

# 'O Worship the King'

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[ 0 : 00 ] Let's pray and ask for God's help as we come to his word. Heavenly Father, as we come to your word, we pray now that you would speak to us.

In one sense, it is a very simple request. And yet we know it is something that we cannot do for ourselves.

To hear Christ speak in his word, we need the power of your Holy Spirit to be with us. To soften hard hearts, to unblock deaf ears.

And so, Heavenly Father, do that work by your Spirit that we might hear Jesus. To behold him in his glory. That we might worship him more and more in our lives.

And we ask it in his name. Amen. Two weeks past Wednesday, I was here working in the office through the way there.

[ 1 : 02 ] And Sarah phoned me to say that she was with her youngest two children walking through Old Aberdeen next to St. Macor Cathedral. And she said two things.

She said, one, there are police everywhere. And there were lots of people dressed very smartly. Do you know what's going on? There are police vans, police dogs.

There were literally police on every corner. What do you think might be happening? Well, I had no idea. And so, Sarah needed to go home from posting the letter or whatever she was doing.

And I was working here. And so it was. But later in the day, Sarah found out about half an hour or so after she was there, the king arrived. The king arrived to the very spot where she'd been about half an hour earlier.

The king arrived and came for some event, whatever he was up for there in St. Macor Cathedral. And what did she think after that, after missing the king by about half an hour?

[ 2 : 01 ] What did I think after that? Wow, I wish I'd been there to see the king. Dear friends, this evening in Psalm 93, the psalmist is inviting us to see the king.

To look at the king. To behold the king. And ultimately to worship the king. Now, just to be clear, not the king of the United Kingdom or any other mere earthly king.

No, our great God, king of all creation. And so that is what the psalmist invites us to do. And that's what he invites us to do right here at the start of the psalm.

If I can put it this way, to have an audience with the king. To have an audience with God and to be invited inside his palace. Not Buckingham Palace, Holyrood or Windsor Palace.

No, but the palace, the courts, the throne room of heaven. And to see God in all his royal splendor and might. Dear friends, we are invited this evening to see the king.

[ 3 : 05 ] And so that takes us to our first point. Our first point there. Because God reigns. Because God is king. And has established the world. Now, you might say, that's a very strange way to start a point, right?

With the word because. What do you mean? Well, I've really done that for two reasons. One is because later in the psalm, verses 3, 4, and 5. We're going to get the implications of God's kingship.

What it means that he reigns and rules. But secondly, I've started the point that way. But because God reigns. Because the reality of God's reign and rule is just taken as a given here in the psalm. How does the psalm open in verse 1? The Lord reigns. It's not a debate. It's not a question. It's not election night with, is it David Dimbleby or whoever it is.

I don't know. Somebody sits up on channel 1 and channel 4. Whatever, right? And you have all these commentators. You can tell I never stay up to watch election results. I don't even know who it is. But it's not an election right now.

[ 4 : 14 ] Someone waiting for the result. No, it is an announcement. A declaration. It is a herald. The Lord reigns. He is king. Now, we live in an age where authority, I would suggest, it is not a popular word or a popular idea.

I think for many people, at least in our Western world, we could say that the motto of our age is, I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul from that poem, *Invictus*.

Maybe some of us here tonight think that. I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul. Maybe some of us think that. Maybe some of our friends or family or classmates or hallmates at uni think that.

But I want to suggest to you to this evening, if that's you or if that's someone you know, not only do we need God's kingship, not only do we need all that we're going to see of God here in this psalm and all through the scriptures, but I want to suggest to you that it is the deepest longing of our hearts that we want this.

That we are made to be ruled by God and there is deep joy and relief in being ruled and knowing that God is my king. Oh, we've suppressed it and turned from it and fled from it.

[ 5 : 34 ] Yes, in our rebellion from God. But when we are called back to God, what joy. This past week, the elders had a meeting on Thursday with some prospective new church members.

And let me tell you, Thursday evening, I'm not an elder, but because I'm training for ministry, I'm kindly invited to be along. Let me tell you, Thursday evening is a highlight of a year, was a highlight of the year.

It was the best. And I know all the elders would agree, it is the biggest privilege to take a front row seat, if you like, to hear people's story about how Jesus has been working in their lives and how they've come to know and follow him.

It is wonderful. But what struck me on Thursday evening, in hearing folks share their stories, that a number of people said, and in their own way and in their own words, but spoke of the relief, the joy, the glory of knowing Jesus as my savior and now as my king.

And so if you're here this evening and you don't know Jesus, he's not your king. And the idea of God as a king over all creation sounds strange and alien.

[ 6 : 49 ] And quite frankly, I don't want to be rid of my autonomy. Thank you very much. Dear friend, let me tell you to come and meet this king this evening. And come and speak to those that you came with or someone on welcome or the door or come and speak to me.

And you will hear of the glorious freedom and joy and life held out to you by this king as you come and bow the knee to him. So dear friends, come and meet this king with me this evening, with the psalmist.

And so with our audience, with the king, what I want us to do at the start is just come and sit with him, look at him, have a look around, see what he's doing, notice some things about him, and then take some implications from there.

So he reigns. But what does the psalmist then tell us first? Well, firstly, something about him. He tells us what he wears. And what does our king wear? Well, what does the psalmist say there in the first verse?

He is robed in majesty. He wears majesty. Now, I want you to note that it's not that his robes or his clothing is majestic.

[ 7 : 53 ] No, it's not like somebody walks into a room and you say, oh, isn't that lovely? No, no, he's wearing majesty. His robes are majesty itself.

So what does that mean to say he's wearing majesty? What does this word majesty mean? Well, what do you think of when we speak of majesty? Often we think of kings and queens, don't we, of great power and splendor and greatness and glory.

There's a gravity. Something in someone's being that says there's something here in this person and in this office that's bigger than me. Bigger than most people, right?

But we don't just call kings and queens majestic, do we? Have you ever stood on a mountain view or seen a glorious sunset and just said, it's majestic?

And what's giving us that idea? The bigness, it's glory, it's power, it's beauty. And dear friends, our God wears that.

[ 8 : 54 ] He's clothed in that forever, dressed in it, never to take it off. But in a way that is so infinitely bigger and more glorious than anything majestic we would see here on this earth.

Yes, the brightness, the glory, the splendor of God's majesty makes the sun look like the wick of a candle that's about to be snuffed out. For you see, the majesty and beauty of kings and queens and sunsets and mountains, it fades.

The sun tips over the edge. The king or queen is laid in a tomb. But God's majesty is eternal and everlasting. For as we're going to see in a moment, God is from everlasting.

It is the sure testimony of the scriptures of God's great majesty and beauty and glory and greatness. What did we read at the start? 1 Chronicles 29, David writes, David sings, Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty.

Psalms 8, the psalmist says, O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. To come before this king is to come before someone where we fall on our faces.

[10:05] We cannot almost but lift our eyes. Think of Isaiah. In Isaiah chapter 6, he sees and comes before God. And what does he say? Woe is me.

So what do we see of our king majesty? Well, what else does he wear? He wears a belt of strength, doesn't he? He is robed. He puts on his belt of strength.

That's our second thing. Now, we could spend a long time thinking about God's omnipotence, his unsurpassed power and strength. But we won't say too much more about that just now because we're going to come back to it when we get to verses 3 and 4.

But just note it. There is none stronger than he. None stronger than he. No, no, his belt. Strength. Well, what else do we notice about this king?

Well, no longer his clothing. But the next thing we go and see is what he is king over, his dominion, right? To be a king is to have a kingdom. So it's like now we're in this audience with the king.

[11:04] And perhaps we're in his palace. And he takes us to a window. And you step out on a balcony. And he points out of the window. And he says, here is my kingdom. And what is his kingdom there in verse 1?

It is the world. It is the world. Yes, the world is established. Really implying he has established it. The king stands there with you on his balcony and says, as far as I can see and beyond, everything is my kingdom.

I'm going to quote the Lion King now, which I really should have re-watched this clip. So if you're a huge Lion King fan, you can come to me later and tell me you got the line all wrong. But I have some vague memory of in the Lion King, the king, is it Mufasa?

He takes Simba. And what does he say as he sits out looking? He says, as far as the light touches or something, that is my kingdom. And well, it's like that here. But God is saying, no, no, not as far as the light touches.

No, it's as far as I can see. But beyond, everything, everything in creation is mine. There was a Dutch prime minister and theologian, Abraham Kuyper.

[12:08] And he said this, there is no square inch of all creation that God does not say mine. Mine. Every square inch of the universe, every atom, particle, blade of grass, every star, every person, everything is under God's ultimate rule.

It is a kingdom with no end. Like a sea without a shore. All kingdoms have borders and ends and walls that sit around them, don't they? Well, not this king.

Everything. The last part of our audience with the king, what does he do? He takes us, if you like, from the balcony window and he takes us to a throne. Right into the throne room of heaven.

And look how great it is. What does he say? Verse 2, your throne is established from of old. You are from everlasting. Now, notice the contrast with the world.

Both are established. The world is established. And God's throne is established. But God's throne is established what? From old. You see, there was a time when the world was not.

[13:11] Genesis 1, God spoke and brought everything into creation. But there was never a time when God was not. Claims to thrones often go back in time, don't they?

Who has the furthest back claim to the throne? Who is the rightful king? Well, God is from everlasting. There can be no other claim to his throne. And so our God reigns.

Dressed in majesty. A belt with strength. A king of all creation. And a throne from everlasting.

Friends, there is none like him. And so, dear friends, how can we come?

How can we come? Think about right now how hard it would be to try and get into Holyrood Palace or to get into Buckingham Palace if the king's in residence. Right?

You can't just walk in. And here we meet a king of all creation and glory and majesty and strength. How can we come to one so glorious? Yes.

[14:15] We can come through his son. Because for a time, the son of God veiled his majesty. It's what we were hearing about this morning, wasn't it?

He veiled his crown of glory in flesh and took on a crown of thorns. A crown of thorns. And humbled himself to death.

Even death on a cross. That's how we can come. He who is majestic. Majesty in every way. In taking on flesh, Isaiah tells us in Isaiah 53.

Became someone who had no majesty about him. To suffer and die that we might save the lost. And with him be raised to glory.

That's how we come. And so, if you don't know this king tonight is your king. There is only one way to come to him. And it is through his son, the Lord Jesus.

[15:11] Come to Jesus. It is only in him that we can approach this king and live and live. But, dear friends, there is one other question to ask before we move on this evening.

And it is worth his asking. And the psalms ask it of us again and again. Indeed, the whole of the scripture does. But it is how big is our God? How big is God to you?

For all of us and to some of us more than others, I think the answer is not big enough, right? Not as a bigger version of ourselves, but as God Almighty. One God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

Clothed in splendor and majesty. And who is eternal and has all power and good and greatness. And would, in the person of his Son, lay it down for our salvation.

Dear friends, we need that, don't we? We need that. We could do a lot worse this week than to meditate. To dwell upon the glory and splendor and majesty of God.

[16:11] And why do we need it? Why is it going to help us to remember that the strength and might of who God is? Because of the pain and sorrows and chaos that so often comes upon our lives.

And that is exactly where the psalmist goes next. Verse 3. And that takes us to our second point. Because God reigns and has established the world, He is stronger than every threat.

Verse 3. The floods have lifted up, O Lord. The floods have lifted up their voice. The floods lift up their roaring. The floods here is imagery for chaos.

For threat. Israel, in the Old Testament, God's people, they're not a people of the sea. You never read about an Israelite navy in the Old Testament.

Right? You read about armies. But never a navy. Right? Israel are not sea people. The Philistines came from the sea. Enemies come from the sea. So to say the floods have lifted up, it's speaking of chaos, of terror, of enemies, of sorrow and turmoil.

[17:20] And look at how the poetry works. The floods have lifted up. Okay, something's going wrong. But oh now, the floods have lifted up their voice.

It's getting worse. They're speaking. And the third line, oh, and now they are roaring. Things are bad. Things are very bad. The bottom has now fallen out, and I don't know where we're going to land.

Think perhaps of pounding, crashing waves at the beach by the harbour on a stormy day. We've seen it, or we've seen photos of it, haven't we? A harbour wall with a lighthouse and waves pounding over and over and over.

Imagine standing right there. Terror, threat, chaos. And friends, most of us know, don't we, what it's like for life to feel like that.

To feel like we are standing in the midst of a storm, of many storms, of being pounded and pounded and pounded by water, and the utter chaos and uncertainty that comes with that.

[18:25] Life turned upside down. Events that leave me feeling sick to the core, like someone has pulled my heart out. Sickness, disease, anger, fallouts, betrayal by friend, issues at work, injustice in court, death.

The list goes on, right? If you don't know this, one day you will, right? Life feels like I am standing on a harbour wall in Aberdeen in the midst of a storm.

And I do not know how I'm going to keep standing. But Israel sang this psalm as the people of God as well. Not really just individually, but as God's people.

And so we sing it too, not only as individuals, but as the people of God, as the church. And the church too can feel pounded by threats and chaos and terror as nations and kings and people turn

on God and on his people, right?

Threats on the outside, feeling like Satan has set up a kind of siege against us. He's camped outside and he's firing everything he's got. And threats on the inside too, right?

[ 19 : 34 ] Wolves come among the sheep and people being led astray. Oh, don't we know, dear friends, what it's like for life to feel that way? And so what's the answer?

What's the answer? What is the answer? The response to these rising levels of floods, of terror, of chaos? Well, the answer's there in verse four.

The answer is to stare at, to look at and remember who you've just met in verses one and two. Remember that he who is clothed and robed in majesty with a belt of strength, he is stronger and mightier. And do you see the beauty, the genius of the poetry?

Do you see how every threat of the waves in verse three is counted by an answer of verse four about how God is mightier? And that's why we get it three times, right? Each time the challenge is raised, each time the threat is vanquished because God is mightier.

[ 20 : 41 ] Oh, the floods have lifted, but God is mightier. Oh, the floods are speaking, but God is mightier. Oh, they're roaring. The Lord is mighty, mightier. And so, dear friends, how do we see that today?

What does that look like in our life for those of us sitting here right now with hearts of sorrow and chaos? And I don't even know how I'm going to get through this week, let alone tomorrow. How do we see this today that the Lord is mightier?

Where do we see it? We see it in God's King, the Lord Jesus, in the Lord Jesus. He is the Sam 2 King.

He is the King that God the Father has set on Zion's hill, that all our enemies might be defeated, that all our enemies might be vanquished and crushed, and that all chaos and disorder might be restored.

Think about that moment again in The Lion King. Mufasa takes Simba, and he says, what? Our kingdom goes as far as the light touches, but not into the darkness. But you see, in this psalm, we're invited by the King, who, if you like, stands there, looking over all creation, over his kingdom.

[ 21 : 53 ] And, dear friends, let him hear him say this. My kingdom doesn't just go as far as the light touches. It's everywhere, but where there is darkness, I am sending my Son.

Where there is darkness, I am sending my Son, King Jesus, to restore my rule and to defeat darkness and enemies and chaos in this world. The Lord our God is mightier.

How? Because King Jesus has gone out into the world to conquer. Not nations, but, dear friends, people's hearts. And so, to restore his rule and his reign in the world.

And what's the evidence of that? People becoming Christians. It was Thursday night. Elders of this church meeting with ordinary people who tell them how they now follow King Jesus.

Darkness to light, death to life, strangers to sons. And, dear friends, the first fruit of that new world, of everything made new and true and beautiful and good, is found where?

[ 22 : 57 ] In Christ's resurrection. Christ, rising from the dead, is the firstfruits of a new world that will one day be consummated when Christ returns, riding on the clouds and all is made new.

And his kingdom and rule will be lightness from shore to shore, with no death, no tears, no suffering. And the dwelling place of God is with men. And so, friends, in the days where life is like standing on that harbour wall, in the storm, and I think I'm lost and I do not know what to do, the psalmist here says, look to Christ.

Look to our mighty God who has defeated, ultimately, our enemies, has defeated the kingdom of darkness, Satan's kingdom, and has paid the price for our sins.

And has defeated our great enemy, death. Death. And so, as we feel the waves and storm of death pour over our lives and pound our lives, we know that we are worshipping a king who one day will make even death work backwards.

And has defeated all those things that stand in our way. And so, whatever circumstance, whatever trial, whatever chaos you're facing today, dear friends, God is mightier than it in Christ.

[ 24 : 21 ] And he made you and he knows you and he sees all that's going on. Remember, he is from eternity. He knows the beginning from the end. And so, this psalm says you can trust a God like that.

Trust him. Now, dear friends, this psalm doesn't promise, and never does the Bible promise, that you might see immediate deliverance of some trial or chaos you're facing now. We might say, God,

where are you in this?

God, can you help? But remember how the cross looked weak and it was the power of God for salvation. God is mightier. Christ is overcome. And whatever you face, your shepherd has you in his hand.

He will keep you safe and he will see you to glory. I read this morning about a missionary called Nate Saint.

Nate was a missionary pilot in South America. And he was the pilot that flew Jim Elliott, whose name you might have heard of, to the tribe of unreached people in Ecuador in the 1950s.

[ 25 : 24 ] And these unreached people, who Nate and four other men landed into as they tried to take the gospel to them, Nate, along with others, was killed by them in the 50s. Now, Nate Saint was a hugely gifted man who was an aircraft pilot and engineer.

And the stuff that he was designing was really leading edge in the whole of the aviation industry, at least as I can understand what I read. He was designing lots of safety features, a fuel system for if the fuel wasn't injecting properly into the engine, all these kind of things.

Loved Jesus, loved his wife, but was killed in his 30s in a jungle in Ecuador. It looked so weak.

Upon his death, his sister set about her missionary work to those people after him.

And eventually, after about 10, sorry, after a number of years, was invited and welcomed among this tribe. And many of these people came to Christ. And 10 years after Nate's death, his son Stephen came to see his aunt and her work among these people.

These people who had killed his dad and the men who'd been with his dad. And as Nate's son came to visit this tribe, these people that had killed his father, as he was amongst them there in the 1960s in Ecuador, he was baptized by them.

[ 26 : 51 ] Nate Saint's son was baptized by two of the men who had killed his father. Men who had once held spears now held the waters of baptism in their hands.

Men who once held out death now held out life. God is mightier. God is mightier than every threat. Nate wasn't on this earth to see God's providential care, working all these things out in the midst of loss and tragedy and unexpected suffering. Yes, but God was working about his glory that these people in Ecuador would come to know the Lord Jesus.

And what is true then for us as individuals is ultimately true for the church, right? God will preserve and keep his church. Whatever we face, we are confidently assured that the church of Jesus Christ, there will be no end.

That's what we've seen in Ephesians earlier in this year, isn't it? The glory of Christ's work in his church, in this world. So because God reigns and has established the earth, he is mightier than every threat.

[ 28 : 01 ] So dear friends, trust him. As individual men and women, boys and girls, we trust him. And as the church of Jesus Christ, we keep trusting him when we feel threats and chaos on every side.

Finally then, our last point, and briefly, because God reigns and has established the earth, we can confidently live by his word. Verse five, your decrees are very trustworthy.

Holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore. Now, as I was looking at this psalm, and perhaps as you're sitting there reading it, you're thinking it feels like a bit of a jump to speak of God's decrees, of his laws and holiness, when we've just been speaking there about threats and terror.

But I think the logic goes something like this, that we've beheld a king, a king who rules and whose world is his. And we see the chaos in the world, but we're reminded God has overcome that.

And so rather, if you like, capitulating to the chaos and threat and darkness and being overcome by it, we are assured to keep living God's way, knowing that he has everything in his hands.

[ 29 : 13 ] Perhaps you could think of it something like a soldier in the midst of the darkness of a battle. And the battle, not sure if we're winning or losing, are these the right tactics?

But they go back to meet the general, the king, the captain, whoever it is leading the charge. And having seen him and knowing who he is, they go, yes, we are assured that the battle is yours, that it is won.

And so we will keep on fighting your way. And so because God rules and is reigning in this world, we can confidently keep living out his word.

That's what the psalmist is telling us. Simply, God has made the world, established the world a certain way, and we're to keep living God's way in God's world.

And dear friends, it can be hard to live God's way in God's world, can't it? In fact, sometimes as we live God's way in God's world, that can be the very thing that brings the waters and the chaos and the terrors against us, right?

[ 30 : 16 ] And sometimes it can be hard to live God's way in the church. Whether in the church or in the world, people can slander us, hurt us, lie about us, ignore us, belittle us.

And this is a reminder from the psalmist that says God's decrees, God's laws, God's ways are always best to live by because the church is his and the world is his and all is coming under his rule. And so, dear friends, we are to have confidence in meeting with the king and having our audience with the king to say, yes, we are going to live your way. And I think as a church, as churches and the church, if you like, across this nation, we're going to need this more and more, aren't we, to confidently keep living God's way.

The majority of our politicians, again this week, voted for a measure that's so clearly against God's word. And more and more, we're going to see that. But the psalmist reminds us by looking to the king, hold the line, keep living my way, no matter the cost, because the whole direction of travel for this world is coming under the rule and reign of the king.

So, dear friends, let me help you feel something of the comfort and the challenge of this and then we're done. There is real comfort in the psalmist's words here, aren't they? It's comfort because he says what?

[ 31 : 38 ] Holiness befits your house. And where is God's dwelling place now? It isn't the temple, right? Or it is the temple, but the temple is what? God's people. Holiness befits your house.

We are God's people. We belong in the palace with him. We belong there because we're clothed in Christ's righteousness. Holiness befits us. We are holy before God.

We belong with this king. Oh, what comfort for us. But there is a challenge too, right? To keep living God's word, trusting God's word in a world that so often turns from it.

So, dear friends, feel the challenge and be encouraged to keep trusting God's word at home, at work, in every sphere of life. Keep living God's way in his world and know the joy and the blessing that comes from that.

So, dear friends, our God reigns. He has established the world and he is mightier than every threat. And so, may we trust him and know him with us when whatever we face.

[ 32 : 46 ] And because of who he is, let us keep confidently living by his word, trusting his word, following his word, knowing that one day our king will come again.

Not to a stable in a manger in Bethlehem. No, he will peel back the sky itself and come riding on the clouds and all who are his will come to the wedding supper of the Lamb.

And there we will be around a throne worshiping God forever, all made new, all enemies gone, face to face with our king. Until that day, keep beholding your king, worshiping your king, for he is with you wherever you go.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you so much that you reign, that in a world that so often seems chaotic and lost and in so many places is rebelling against you, we know that you reign, that you are sovereignly working all things to come under the feet of the Lord Jesus, that he is our saviour and our king.

And so we bow and worship him now. Father, we do pray especially for any here in our midst who are feeling the waters of threat and chaos and sorrow pounding up against their lives.

[ 34 : 12 ] Draw very near to them, we pray. May they know that you will preserve them from every threat and that you will see them safely home to heaven, that not one, not one sheep who is given to the great shepherd, the good shepherd, the Lord Jesus, will be lost.

So protect your people, deliver us from evil and may we have joy in the Lord Jesus who has overcome all things. And we pray also then that you would help us to live by your word, to rejoice in your word gladly because it tells us about who you are and will always lead us down paths of righteousness and goodness as we seek to live out the gospel in this time.

So Lord Jesus, we love you. We thank you that you are our king and so we pray that you would help us to worship you now all our days until we see you face to face and are surrounded by all the hosts of heaven and earth and worshiping you.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.