

BRINGING BACK THE KING

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The question as to the full authority of Jesus over those who believe in Him is an issue with which many struggle. Those strugglers want Him as their Mediator for obtaining eternal life, but to have Jesus as an authoritative person in their present life is asking too much.

Kingship speaks of authority and authority demands obedience. Many will ask, “Aren’t we saved by grace?” or “Is the Sermon on the Mount actually for us to observe, or were these merely ideals for us to consider?”

The answer to those questions is also a question: Why then did Jesus say:

“Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46).

Jesus does not only want us merely to know Him but to obey Him. This desire not only applies in the life of the believer but also applies even more so to the authoritative person in the church.

Jesus founded the church. In fact, He lived and died in order to establish the church, and He claimed ownership over the church (Matthew 16:18). The church was His idea, and it was meant to be formed by His design. He promised to equip His church with divinely equipped leaders for ministry (Ephesians 5:11). Today we struggle with churches that are man-made and only limitly Christ-equipped; yet we have been forewarned in Scripture that the wisdom and ideas of this world is foolishness in God’s sight (I Cor. 3:19).

True believers will remember God’s promise:

“Blessed are those who keep my ways” (Proverbs 8:32).

This message is so true, especially with the spiritual sensitivity that needs to be followed when forming a church to be directed by the Lord:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord” (Isaiah 55:8).

The New Testament Church was not governed by one man, but by the leadership of those whose lives really indicated that they stood under the authority and directives of our Lord. Jesus spoke of those authoritative leaders when He said that His sheep would hear His voice (John 10:14-16).

Israel, God’s chosen people, fell as a kingdom when they exclaimed, “We will not have this man rule over us!” In the same manner, too many churches of today seem to have lost sight of the Kingdom message and Kingdom power as they have now become human corporations structured by man’s design, rather than the mystical organism controlled and inspired by the Spirit of God.

We would do well if every believer were to ask the question: “Is my life focused on extending the Kingdom of God?” In return, if the church would admit that we are not truly a church of Christ’s design because

- We have lost the centrality and control of Christ.
- We have commercialized what we call church.

- We neglect strict adherence to Scripture.
- We no longer seek the Spirit's ministries in the church.
- We tolerate lukewarm actions, attitudes and worldly conformity.
- We have become spiritual spectators instead of performers.
- We have a form of godliness but not its power.

Because of the falling away of true believers, the resurrected Jesus is becoming less and less visible in our midst and to the world. The message of our being crucified with Christ has been exchanged for just believing with our mind. Taking up our cross and following Him as a standard of discipleship is spoken of very little in these days, and "following Him" to many merely means doing the best we can.

Is it, therefore, any wonder that we have lost sight of being a "Kingdom of priests" and have stopped being extenders of the Kingdom of God (I Peter 2:9)?

Only when as a church we are willing to die with Him and stop seeking to make a name for ourselves...only then...will we again become of any usefulness and will again experience the presence of God in our midst.

If we accept His rulership (through self-denial), we will also receive authority from Him. Jesus is looking for people who are willing to die unto their own ambition and be fully available to Him (II Chronicles 16:9). A new day would dawn for many believers if this message were proclaimed again. In addition, if we dared to expose and to repent of the sins that so easily beset us, we could run the race and Jesus would become the Ruler of us all.

Note: This article is based on the book "*Church on the Rock(s)*." It can be obtained by contacting the author's website: www.RichardOostra.com

Sidebar:

"Seek the Lord while He may be found;
 call upon Him while He is near,
 Let the wicked forsake his way
 and the evil man his thoughts.
 Let him turn to the Lord,
 and He will have mercy on him,
 and to our God,
 for He will freely pardon" (Isaiah 55:6,7).

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