

Silent Witness (Crown)—Lent 4—3/21/2001—Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Title: "Is He Your King?"

Text: John 18: 33-38

Introduction: **Illus.: Whose Kingdom Do You Belong to?**

Theme: Is Jesus your king because `you yourself state this as something that is true for you' or do you say it because `someone else has told you this?'

- **Pilate tried to prove/disprove Jesus as king because he did not want to have to deal with him**
  1. If Jesus was a self-declared king—then he could put him to death for *treason*
  2. If Jesus wasn't a king but just a trouble maker—then he could *punish* him, *satisfy* accusers, and *be done*
  3. But the more Pilate dealt with Jesus the more uncomfortable he became because he couldn't fit Jesus into his agenda
  4. Pilate wanted a truth-less world to justify his deprave way of thinking and living—but Jesus was **THE TRUTH**
  5. **ILLUS.: LOSING TOUCH WITH THE TRUTH**
- **Either way—if Jesus is the King or not—brings us to a crucial moment of decision in our life**
  1. If Jesus isn't the king of all, we live in a world and life that is wildly out of control---headed for a crash
    - a. Still in our sin
    - b. Liable for punishment and enduring the pain and the consequence without hope
    - c. Death is quickly speeding up on the horizon, and I don't have the answer or solution
  2. If Jesus is the King of all, he is the Lord of me
    - a. *Pilate therefore said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me up to you has the greater sin." John 19:10-11*
    - b. Personally confronting what his Lordship in my life means (decisions, actions, priorities, purpose)
    - c. *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Matt 28: 18*
- **If Jesus is the King of all, do you accept Him as your king?**
  1. Pilate chose not to surrender to the Lordship of Jesus and was compelled to crucify him to try and get rid of him
  2. **ILLUS.: SURRENDERING TO GOD**
  3. If I surrender to the Lordship of Jesus over me, than I experience the life and blessing he will bring
    - a. *For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Romans 14:7-8*
    - b. He is the Lord of life and death—which gives me the only hope when life is boiled down to the bottom line

### Whose Kingdom Do You Belong to?

While serving as a missionary in Laos, I discovered an illustration of the kingdom of God. Before the colonialists imposed national boundaries, the kings of Laos and Vietnam reached an agreement on taxation in the border areas. Those who ate short-grain rice, built their houses on stilts, and decorated them with Indian-style serpents were considered Laotians. On the other hand, those who ate long-grain rice, built their houses on the ground, and decorated them with Chinese-style dragons were considered Vietnamese. The exact location of a person's home was not what determined his or her nationality. Instead, each person belonged to the kingdom whose cultural values he or she exhibited. So it is with us: we live in the world, but as part of God's kingdom, we are to live according to his kingdom's standards and values.

### Losing Touch with the Truth

What is largely missing in American life today is a sense of context, of saying or doing anything that is intended or even expected to live beyond the moment. There is no culture in the world that is so obsessed as ours with immediacy. In our journalism, the trivial displaces the momentous because we tend to measure the importance of events by how recently they happened. We have become so obsessed with facts that we have lost all touch with truth. Ted Koppel

## Surrendering to God

By college, Michelle [Akers] had become an All-American soccer star, earning ESPN's woman athlete of the year in 1985—the same year the United States formed its first women's national team, with Michelle a starter. In 1991 the U.S. team won the first-ever Women's World Cup and Michelle scored 10 goals in five games, including the championship's winner. She signed an endorsement deal and became the first woman soccer player to have a paid sponsor. She played professionally in Sweden. Michelle's drive and tenacity were beginning to pay off. She even tried out as the place kicker for the Dallas Cowboys: her longest attempt reached 52 yards.

But just as her star was rising, Michelle's health was declining. By 1993, the woman who used grit and determination to make life happen found her life unmanageable. "Each day I felt like I had flown to Europe with no food or sleep, then flown right back and trained for hours," Michelle says. She suffered from Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome (CFIDS), a debilitating disease affecting more than a million adult Americans. "When it was really bad, I couldn't sit up in a chair. The racking migraines stranded me at home, unable even to get up to brush my teeth or eat." For the first time, Michelle could no longer count on her old friends—strength and hard work. She had to find a new way to cope. "I couldn't bear not to be the best in the world, not to be the one who could bounce back from any injury," she says. "It was the only me I knew." When her marriage of four years broke up in 1994, Michelle had reached the end of herself. "I was so sick I couldn't take a five-minute walk without needing two days on the couch to recover. I was forced to spend a lot of time thinking about who I was. I didn't like what I saw."

Michelle had put her trust in Christ as a high-school student, but ignored God in college and after graduation. Now sick and alone, Michelle reluctantly accepted an invitation from a strength coach to attend his church, Northland Community Church in Longwood, Florida. Although she couldn't articulate it at the time, in retrospect Michelle says she knew she "needed to get things right with God." "Looking back," she explains, "I think God was gently, patiently tapping me on the shoulder and calling my name for years. But I continuously brushed him off, saying, 'Hey, I know what I am doing. I can make these decisions. Leave me alone.' Then I think he finally said, 'Okay,' crossed his arms and looked at me sadly—because he knew I was going to make a lot of mistakes by ignoring him. He knew I would be hurting in the future." It took total devastation before I would acquiesce and say, 'Okay, God. You can have my life. Please, help me.'

## John 18:33-38

Pilate went back into the palace, called for Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

<sup>34</sup>Jesus replied, "Did you think of that yourself, or did others tell you about me?"

<sup>35</sup>Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own people and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?"

<sup>36</sup>Jesus answered, "My kingdom doesn't belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. My kingdom doesn't have its origin on earth."

<sup>37</sup>Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?"

Jesus replied, "You're correct in saying that I'm a king. I have been born and have come into the world for this reason: to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to me."

<sup>38</sup>Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

After Pilate said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I don't find this man guilty of anything.

[GW]