

# Know Who Is King

*Pastor Jay Bickelhaupt*

**W**ho has ever wanted to be king or queen? I am not necessarily talking about ruling from a throne with scepter in hand but instead I am referring to simply being in charge and having authority over others. I had a friend that would say that he was king of his house until his wife came home. I think king or queen can be a coveted title that many would like to be given or claim for themselves. In grade school we battled long and hard on piles of snow in order to be king of the hill. Boxers train intensely to earn the title king of the ring. Some of the ladies in our congregation could easily be called queen of the kitchen because their food is fit for royalty. Men and women work hard to lay claim the title king or queen so that he or she can have bragging rights.

On Palm Sunday the Psalm that we sang asked us, "Who is the king of Glory?" We know that king to be Jesus - a king like none other. As we follow him into Jerusalem he does not boast and brag. He does not flex his royal muscle while making pride-filled claims. He enters Jerusalem gentle and riding on a foal of a donkey. Yet our king enters with power and teaches us that there is strength is humility. I pray that through the Holy Spirit we recognize the awesome power of salvation that our Savior brings to our hearts and that through this powerful word we learn to let humility reign in our lives.

## **Recognize Power**

**I**n order to review for ourselves the words that we sang in our psalm, we read the Psalm that King David wrote one thousand years before the king of glory rode through the gates of Jerusalem, Psalm 24.

Jesus Christ is the king of glory for whom David penned these words and yet Jesus entered Jerusalem in complete humility. If the gates of Jerusalem could have lifted their heads and see the king would they have recognized him as one? Jesus did not have a castle in which he resided and actually he makes it very clear that he didn't even have a home or a place to lay his head. He could not even claim the donkey

that he rode on to be his own; it was borrowed from a friend. He sat on a makeshift saddle of his disciples' dusty outer cloaks. There were no soldiers who road with the king of glory into battle but instead Jesus surrounded himself with twelve regular men who would actually desert him when he needed them the most. You can hardly say that he had loyal followers

*Our king enters with power and teaches us that there is strength is humility.*

### *Psalm 24*

*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;*

*for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.*

*Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place?*

*He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.*

*He will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from God his Savior:*

*Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, O God of Jacob.*

*Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.*

*Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.*

*Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.*

*Who is he, this King of glory? The LORD Almighty— he is the King of glory.*

## **OUR MISSION**

As God's disciples, we the men, women and children of Apostles are united in the preaching, teaching and sharing of God's Word in its truth and purity.

By God's grace, we will nurture believers and joyfully spread the Word of God in our community and throughout the world, all to His glory.

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with Judas in his midst who would later betray him with a kiss. Yet, this is our king of glory. David writes that the earth is his and everything in it. Christ was there in the beginning to form the seas and create their boundaries. "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made," (John 1:3). The king had every right to ride with pride and yet rode with humility. The king of glory deserved much more than a young donkey. He deserved much more than palm fronds to ride on and dusty cloaks to sit on. People recognized him as a great prophet or teacher, someone who could do miracles, but not necessarily their creator king. Many of those who ran ahead shouting, "Hosanna in the highest," as he entered the city would in five days lead him out of the city shouting, "Crucify him!" Who is the king of glory? Many simply did not know!

Who is your king of glory? I am confident that all of us would say, "Jesus, he is our king." But I am also confident that as he rides through our lives we do not treat him as he deserves. Instead of laying thanks and praise before our king for the tremendous amount of blessings we have, do we lay in his path complaints over everything that we don't have? Instead of following him faithfully into challenges and troubles do we flee from him by chasing after worries and fears? Instead of giving our king the glory how often do we claim our glory for our own? Jesus came in humility deserving all glory. We deserve nothing but humility but seek glory. Instead of riding on a lowly donkey, how many times do we get on our high horse thinking we are better than what we are? Or acting like we are something special compared to someone else? Maybe as married couples we play the emotional king of the hill by not compromising with our wives because we mistakenly think we are some kind of king. Or, wives, how many times are arguments continued or maybe even started because pride does not let us cooperate with our husbands? As a family of believers we are not immune to pride either. How many times have we butted heads with another member because we are simply too stubborn to listen to other ideas and work together? By our sinful pride and sinful doubts we claim to be king as we push Jesus out of the way.

### **Let Humility Reign**

**J**esus teaches us a lesson in kingly power. He is the Lord strong and mighty in battle. Yet, as you look at him riding on a donkey surrounded by twelve unimportant disciples from an outward appearance he doesn't seem very mighty at all. The Lord does not show his might in numbers but instead he shows us that numbers are not needed to fight the powers of hell. He alone is the Lord almighty that has the ability to win salvation! There is no other king! There is no other individual that could ride into spiritual battle by himself. Jesus displays his strength to us this morning through his perseverance as he stayed the course

and traveled to Jerusalem. He knew that in five more days he would be labeled the "King of the Jews" and be given a cross for his throne.

As Jesus entered Jerusalem our King was preparing to do battle. The weapon he chose to wield was neither a whip nor his fists. Jesus did not rush into battle with cursing or insults. Jesus came armed with the promise of salvation and was driven by love. It was for love of lost sinners that he set aside the full use of his power and glory. Out of love he refused to grasp an earthly scepter but allowed a wooden rod to strike his head. The king of glory, the creator, the Lord mighty in battle, was crowned with thorns so that he could freely give to you the crown of life. Our king's power is not defined by outward signs of strength but by inward love revealing itself in action.

Throughout Jesus' entire life on earth he battled for you. He fought against the temptations to become boastful. The Savior king never demanded that people serve him but he came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for your sin and mine. We celebrate the fact that armed with grace Jesus came to ride in majesty; in lowly pomp he rode on to die for the sins we committed. The king humbled himself to save those who so often out of sinful pride try to act like kings.

Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up you ancient doors that the king of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord almighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors that the king of glory may come in. Who is he, this king of glory? The Lord Almighty - he is the King of Glory.

*It was for love of lost sinners that Jesus set aside the full use of his power and glory.*

"Who is your king?" David asks in the Psalms. Our king is Christ the Lord whose throne does not dwell in ornate palaces but instead his rule is in our hearts. How awesome it is for you and me to know that Jesus' forgiving power and almighty strength are working personally in our lives and congregation.

The repetition emphasizes the invitation that is extended here. Jerusalem's gates are command to lift up their heads and invite the king to enter. On Palm Sunday two-thousand years ago the king of glory rode through those gates. Now two-thousand years later your hearts are being spoken to. Lift up your spiritual eyes and marvel at the fact that the king of glory rides into your hearts through his word. Welcome

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him with joy because through faith in Jesus you are the one who is able to stand in his holy place. He has declared you innocent giving you clean hands and a pure heart. God the Father declared you sin-free and considers your actions perfect because you have been clothed with Jesus' righteousness. Jesus is our perfect example of humility and our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. But more important than having a perfect example is having a perfect Savior who rode into Jerusalem to rescue us from sin and death.

There have been many who have battled to be the king of hill and many who have failed. This week take the time to prepare your hearts as you ascend the hill of Golgotha one more time to see your king do battle. There some will say that Jesus failed in death, but we know that through his death

he won life for us so that someday we will reign with the king of glory in paradise.

Therefore, every day bow your knee to Jesus' name and let your tongue confess that Jesus Christ is your Lord, who rules in your heart and life. Amen.



*Jay Bickelhaupt is serving as pastor at Apostles Evangelical Lutheran Church in Billings, Montana. For contact information, please visit us at [www.apostlesmt.net](http://www.apostlesmt.net).*

## A Very Special Week

*Grace MEMO*

*Pastor Daron Lindemann*

If you wrote a two screen long e-mail to a long distance friend and one whole page had to do with a single issue in your life at the moment, do you think your friend would get the impression that this issue is very significant to you?

Would you believe that almost half of the Gospel of John in the Bible deals with the final week of Jesus' life? About a third of the others gospels – Matthew, Mark, and Luke – are set aside for this as well. Pretty significant? What biography that you've read spends this much time on the last week of its subject's life? Not even Martin Luther King Jr.'s biography does that, and he died a violent and meaningful death.

No wonder we call this week "holy," a word meaning "special" or "set apart for a sacred purpose." Something special is happening this week. Only two of the gospels mention the events of Jesus' birth but all four spend many pages recalling his last week. Here's a synopsis:

**Palm Sunday** – Jesus parades into Jerusalem, the home territory of his enemies, and receives cheers of support from the Passover pilgrims in town for the celebration. This, according to his plan, bolsters his disciples for the upcoming trauma and also enrages his enemies to put the plans into swift motion for his death. Jesus weeps over the rejection he receives from those he would rather welcome into his love, makes his way to the temple and then retires to Bethany (a suburb village of Jerusalem) to stay with friends for the night. It is not yet time for him to be arrested.

**Angry Monday** – Jesus returns to Jerusalem and curses a barren fig tree and also the empty-hearted hypocrisy of those making money in the temple. He heals people and returns to Bethany again, since it is not yet his time to be arrested.

**Busy Tuesday** – As its name implies, Tuesday of Holy Week was nonstop for Jesus. He returns to Jerusalem, teaches in the temple, responds to those who question his authority, condemns those who rely on themselves to earn forgiveness, makes predictions about the fate of Jerusalem, prays to his Father, and generally instigates the displeasure of his enemies while bringing comfort to those who believe in him.

**Silent Wednesday** – there is nothing recording in the Bible about Jesus' activities on this day.

**Maundy Thursday** – from the Latin word for "command," the word "Maundy" brings to mind the "new command" that Jesus gave his disciples in the upper room to love one another as inspired by his sacrificial love. He washes his disciples' feet, institutes the Lord's Supper, reaches out to his betrayer, prays in Gethsemane, and is finally arrested.

**Good Friday** – Evidence that even the most terrible event in life can actually be good. God's beloved creatures kill their maker and Savior. Jesus is put on Jewish trial, falsely accused, brought before Pontius Pilate, beaten, mocked, crucified, dies, and is buried. Before his death he declares "It is finished," as a testimony to the completion of the work of forgiveness. He did it all and there is none left for us to do. That is what makes this Friday good. Though our forgiveness wasn't cheap, it is and always will be free.

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Holy Saturday, when the body of Jesus lies in the tomb, is only a brief prelude to the drama of Easter Sunday.

Journeying with Jesus to the cross and tomb this week, it's hard not to see the might of the Roman Empire and the world's most sophisticated religious system of its time battling against a solitary figure. Mocked by those he came to love and deserted by his most intimate friends, and eventually forsaken even by his Father, Jesus faces his most trying hour alone. Yet the Bible portrays the irony that Jesus himself is overseeing the entire process, knowing the fate that awaits him, for the cross has been his goal all along.

It's a place you'll want to go with him again for a very special week.

Apostles Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Billings, Montana

**Worship Services** Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Monday at 6:30 p.m.

**Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes** Sunday at 9:15 a.m.

**Men's Bible Study** Monday morning at 6:30 a.m.

**Women's Study** Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m.

Contact the pastor at (406) 656-7141 about the opportunities to join a **Bible Information Class**.

More information and resources are available on our website at [www.apostlesmt.net](http://www.apostlesmt.net) or by contacting the church office at (406) 656-7141.

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*Inside: This Week's Sermon*

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OUR MISSION



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