

# Long Live the King

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Hello everybody, welcome to church, you had my welcome as well. I'm Roy, if you haven't met me before, lovely to have you at church with us today. If you've got a Bible there, turn up to Philippians chapter 2, that's the place we're going to look at this morning, Philippians chapter 2.

You might think, what are we doing in Philippians chapter 2? We should be in Matthew or Mark or Luke or John, but no, Philippians chapter 2, not a mistake. Philippians chapter 2, I'm going to read out from verses 1 to 11. So, if there's any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being of full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Having this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant.

Being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that's above every name, so that the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Well, this year there's been a lot of movements in the seats of power in the last year or so. It's been happening, hasn't it? King Charles III came to power in 2023.

It was a long time coming for him. It was a position he was born to have. It was the position he was groomed to inherit. It's a position marked with privilege and prestige. And one thing for sure though, his reign will not be forever. We all know that there are successors in the line to his throne.

More recently, to the surprise of many and not to surprise of others, Donald Trump has returned to the seat of power in America, but not just President, also the Times Man of the Year, believe it or not.

[ 2 : 3 1 ] His return to reign comes with power and prestige and the last thing we'd ever credit President-elect Trump is with is humility. The one thing we'd be sure of though, is his reign will not last forever.

And we all know there are other rulers in the world, President Putin and President Xi amongst others, who both look to being presidents for life. But, both should know they will not reign forever.

Kings and rulers of this world cannot reign forever because like the rest of us, they are mortal. Every act they do is just a life lived in this world like us.

And even if they act like they're immortal, they are not. And when kings and rulers are good, we rejoice in their reign. We'd love it to go on for a long time.

But when kings and rulers are bad, we lament every day that their reign continues and we end up rejoicing in their downfall. It doesn't matter where you live in the world or how good or how bad those in authority are.

[ 3 : 44 ] It seems we'd all like someone better in charge. A person in charge is really good and makes life better for everyone under them. A person is so good that submitting to their rule is always good for everyone all the time.

Someone who can bring about peace and not war. Ideally a person who makes it possible for everyone to get on with everybody else. Ideally, bring about a flourishing society rather than an oppressive, violent, impoverished society.

If you've got a bad king, a bad emperor, a bad prime minister, then you don't want them to be in power for too long. But if you've got a good one, you'd welcome their rule for a long, long time.

Now Christmas time is all about the birth of a perfectly good king. The perfectly good king who came to establish the perfect kingdom.

His name, King Jesus. We heard about it in the readings from Matthew. Mary becomes pregnant. Joseph's told by an angel that Mary's going to have a son and to name him Jesus because...

[ 4 : 53 ] Why? He will save his people from their sins. And so Jesus is born. Wise men, possibly Chinese people, come from far away and come to worship Jesus.

They find him in Bethlehem. As God promised by the prophet Micah, that a ruler will come from Bethlehem and he will be a shepherd for God's people.

Now you could read the rest of Matthew's gospel and hear the account of Jesus' life. Or you can get an executive summary in Philippians chapter 2 verses 1 to 11. Which we'll spend a little bit of time looking at now, this morning.

I want to point out two things from the passage, right? One is, Jesus is the perfectly good king we need. And second, Jesus is the eternal king we will all recognise.

Two things, right? Jesus, the perfect king we need. Second, Jesus, the eternal king we will all recognise. So firstly, that Jesus is the perfect king we all need.

[ 5 : 59 ] He's perfectly good because he's the true and living God. In chapter 2 verse 6 we saw there that Jesus was in the form of God but did not count equality with God something to be grasped.

That is, he didn't go around asserting his status as being equal with God. Jesus, no one less than God, is the one who became man.

And so Jesus knows our situation in life. He entered the world. He did not enter into privileged and protected life in a palace.

He became one of us, ordinary in every way. He didn't have bodyguards protecting him, keeping him away from people. He lived amongst ordinary people.

He didn't come to have people serve him. He came to serve others. While at the same time being no one less than God in the flesh.

[ 7 : 04 ] So he's the perfectly good king we need because he's God. And he's the perfectly good king because he's humble. See there in verse 7? He emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, human beings.

He divested himself of the privileges that go with being very God. Now that is something foreign to every ruler and other king around today.

He even said that he didn't come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. Jesus is the perfect king we need because he wasn't looking out for his own interests.

Seeking his own power and prestige. That's the way of tyrannical kings. He did nothing from selfish ambition. He had no need for ambition really, did he?

I mean, he didn't try to become powerful. He didn't need to do that. He didn't need to try to become great. Because before he was born, he was already great.

[ 8 : 08 ] He was already God. But by becoming man, he relinquished the privileges of power, prestige and protection that he already had. He was only ever on about one thing.

The ultimate good of the world. The ultimate good of those who recognised his reign. And he's a perfectly good king we need because he is the saviour.

He is the world, the one who's come to save the world. The world is in desperate need. Desperate need of reconciliation. This time of the year is a time when that's keenly felt.

When the pain of broken relationships is very raw. When stress runs high through society. And you'll know it as good as me. Stress runs highly through family systems.

We're acutely aware of what we need. Reconciliation with one another. And the truth is that it can only come completely by being first reconciled to God.

[ 9 : 18 ] These two things can only come about by regime change. A regime with a perfectly good ruler.

A perfectly good king. And instead of removing one king and replacing him with another king that's imperfect. Jesus comes about to bring the kingdom of God.

A fresh start for a new people and for a new family. And the way he did it was through his humble obedience. You see it there in verse 8. He humbled himself to death.

Not just any death. You see there. But even to death on a cross. A death on the cross for the forgiveness of my sin and your sin.

Our king did that for you and me. He's the king who came to save the world. Save the world from being cut off from God. And being condemned by God. We read about in Matthew.

[ 10 : 17 ] That's why he was given the name Jesus. His very name means that he will save his people from the power and the penalty of sin. Which makes him the perfect king we need.

There's been no one as good as him before. There's been no one as good as him since. Which is great news because he is going to live for a long, long time. And reign forever as king.

See Jesus is also the eternal king we will also recognise. Second point. He is now the eternal king who we will all recognise.

Because God raised him from the dead. And now he reigns as the eternal king never to die again. He is the eternal king. He is the ultimate king.

God the Father has given him the name. Do you see there? Above every name. Jesus is greater in power. Greater in authority. Greater in prestige. Greater in ability.

[ 11 : 21 ] Greater in honour. Jesus is reigning supreme. Reigning for eternity. In time and space. And the good news is that this eternal king is perfect.

Alright. He is a good king. He is a good king. And only ever wants our good. So we can say with great joy. Long live this king. Just like the wise men who came to Jesus in Bethlehem.

Everyone in the world who has ever lived. Or who will ever live. Will one day worship Jesus. Confess him as Lord. That's what we read about here in verse 10.

Just like the wise men bent the knee to him and worshipped him. Every knee in the world that has ever lived. Will bow before him.

See then verse 10. Since Jesus humbled himself to death on the cross. Therefore at the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow. In heaven and on earth and under the earth.

- [ 12 : 27 ] And every tongue confess. That Jesus Christ is Lord. To the glory of God the Father. Everyone will bow. Before Jesus.
- And recognise him as Lord and Master. Which means. That I most definitely am not. Lord and Master. And just quietly.
- Neither are you. Which means we mustn't try. And usurp his reign over us. And notice the universal scope of this. In heaven. Every place above the earth.
- On earth. Every place on this planet. Under the earth. All those who have lived. Are alive. Or ever will live. Will confess. That Jesus is Lord. We will confess with our tongues. Speak out loud. Say. Jesus. Jesus.
- [ 13 : 26 ] You are Lord. Now that's a massive statement. A massive statement. And there's no getting around it. And quite frankly.
- No one's exempt. Some will do it because they love him. And long to fall before him. And worship him. Just like we worship him in this world. Every day that we live.
- Some will do it though. Because. Even though they have loathed him. Yet they will be compelled.
- To do it. Because there is a day coming. When there will be no denying. That Jesus is Lord. From the president. Down to the peasant.
- From the kid. To every king. From every sinner. And every saint.
- [ 14 : 23 ] We'll recognize. That Jesus. Is the eternal king. So today is a day we remember the birth. Of our king. The Lord Jesus. The eternal king we need.
- And the eternal king we will all recognize. And it's only right that we worship him now and forever. We're currently in the year 2024 AD. Roughly 2024 years.
- Since Jesus was born. 2024 years. Into. The eternal. Reign. Of King Jesus. Long live.
- The king. Let's pray. Our father in heaven. We give you thanks and praise. That you sent your son into the world. The man. Jesus Christ.
- Who humbled himself. Gave up. All the privileges of glory. That he might serve us. Thank you that you.
- [ 15 : 22 ] Raised him. After his death on the cross. And now he's seated in glory. To reign forever and ever. We worship him.
- As Lord. As our God. Father. We bow the knee before him. And worship him. As Lord. And saviour.
- Father. We pray that you'll continue to help us. Do that all our lives long. And we long for the day. When he will appear. And every knee bow. And every tongue confess.
- That Jesus is Lord. When that eternal. Perfect kingdom. Is seen fully and finally. We pray it in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.