."**

Christ's Kingdom is not of this world. Just think what that means. Just think about all the terrible things that worldly nations have to deal with. The nations of this world have to struggle with crime and pollution, corrupt politicians and international espionage. The nations of this world have to balance huge budgets with limited resources. They have to keep tax rates low but levels of service high. Politicians have to keep the peace at unruly town hall meetings. The nations of this world have to defend against terrorist attacks and rebellious citizens.

But what a difference Christ's Kingdom is. As citizens of Christ's Kingdom you and I joyfully proclaim, "My King can't be bribed. He has absolutely no corruption in his loving government. And my King never practices favoritism. He treats all his citizens with equal love and compassion. So, I enjoy his spiritual health care program for free. I have the privilege of addressing all my problems directly to my King. And he hears me every time I speak to him and he always answers for my benefit. Yes, my gracious King gives me a kingdom unlike any earthly nation. I have immense blessings here on earth. But the greatest blessing waits for me when my King takes me to my real home. In heaven my King will bless me with eternal life, overflowing joy, and endless perfection."

Yes, Christ is the only King who has the power to supply his Kingdom with true prosperity and eternal prosperity. Jesus tells us about his power that is greater than any power ever possessed by any earthly King. Jesus says to Pilate, "**You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.**"

Christ does not rule his Kingdom with law and force. He does not rule his Kingdom with police and deadly power. Christ has something far more powerful. Christ has the power that created the world and the whole universe. Christ has the power that shatters Satan's lies. Christ has the power that conquers death and brings life. Christ has the truth of his Word.

By that Word Christ protects you. By that Word Jesus says to Satan, "Keep away from my brothers and sisters. They are children of my heavenly Father.

I have forgiven their sins. I bought them with my life. So, Satan, stop bothering my heavenly citizens. You have to do what I say, Satan, because I defeated you with a bloody cross and an empty tomb.”

And by his Word Jesus defends us against this sinful world. He proclaims the wisdom of his Word to us. He uses that Word to guide us away from the temptations of the flesh that destroy faith. He instructs us in his Word so that we have the power to say “no” to ungodly behavior and to unchristian attitudes. By his Word Christ preserves us in our faith and in our life.

And by his Word Christ will also guard and defend us against death. On that last, great day Christ will speak to all those who are in their graves. He will say, “Rise from the dead. Come out of your tombs. Gather before my judgment seat.” And then, all the dead will rise. Then Jesus will use his Word to declare you, me, and every believer innocent of all our sins. He will speak his Word and say to us, **‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’** Then you and I will enter into that Kingdom of heaven. We will be favored guests of King Jesus forever.

So, it doesn’t matter if you know the names of the last Merovingian kings of France. It doesn’t even really matter if you know the name, Queen Elizabeth, President Donald Trump, or Governor Scott Walker. But never forget the name of your great King Jesus. Never forget Jesus because he is not a “Do Nothing” king. No, Jesus is a King with real power. He rules a real Kingdom with his Word. He has done great things for you and for your salvation. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, now and forever. AMEN.