

Looking for a Leader

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[0:00] It is indeed a joy and a privilege to get to be with you all again. This is either the third or fourth time I've had the privilege of being in Bremen, and I'd never heard of Bremen until not so long ago.

It is also a privilege to be partners with you, with the Hutchison's. You are very, very dear to them. When I talk with Nathaniel when we're over there, they talk about you.

And they look forward, hopefully, to seeing you all this spring. And we look forward to seeing them then as well. After my message, I plan to show some photos and give a report.

My wife and I were in the Philippines again this year. We've gone the last two years and several times before that. But first, I have the privilege of opening the Word of God to you, and I'd like you to turn to 1 Samuel 8.

Now, this is a Sunday which those of us in a Reformed tradition acknowledge as Reformation Sunday, which is to me the most important thing about this particular Sunday.

[1:06] But for many people, it's also Election Sunday. I don't mean the L of Tulip election. I mean the thing that's going to happen on Tuesday.

And there's been a heritage of preachers preaching election sermons. And that's something that came to my mind as I knew I'd be here on this particular day.

We've been in our church going through the book of 1 Samuel. And I got through this passage some months ago. But as I think of what Israel is doing in 1 Samuel 8 as they seek a king, it reminds me so much of what the nations still do.

Politicians campaign as messiahs. They promise utopia. Utopia. They promise heaven on earth. They make promises upon which they cannot deliver.

And the people who support them, even the people of God who have supported them, often find themselves sadly disappointed. And so my objective tonight is not to tell you for whom to vote.

[2:15] I actually appreciate what Martin Lloyd-Jones said about this in the 50s in England. And he said that he didn't want to preach against a particular political party lest people be offended by his politics rather than by the gospel, by the cross.

And so don't get too nervous. I'm not going in that direction at all. But I want to take the example of what Israel does here in 1 Samuel 8 and show how it applies both to our nation and to the church.

And then I also want to show how we do have a king. We do have a ruler who is worthy of our praise. And that ties into your theme of the night. We have politicians who are trying to rob the king of his glory.

And Psalm 2 says they better stop doing that or they will regret it. The approach that we have been taking to 1 Samuel, and this is what I'll be doing more or less tonight, is explaining the text as we go through it and its meaning and then making some application and then ultimately showing how all these things, as all of Scripture does, points to Christ.

So beginning in verse 1 of 1 Samuel 8, Israel's leaders seek a king. I guess I should give a little more context since you haven't been in 1 Samuel for months like I have. The book of 1 Samuel, if you wanted to state an overall theme, it's looking for a leader.

[3:36] It begins with Eli, who is among the last of the judges. Eli is a failed leader, especially because of his sons. But Hannah's boy Samuel becomes the next judge and prophet in Israel, and he leads the nation well.

But he becomes the last judge. And this is a chapter which is really a transition of the government of Israel from the Lord leading his people through judges to the establishment of kings.

It would be, if you wanted a parallel in American history, like we went from the Articles of Confederation to the Constitution. Also from kind of a smaller government to a stronger central

government.

So it's a major turning point in Scripture. So beginning in verse 1 of chapter 8 of 1 Samuel. And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel.

Now the name of the firstborn was Joel, and the name of the second Abijah, and they were judging in Beersheba. His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice.

[4:48] Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. And they said to him, Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways.

Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations. But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, Give us a king to judge us.

And Samuel prayed to the Lord. The Lord said to Samuel, Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you. For they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.

Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I have brought them up from Egypt even to this day, and that they have forsaken me and served other gods, so they are doing to you also.

Now then, listen to their voice. However, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them. So the elders of Israel think they need a king.

[5:55] Samuel, the incumbent, is about to be put out by term limits, I guess you would say. He's getting old. Behold, you have grown old. I just turned 50, so I know how Samuel must have felt.

John MacArthur thinks he was probably at this point actually in his early 60s. We see that he actually doesn't die until chapter 25, so he's got a lot of life left in him. But they're concerned.

What's going to happen when you're gone? Your sons don't walk in your ways. And apparently, what Samuel has done, he's appointed his sons to judge in Beersheba, Abijah, and the extreme south.

So you've got kind of national coverage there. And they were not living up to their good names. One is Joel, which means the Lord is God. Abijah, the other son, means my father is the Lord.

But they are guilty of gross misconduct. The law had warned repeatedly against perverting justice for bribes. And yet that's exactly what they were doing.

[7:00] They were being corrupted by the power they had, showing a disregard for the people of God, the word of God, the law of God, God himself. How tragic it must have been for Samuel, who had grown up in Eli's house and had seen the failure of Eli with his sons and seen their wickedness and how God judged them to have sons of his own who turned out like the sons of Eli.

In the book of 1 Samuel, this is also kind of striking because up until now, Samuel's just almost been perfect. He's like Daniel, or Joseph. Somebody who just didn't ever make a misstep. And yet, I think many of us as parents can relate.

We name our children after Bible characters. We seek to train them in the ways of the Lord. But they don't always follow in those ways. And many parents can be brokenhearted as well.

I think the only thing I could blame Samuel for is he probably shouldn't have let them enter into the family business of priesting and judging if they were unworthy.

But they are responsible. They made their own choices. Samuel's character itself was still above reproach. But the leaders come. They say, it can't be your sons.

[8:14] But then they say, we want a king to judge us like all the nations. The other nations had powerful kings. And the idea in the minds of the elders is we need a great king.

We need a great famous man. A Goliath kind of guy who could be our great ruler. And even today, nations want leaders who will give them greater status on the international scene.

It says in verse 20 that we want to be like the other nations that our king may judge us and go before us and fight our battle. So that adds another element. They're concerned about the threats of the Philistines and the other nations surrounding them.

And they want a great military leader that they could turn into kind of a regional superpower under his guidance. What they're asking for, again, it's not just a new judge.

They want a new system of government. Under the judges, the Lord ruled his people periodically raising up these leaders as needed, often to face a crisis. This was a smaller government.

[9:20] And you might ask, and I think Samuel would have asked, what's wrong with the present system? Hasn't God delivered us? Just back in chapter 7, a great victory was gained under Samuel's leadership. But now the people want a powerful, hereditary king.

And what's wrong? What's wrong with this desire of theirs? We learn from the book of Judges this isn't the first time they had this idea. Way back in the days of Gideon in Judges 8, it says, the men of Israel said to Gideon, rule over us, you and your son and your son's son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.

Gideon said to them, I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you. The Lord shall rule over you. That's what the Lord makes reference to also in verse 7 of our text.

He says, they've not rejected you, they've rejected me from being king over you. So that's what's wrong with what they desire. But for those of you who've read the Bible carefully, there may be a question popping into your mind.

And that is, aren't there multiple references in the Pentateuch that Israel would have a king? Yes, there are. There's a reference in Genesis. The scepter will not depart from Judah.

[10 : 32] There's a reference in Deuteronomy in chapter 17 where there's a list of requirements for the king and his character and his behavior and his adherence to the law. So, if God had already said they should have a king, what's wrong with asking for a king?

Or they would, what's wrong with asking? And I think it gets down to their motives. This phrase, we want to be like the other nations. That doesn't sound good, does it? We're not supposed to be like everybody else.

They weren't supposed to be like everybody else. They're a nation holy to the Lord. Their God is different than the gods of the nations and they themselves are supposed to be different. They have a law and actually in Deuteronomy 17 where it spells out the rules for the king, he's not to be like all those other kings.

He's to be different. He's under God. And then God says, the Lord also says, as I've already mentioned in verse 7, the problem is that in their hearts they want this king to do for them what only God can do.

They're wanting this king over them in the place of God himself. Even though, again back in chapter 7 when they turned to the Lord, it was the Lord who gave them victory against the Philistines.

[11 : 43] Not Samuel, not a king. The question could be, didn't God already beat a bunch of kings just like that? The ones you want to have, one like that? Why do you need that?

And again, this is what nations do. They look to their leaders in a way they should look only to God. They want to turn a man into a God. To be great without God.

the ultimate expressions of that are Babel or Babylon in Scripture. They want a monarch to keep them secure. Our great king will defeat our enemies.

The psalmist says in Psalm 146, Do not trust in princes and mortal men in whom there is no salvation. His spirit departs. He returns to the earth. In that very day, his thoughts perish.

How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob whose hope is the Lord. Who are they to think that when they finally did get their king and the first king of course was Saul, who are they to think Saul would have better sons and grandsons than Eli and Samuel did?

[12 : 51] They should have waited for the Lord to appoint the king in his timing and in his way. So Samuel is displeased. He appeals to the Lord and it seems like some of this might have been Samuel was personally hurt.

The Lord even says, you know, listen to the voice of the people. They've not rejected you though. It's kind of like, don't feel bad. They've been doing this to me for centuries is what the Lord is saying to Samuel.

As Samuel is grieved over their bad request and the Lord affirms what they're seeking is not a substitute for you. They're seeking a substitute for me.

Come make us a God who will rule over us when they made the golden calf. Or as the Jews said, we do not want this man to reign over us. Why then does the Lord tell Samuel to obey the voice of the people?

Well, the Lord has his purpose. The Lord has his plan. If you keep reading in 1 Samuel, his first plan is to show them their king isn't worth much. The first king, Saul, is going to be the people's choice and he's going to be a complete failure.

[14 : 06] But then God will bring forth his anointed and that will be different. But before the Lord gives them their choice, he says in verse 9, now warn them of the consequences of their decision.

Before I move on to that part, just to make a couple of applications. One is, as I think, of Samuel's sons who were given this power, this power to judge in Beersheba. It's just a reminder yet again of,

as Lord Acton said, how power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

And as these men who were not sanctified by the Spirit gained all this power, they misused it. And that's the depravity of human nature.

It's true in human government. It's true in the church. It's true in business. Our former congressman from North San Diego County is presently in prison. My only complaint about that is there should be three or four others with him, as far as I'm concerned.

In church history, you've had, in the Roman Catholic Church, the practice of simony, buying and selling offices in the church. It was also happening in the Episcopalian Church or the Anglican Church.

[15 : 18] As we think of ourselves, though, in the political realm, we see the tendency people have to look to a politician, to a king, to a president, to a senator, a governor, as a savior.

And they play to this. Politicians, not just in this election, but in every election, they campaign as messiahs. They campaign saying, I'm going to solve all your problems.

I'm going to bring heaven to earth. I'm going to wipe away every tear from every eye. Sorrow will end. And the phrases they use, there's going to be a great society.

There's going to be a new world order. There's going to be a bridge to the future. Happy days. We'll be here again. Jeremiah says, Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who makes the flesh his strength.

He will be like a bush in the desert. When you trust these people, men or women, you will always be let down. R.C. Sproul describes statism as a philosophy of government by which the state is viewed not only as the final ruling authority, but as the agent of redemption.

[16 : 26] Nothing wrong with the government punishing evildoers and creating order, but when they start getting into the redemption business, they're intruding where they have no business. And yet that's what people want.

They want the government to solve every problem. You know, end poverty, make the farms prosperous, care for the elderly, promote the arts, eliminate prejudice. Sadly, many Christians have falsely put their hope in the last generation thinking, if we could just get this guy in, everything would be fine.

Abortion would be over and whatever hopes we have, hasn't happened, has it? Another observation I would make from this text, and I think you could make it from the whole Old Testament, is the majority is not always right.

There's a Latin phrase, the voice of the people is the voice of God. Well, that verse is not in the Bible. My observation reading the Old Testament is the majority is almost always wrong.

You look at Israel, you look at us, that democracy is not mandated by Scripture. The majority, historically, can engage in tyranny. I guess, again, back to Scripture, the majority wanted the golden calf, the majority wanted Saul as king, the majority wanted crucified Jesus.

[17 : 44] That's what the majority often does. There's not some innate goodness in human nature that's going to make everything just right. The majority in Germany wanted Hitler. The majority in the South, two generations ago, believed in racial discrimination.

They're not right. In California, where we live, the majority may vote in favor of homosexual marriage. That won't make it right. That will not make it correct in all the other issues that may come up.

This also applies in church government, that God has appointed leaders under Christ. I mean, first of all, we have our infallible, unchangeable Constitution which governs us.

It's not what we think, it's what God thinks. And then, likewise, He has appointed rulers for us to respect and to submit to them under Christ and under the Word of God. it's not just what the 51% of the most immature people want.

It's ultimately through Christ, the leadership that He has given us. Another application is we need to be very careful not to give to any human leaders, including our spiritual leaders, allegiance which belongs to Christ alone.

[18 : 57] Just as in the Old Covenant, the people were to acknowledge that God is their true King. and they were tempted to look to some Saul kind of guy and want to revere and respect and put their hope in Him.

In the same way, we want to have a balanced perspective on our leaders, our elders, our pastors. These are men appointed by God, worthy of respect, but Christ is always the head of the church,

the chief shepherd.

I think sometimes churches can fall into the same thing. We want to be like the other churches who have some famous big shot with this TV show or radio show or big thing that makes us all well known because we have the hero leading us and it becomes about that person and the church is known as so-and-so's church rather than being known for the Christ who is the head of the church. Or sometimes a church when they need a pastor or they're looking for somebody else to come lead. Sometimes you'll see these advertisements or you'll get a letter. We're looking for a dynamic, experienced, gifted visionary to lead the church into a new vision of growth and renewal as if we could just get the right guy.

If we could just get the right leader or second guy then all of a sudden the walls would have to be expanded, we'd be bursting at the seams with people, we'd be full of success. It doesn't work like that.

[20 : 26] it's not about having the right guy. It's about having Christ where he belongs and the word of God on the top. The church is also guilty of wanting to be like the world.

Appoint us a king to judge us like the other nations do. In history, you see of the church how often, and this is the thing I see especially, like you travel in the Philippines and you see churches there that have blunted kind of some version of Christianity with the tribal cultures there and they've turned goddesses in that culture into saints in the next culture and you think, well, that's terrible. They do that in the Philippines or South America or wherever, but you see evangelical churches and they say, well, what works in the world? Well, this kind of marketing works, this kind of management works, these techniques, and that's going to, and you go to these church growth gurus who have conferences and they tell you it's all about your leadership and they think, well, there's just something we can do externally.

If we could just, you know, be on TV or have a new kind of sign or stiff up the worship or there's some external thing we could do that would then give us great victory, it's not about programs and techniques.

It's about our hearts. What we need is revival. What we need is to acknowledge the headship of Christ and love His Word and be faithful to Him. Well, continuing in our text in verse 10, after the people demand a king and the Lord has given Samuel this instruction and basically what He's saying is your king is going to cost you.

[22 : 03] Continuing in verse 10, so Samuel spoke all the words of the Lord to the people who had asked for a king. He said, this will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you. He will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots.

He will take for himself commanders of thousands and fifties and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters for perfumers and cooks and bakers.

He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give them to his officers and his servants. He will take your best male servants and female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work.

He will take a tenth of your flocks and you yourselves will become his servants. Then you will cry out on that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves. But the Lord will not answer you in that day.

What Samuel is describing here is the ways of the kings of all the nations. They come making big promises and they prove to be very costly.

[23 : 14] And the sad thing is when you read this description here and if we had time we could go through the rest of 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, Chronicles and all of this comes to pass.

I'm going to give you a few examples as we go through it very quickly. Samuel in chapter 12 when he's kind of giving his farewell address he contrasts himself with their king and he says whose ox have I taken or whose donkey have I taken?

Whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? And the point being he when he ruled them took nothing. Saul could never make that speech nor could most of our politicians.

He says your king is going to be a taker. He will want great things. He's going to want a great army. He's going to want a great palace. He's going to want great projects and he's going to have to take it from you to get it.

He says he's going to take your sons. He's going to draft your sons into his military and he's going to draft your sons into his service and his fields. You're going to go from a volunteer army that was raised to meet particular needs to a large standing army that's going to be expensive.

[24 : 23] That's what he said. He says he's going to take your daughters to serve in his household. I found that to be kind of shocking. You'd kind of think back then your daughters were safe. He says your daughters are going to be forced to serve that king.

He will take your property. Imminent domain would be one expression of that now. He will give it to his servants. Later in chapter 22 it's Saul when he's competing with David he says Hear now O Benjaminites will the son of Jesse give you fields and vineyards?

The only way Saul can give his brothers fields and vineyards is to take it from other people. Spreading the wealth. He will take your income.

Now this part I didn't find to be that too bad. It's going to be a 10%. Most of us would be very happy with that right now. But the worst of all it says he will take away your freedom.

He says you'll be slaves. Remember what you were in Egypt? You didn't like that but now your governor your king is going to make you slaves in your own land because you're going to have to serve him.

[25 : 35] And so it happened. So it happened when the kingdom divided it was because Rehoboam was sending his servant to force the other tribes into hard labor and the servant was stoned to death.

And then he says and when you finally realize what you've done to yourselves it'll be too late. You'll cry out to the Lord and he will not hear you. So application. Big government comes at a big price.

Now I'm not being partisan when I say that because both major political parties compete for all the things they're offering you. And people want the government to do things for them.

They want security. They want their problems solved. The farmers want a subsidy. The arts and musician people want funding. The businessmen want tax breaks.

Everybody people want education for their kids. They want child care for their kids. They want health care. One guy said everybody's interest is special to him.

[26 : 39] freedom. But it comes at a price. Francis Schaeffer made the statement that people are willing to give up their freedom if somebody promises them personal peace and prosperity.

Government uses a crisis. The Philistines, the Ammonites that are around us. We need a strong king to protect us. But in the process you lose so much of your freedom. And that's how government works even now.

We have a financial crisis. We have a terrorist crisis. We have whatever the crisis may be. Turn to the government. They'll take care of you. Tyrants will promise anything to gain power.

They will never relinquish. China has a problem with overpopulation. What does their government do? If you get pregnant a second time you've got to abort it.

That's what government does to solve problems. Government doesn't produce. It's a scary thing to me in our country that over half of all Americans receive significant support from the government and one-fifth their job is directly tied to the government and it's about a third of the economy.

[27 : 52] Did you enjoy your rebate check? The thing that I see there that's parallel to our situation is it says you'll become slaves. You'll become servants in your own land.

How does that apply to us? The text that came to my mind is Proverbs 22 where it says the borrower becomes the lender's slave. Debt is slavery when you owe.

God warned Israel in Deuteronomy that in the curses of the covenant that if you are disobedient to the covenant you will be owing money to other nations.

They will be the head, you will be the tail. Our government has discovered that taxes are unpopular and programs are popular. So they enslave us and future generations with debt by producing programs for which nobody pays.

\$10 trillion of debt. The national debt clock they had to add a digit to a few weeks ago. But if you add in unfunded promises with Social Security and Medicare it's like \$60 trillion.

[29 : 02] It's hundreds of thousands of dollars for every family. They've put us, they've made us servants. And again, I'm not talking about any particular political party. And sometimes the state, often the state demands our ultimate allegiance.

We see that pictured very plainly in the book of Daniel. You can only pray to the king. You must bow down. Biblically, the responsibility of the government is to punish evildoers, to protect those who do

right.

How are we to pray? Paul says, pray for our leaders that God will save them and basically he says, leave us alone that we can worship God freely. we're thankful we have many of those privileges. Our forefathers in this country, they understood total depravity. They tried to write documents like the Constitution, which limited the powers of government and separated the powers and had checks and balances for fear of some of the very things described in a passage like this.

I think also we could apply this to church government. Too much church government can also be costly and destructive, and I know our churches agree on this issue.

[30 : 16] The Bible does not establish a structure beyond that of a local church that has authority over churches. And denominations will claim that this hierarchy provides many benefits.

Just to be clear, like you are in Arbka, our church is in Fire. These are associations that acknowledge that every local church is independent, free to come and go, and is an association for fellowship but not control.

But the denominational idea can be tempting. Oh, we can have accountability. If one church goes bad, we'll have leaders who are godly, kings who will rule over us, and they'll fix our problems and solve our discipline, and we can share these issues together.

We want to be like the other churches, with denominational boards to fight our battles and to protect us from error. But to paraphrase, when you get a denomination, they will take the best of your men for their denominational boards.

They will make your daughters pastors. When they stray from the confession and you don't, they will take away your church property.

[31 : 22] They will take the best of their tithes for their programs with which you don't agree. and you will cry out in that day because of the denomination you have asked for yourselves. What a blessing it is that Christ and His wisdom has designed the church as independent local churches.

And I've likened it like a big ship with, you know, instead of having one big hole that if you poke a hole in it like in a denomination, the whole thing sinks. You've got a bunch of compartments.

And if one goes bad, the others are still afloat. Or one guy said maybe it's more like a bunch of rowboats instead of one big ocean liner that can be sunk. And yeah, one boat sinks, that's a shame. At least the whole thing doesn't go down. Spurgeon said the denomination's problems is they're like fish.

They rot from the top down. And so we see what history has uncovered for us in that regard. It's a blessing to have fellowship as churches, loving each other, praying for each other, cooperating in missions, but not having to create extra biblical hierarchies just because most other people have one.

We don't have some Pope-like spokesman who can go on CNN and say, would we Reformed Baptists think about this or that? Not that we need one, in my opinion. And finally, in verses 19 to 22, the people still remain determined to have their king.

[32 : 41] Verse 19, Therefore, or nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, No, but there shall be a king over us, that we may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.

And after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the Lord's hearing. And the Lord said to Samuel, Listen to their voice and appoint them a king. So Samuel said to the men of Israel, Go every man to his city.

It's a sad way to end a chapter. You have in your presence not only a judge, but a prophet of God who warns you, and you ignore him.

that's stunning stupidity. How sometimes people can have their minds made up in what they want and ignore the voice of God.

Samuel mediates for the people, but God allows them to have a king. I think he allows them to have a king for a few reasons.

[33 : 44] One is, sometimes we get the rulers we deserve. Jeremiah said, An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it so.

And that may be what happens to us. We may already have, in beginning, the rulers a nation like ours deserves. An idolatrous, godless people who are in love with sex and money and comfort and don't fear God.

We may get Saul, Nebuchadnezzar, whatever kind of rulers we may have. And the problem in America isn't the people we pick.

The problem is the people doing the picking. And their hearts are far from God, their hearts are rebellious, and they want to put their hope in some junior Messiah candidate.

Whatever one that may be, rather than putting their hope in God, which makes them vulnerable to statism, paternalism, and causing themselves great harm.

[34 : 58] But I think there's another reason also the Lord allowed this. And that is that having a really bad king will make you appreciate a good one. And if you keep reading in 1 Samuel, God has in mind for them to have a better king.

He has a king who is a man who is after his own heart. Not necessarily the tall, dark, and handsome guy like Saul was. Not the mighty warrior by outward appearance.

But God doesn't look at outward appearances. God looks at the heart. And he had in mind already that after the people had had enough of Saul, they'd get David, who is the true anointed of God.

And we know that David points us to Christ. And as we see the wretched politicians of all parties who fall so far short of the standard that God has set for what human leaders should be, it makes us long all the more for Christ.

And what a glorious contrast between the kings that men pick and the king whom God has appointed. God says, as for me, I have installed my king upon Zion, my holy mountain.

[36 : 29] God's already picked the king. And he will reign forever and ever. No term limits. He will never grow old. He meets the qualifications of leadership perfectly.

Psalms 24 describes him. Who may ascend the hill of the Lord and who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart. Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood is not sworn deceitfully.

The psalmist goes on to say, Lift up your heads, O gates. Be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the king of glory may come in. Who is the king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty. The Lord mighty in battle.

We have a Savior who has clean hands and a pure heart. Who lived perfectly. Who kept the law perfectly. Both outwardly and inwardly.

And we have a king who came not to take, like earthly kings do, but to give. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[37 : 34] Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, that you through his poverty might be made rich. Wouldn't it be nice if there's somebody running for president right now who would say, I will pay off the national debt if you elect me.

I might vote for that person. False hope as it might be. Well, the Bible says we owe a debt we could never pay. We owe the debt of our sin, which is more than trillions of dollars.

It's an infinite debt of guilt. And that Christ our King came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. And he on the cross, our King came and paid our debt.

He didn't put us into debt. He paid our debt. He didn't come to be served as earthly kings do. He came to serve and paid the ransom price to eliminate our debt, the debt of our sin.

But then Paul even says, not just to get us debt free, but that you through his poverty might be made rich. We have a surplus. A surplus of righteousness.

[38 : 47] The perfect righteousness of Christ has been imputed to us. That's what our King has done for us. Given us forgiveness of sin. Given us the righteousness that comes by faith, by God's grace, through his perfect work.

He's the one who brings true salvation to his people. All earthly candidates are counterfeits. They promise so much and they deliver so little. Christ is the one who has come.

He has defeated the terrorist. He has defeated the enemy. He has crushed Satan. He has defeated death and the grave. The majority rejected him.

He came unto his own and his own did not receive him. But the majority is often wrong. When the majority put him to death, God reversed their verdict and raised him from the dead to live forever. Enthroned him in glory. And he will reign forever and ever. Unlike earthly rulers, his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

[39 : 58] When you get these earthly kings, they make life harder, not better. Whichever one gets elected. But when you come to Christ, he makes it easy and delightful to be in his service.

God has appointed his king. But he who was king is also judge. And I think at the end of Psalm 2, where we read earlier that God has installed his king.

But that's a word that goes to each one of us. God has installed his king. What is your response to the king whom God has installed?

Will you defy him? Will you reject him? Or will you submit to him? The psalmist says, kiss the son. Do homage to the son.

Acknowledge his kingship. Acknowledge his lordship. Lest he be angry and you perish in the way. If you align yourself with his enemies, if you reject him, he will crush you.

[41:02] He will punish you. But if you turn to him in faith, by his magnificent grace, he will forgive you. He will adopt you as his child.

He will give you joy forever. And if we think of Tuesday, we don't have to worry. No matter who wins or who loses, no matter what happens and the propositions and all the elements of the ballot of which some of us have experienced an anxiety, Jesus reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords. And whoever gets elected will be gone before long. And Jesus Christ will reign forever and ever. and we will reign with him. And he is worthy of glory.

You picture some candidate and they love this. To stand in front of a crowd, tens of thousands, hundred thousand. They claim there's going to be a rally on election night with a million people. They're all praising a man.

It's worthless. I think these men rob God of his glory by posing as Messiahs. Worthy is the Lamb.

[42:17] To him be glory in the church forever. To God alone be the glory. Let's pray. Father in heaven, we thank you that in times like these you speak to us in your word.

Lord, and as we see human rulers don't change over thousands of years and people don't change and the rulers they desire over thousands of years.

We see in Christ the King for whom we long. We thank you that he has come to serve his people by giving his life for us. To take away our debt and make us rich.

He rules with perfect righteousness. He saves his people. He wipes away every tear from our eyes and promises of a kingdom with him to reign with him forever in everlasting joy.

Help us, even in troubled times, to put our hope completely in him and not to hope in men. I pray tonight that each one here would be among those who acknowledge his lordship, who do not resist his kingship, that we all might submit to him and glorify him.

[43:33] We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.