

A Puzzling King With His Puzzling Kingdom

Psalm 110, Part 1

Preached by Phillip Kayser at DCC on Sunday, March 24th 2024

I. Introduction - Seek to be transformed by doctrine

I think that Palm Sunday is an underrated and underappreciated day because many Christians put Christ's kingship *way off* into the future. But we will see today that the Scriptures portray Christ as a King who is advancing His kingdom *right now*.

And since the New Testament quotes this Psalm as being partially fulfilled on Palm Sunday and partially fulfilled in Christ's resurrection and ascension, I am going to spend two weeks trying to explain in a little bit fuller way the meaning of this foundational Psalm. And it *is* a very foundational Psalm. The New Testament quotes it more than any other Psalm, and several scholars have pointed out that the New Testament quotes it more than any other Old Testament passage.

As usual, I will encourage you to let these doctrines change you. God is not just interested in you knowing facts - as important as knowledge is. Doctrine was intended by God to transform us. For example,

1. If Jesus is God (as this Psalm says that He is), it ought to lead us to worship Him and depend upon Him and to believe that He is able to do everything that He has promised to do. He is not stymied by the leaders of our woke culture.
2. Second, if He really is king, it ought to make us want to bow before Him and obey Him. It ought to make us confident that things are not out of control in this wacky world. He has our elections just where He wants them – probably in judgment. We deserve His kingly judgments.
3. And if He really is a Judge who judges in history, then we should have confidence that there is rhyme and reason to the disasters and blessings that come upon nations. Many Christians doubt it, but our theology *demand*s it.
4. If Jesus really is a king-priest, that ought to affect our lives.
5. Fifth, if bloody wars are a part of His plan in history (which the last two verses indicate that they are), then we ought not to be discouraged when we see bloody wars. God is doing something through them.
6. On the other hand, if this Psalm rebukes passivity and calls us to be volunteers in the Great King's army, then we ought to do what we can to make a difference in this world - even in the political realm. Talk to me afterwards about an opportunity for young people to be able to get involved in a very practical political project in the next three weeks.
7. If He really does rule in the midst of His enemies (as this Psalm says that He does), it ought not to surprise us to still see enemies all around us.

8. But eighth, if He wins *in* history, (and not just *after* history) then it ought to stir up our faith to expect great things from Him and attempt great things for Him.

But I will admit that there are things in this Psalm that puzzled many first century people and continue to puzzle people today. And we will start with looking at those puzzles. Today's sermon will mainly be dealing with the first half of the Psalm, though it will not be possible to ignore the implications of some of the later verses.

II. First puzzle - Messiah is God and therefore Lord by divine right (v. 1)

The first puzzle that this Psalm presents to us is that the Messiah was declared to be God and therefore Lord by divine right. Now we understand that, but there were many in the first century who were confused by that. Verse 1 says,

Psa. 110:1 The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

Let's break this down.

A. Messiah would be David's Lord (see title of Psalm and "my" in v. 1)

When verse 1 says, "Yehowah said to *my* Lord," who is the speaker? Who is represented by the word "my"? And the answer is that it is the writer of the Psalm, which the inspired title credits to David. It calls this Psalm, "A Psalm of David." So the Messiah would be David's Lord. This is the first hint that the Messiah would be divine as well as human.

And Jesus knew this would be a stumper for the Pharisees, because the Pharisees rightly saw the Adonai (which is the Hebrew word for "lord" that is being spoken of in this Psalm) as being the coming Messiah. They knew that. So literally this says, "Jehovah said to my Adonai."

When Jesus cleansed the temple, the Pharisees were outraged, and kept trying to get him to say by what authority he was doing these things. And in answer, he told them via parables that He not only owned the temple, but He owned all of Israel, and that He would come soon to judge and destroy both. They are remarkable parables. And then He gave a question based on Psalm 110 that would settle the issue of authority. Here's how Matthew words it in Matthew 22:41-46:

Matt. 22:41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." Matt. 22:43 He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit [in other words, David was saying it by the Holy Spirit's inspiration - "How then does David in the Spirit"] call Him 'Lord,' saying: 44 "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool'"? 45 If David then calls Him "Lord,' how is He his Son?" 46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

The riddle for the Pharisees was how could the Messiah be both the Lord of David and a son of David? Or as Isaiah words this puzzle, how can the Messiah be both the Root of David and the Branch of David? Lord and son; Root and Branch are quite different things. If Messiah is the root, then David came from the Messiah (in other words, David grows from and was created by Messiah). How is that possible? But if the Messiah is also the Branch of David, then Messiah also came from David and must be a descendant of David. How could that be? Unless Jesus was both God and man, this would be impossible. And so there was the puzzle of this son of David being David's Lord.

B. At God's Right Hand (vv. 1,5)

Second, there was the puzzle of how any human could possibly sit at God's right hand. The Pharisees believed that the Messiah would be a *human* king, but this text clearly says that the Messiah would sit at Yehowah's right hand. LORD in all capital letters is the divine name, Yehowah - or some people pronounce the name Jehovah, or as others pronounce it, Yahweh. All three are just English ways of pronouncing the same Hebrew name. Hebrews 1:13 says that not even an angel could possibly have the words of verse 1 said about him. That would be blasphemy. No angel could sit at God's right hand. Nor could any other creature ever sit at God's right hand. So when Jesus told His trial court that from now on He Himself would sit at the right hand of God and come on the clouds of heaven (that's Matthew 26:64) the Pharisees accused Him of blaspheming by claiming to be God. And He was indeed claiming to be God. You would have to be divine to be in that position.

C. This means that God speaks to God (v. 1)

The third puzzle for the Pharisees might have been that verse 1 therefore clearly shows God speaking to God. It *shouldn't* have been a puzzle to them since some Jewish believers already had a clear belief in the Trinity. For example, there are ancient Jewish commentaries like Targum Onkelos and Targum Yonathan that show a Trinitarian belief before the time of Jesus. Both of those commentaries on Genesis show Elohim, the Word, and the Spirit all being called Yehowah and all being equally the one true God, yet they speak to each other as if they are three Persons. So there is a sense in which it should *not* have been a puzzle. Other Jews had figured this out. But for the unbelieving Pharisees, it would have been a puzzle.

But here is the bottom line for *us*. We always have to apply the text to *us*, right? Since the Messiah is God, He is up to the job of being King - which is what Palm Sunday is all about. What kind of a King is He? He's the Almighty. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things. All things are held together by the Word of Christ's power. As William Hendriksen says about this verse, David "is promising the Mediator such pre-eminence, power, authority, and majesty as would be proper only for One, who, as to person, from all eternity was, is now, and forever will be God." And I say, "Amen!" Both Christ and the apostles use this passage to *prove* Christ's deity. Especially Hebrews 1.

III. Second Puzzle, this divine Messiah is also a Man (vv. 1-2)

Now, we have already begun thinking about the next puzzle - that this divine Messiah is also a Man. But to some people, being God and being Man *seem* mutually exclusive. In hindsight we see how God achieved it, but back then it would have been hard to reconcile those two clear facts. Yet this is one of many Old Testament passages that prophesied that Messiah would be the God-Man mediator and would have to be God to represent God to man and would have to be man to represent man to God.

A. His Kingship would be appointed (v. 1; see inspired commentary in Acts 2:34-36)

The first hint of His manhood (and it is only a hint) is that even though He was already Lord at the time David wrote this Psalm (and thus David calls him “my Lord” - in other words, He was already in existence as the Second Person of the Trinity), there was coming a time in history when the *same* Person would be *made* a King by God’s appointment *when* He sits at God’s right hand. That is not pointing to the Second Coming. It is pointing to the ascension. So that clause hints at two kinds of Kingship - inherent kingship as God and inherited kingship as man.

And that this hint is being properly pulled from the text can be seen by the fact that Peter’s interpretation is exactly the same in Acts 2:32-36. After quoting this verse Acts 2 says, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” God made Him Lord over the earth. *God* is not made Lord. It is Jesus as *Man* that is made Lord over the earth.

B. He will be a priest (v. 4)

The second hint is that this divine Person will be a Priest similar to Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a figure in the book of Genesis who was the king of Salem and was also a priest at the same time. He was a type of Jesus. A priest was someone who mediated between God and man. Verse 4 says,

The LORD has sworn And will not relent, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

Angels weren’t priests. The Father was not a priest. But the God-Man Jesus was.

Well, all of this means that Jesus is up to the job. Only a Person who was both God and man would be sufficient to convert this world - which *is* His goal. He had to be fully God to give an *infinite* sacrifice and to represent *God* to man, and He had to be man to be a *substitute for us* and to represent *us* to the Father. So Jesus is definitely up to the job of converting the world to Christianity. Amen? We can bank on this. We can step out in faith on this. We can worship Him for this. We have an awesome Savior.

IV. Third puzzle, the Messiah will rule with power from heaven (Zion), not visibly from the earth (v. 2 with vv. 1,5)

The third major puzzle was that this Messiah would exercise the rod of His power from *heaven* (or Zion), not from earth. And the reason we know it is the heavenly Zion and not the earthly one is that He exercises the rod of His rule at the right hand of the Father. Both verses 1 and 5 make that clear. Jesus was prophesied to be advancing His rule during the whole time that He was at the right hand of the Father. A lot of people have no faith that Jesus can rule with power without being visible on the earth, but this whole Psalm insists that His powerful reign is *while He is in heaven*.

V. Fourth puzzle, this Messiah will reign over a disputed empire (vv. 1-2; 1 Cor. 15:22-28; Heb. 1:13)

The fourth puzzle presented in this Psalm is that the promised Messiah was said to reign over a *disputed* empire and that there would continue to be enemies who would dispute His reign long after He became King. Verse 2 calls Him to rule in the midst of His enemies. This was not the kind of reign that the Pharisees had in view. They had a view that when Messiah came, He would destroy all His enemies and then His *entire* reign would be *without* any enemies.

Sadly the eschatology of many Christians today is closer to that of the Pharisees than it is to this Psalm. For example, I have had Dispensationalists tell me that the presence of evil in the world today is proof positive that Jesus isn't reigning yet. Sorry! That contradicts verse 2 which says, "Rule in the *midst* of Your enemies!" You see, the Dispensationalist idea of Christ's kingdom is that it will be a future kingdom that is immediately established in a state of peace and prosperity. But you could not get a more explicit statement that even after Christ sits at the right hand of God, there will be enemies.

Furthermore, the word "til" in verse 1 implies a process of time before the enemies are all subdued. That is certainly the way Paul interpreted this passage. 1 Corinthians 15 quotes this verse and concludes, "He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet." Verse 5 indicates that while He remains in heaven at the right hand of the Father, the Messiah will continue to execute kings in the day of His wrath. If you cannot get this doctrine straight in your heads it will mess up what you think is even possible in our age. Psalm 2 deals with this same subject at great length when it says this:

Psa. 2:1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your

inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.” 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

He is calling President Biden to kiss the Son and to bow before His throne or to face the Messiah's wrath. That's exactly what it is saying. He, and governors, and many other rulers are in serious danger of facing the wrath of King Jesus.

And by the way, the New Testament says that Christ's judgments against rebellious kings *began* in the first century. For example, Acts 4 applies this to the Jewish political leaders, Pontius Pilate, Herod, and the Gentiles opposing the Gospel during the time of the apostles. And based on that Psalm the church prayed against the resistance that they were experiencing and they asked for *Christ's Kingly power* to be manifested. How did Christ respond? Verse 31 of Acts 4 says, “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.” And as a result of the power of the Holy Spirit and their evangelistic outreach, the kingdom of Christ grew exponentially.

The point is that Jesus was ruling by gradually converting people and subduing them under His feet while punishing other people through historical judgments. The judgment of Israel in AD 70 and the judgments of Rome that we looked at in our Revelation series were all examples of how Christ would extend His kingdom to the ends of the earth. It sets a pattern for history. And this Psalm speaks to that pattern. Has His kingdom grown? Absolutely! This week I received a report that just the *persecuted* portion of the Christian population numbers 360,000,000 Christians. *Yes* there *has* been growth. But as these Christians cry out to God, there has also been an increase in the *judgments* that King Jesus brings. Psalm 110:5-7 gives a summary of ongoing judgments from the first century on when it says this:

5 The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. 6 He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. 7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

This means that we should not be surprised when Christ's current reign is resisted. This Psalm predicted that it would be resisted but Jesus would eventually lift His head in victory. Currently there *are* enemies who are disputing every square inch of planet earth. They are disputing His reign. They want control of the same planet earth that Christ is destined to control. But this Psalm and hundreds of other passages affirm that Jesus is quite confident in His Kingship and He will not be discouraged and will not give up His reign until all enemies on planet earth are either taken out of the way or are redeemed. Praise God! I love this Psalm.

But this Psalm brings conviction as well. Did you know that there are enemies of Christ in your *own* life that need to be placed under His feet? Before you can be the kind of volunteer that verse 3 talks about, *you* need to quit fighting against Him. And so this is a warning that

Christ's kingdom can expect opposition from the world, the devil, and even your flesh. And if you are not fighting by God's grace against all three fronts, then you are part of the problem, and you can't resist Christ's reign without losing. You can't.

But on the other hand, you shouldn't be surprised when the church receives backlash from Satanically controlled organizations in our country, and the woke movement, and both political parties. It's almost guaranteed. And yet, who is the winner? It's Christ, not Satan. Christ rules over a disputed empire, and I urge you not to be one of the people disputing His right to subdue every area of your life to Him. You are either one of His volunteers or you are part of the problem.

Next week we will look at some of the remarkable things that this Psalm applies to the *resurrection and ascension* of Jesus. But let me finish off this sermon by making some applications regarding the *nature* of His kingship and then giving some hints on how we can be involved in extending His kingdom.

VI. Applications of Christ's current kingship

A. You must not see the presence of enemies as a reason to be discouraged

And the first application is pretty obvious. You must not see the presence of enemies as a reason to be discouraged. On the first Palm Sunday both enemies and volunteers operated side-by-side. There were children singing His praises and there were enemies plotting to kill Jesus. To put off the kingdom of Christ until all enemies are ended is to turn this Psalm upside down. Christ defended the praises of those children and the faith of those children on Palm Sunday and He wants us having a child-like faith that Jesus is currently King and will advance His cause invincibly.

B. The kingdom requires patience since it will start small ("womb of the morning), will gradually grow ("til"), and will move to full victory (v. 1 "footstool"; v.7b "He shall lift up the head")

Next, the kingdom requires *patience* since it will start small and gradually grow. The phrase "womb of the morning" in verse 3 compares the growth of the kingdom to the development of a child from conception in the womb to growth over time. And comparing the first century kingdom to both womb and morning shows that the first century was the *small start* of the kingdom, not the end of the kingdom. It *must* start small and gradually grow over time. The kingdom is antithetical to the instant generation that wants instant everything. The whole Psalm speaks to sacrificial work over time, and it calls us to have *patience*.

C. Applications to the *theological* enemies of Christ's kingship (vv. 1-2)

Third, we need to realize that there are *theological* enemies of Christ's kingship today just as there were on the first Palm Sunday. The Pharisees had bad theology. Sadly, the church

of today has developed some bad theology that keeps the church from having faith in Christ's Kingship. Let me list some of these theological enemies that are found within the church. And I failed to write them down in your outline, but there should be space to write them down.

The first theological enemy is a short-term vision that results from thinking we are at the very end of history. In his book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Hal Lindsey gave the following statement that robs people of long-term vision. He said, "We should live like people who don't expect to be around much longer."¹ He said that in 1973. Look at all of the decades (fifty years) that he *wasted* by expecting an any-moment-rapture. His followers were consistent in not expecting to be around any longer, and the results have been disastrous. In 1987 (a decade and a half after Lindsey made that statement), one of his followers by the name of Whisenant wrote a book called *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be In 1988*. It was a best-seller book - and a best-loser book in terms of embarrassment. Since many were convinced that Christ would come back in 1988 to set up His kingdom, they felt no need to pay off their debts, or to be salt and light in society, or to impact politics, or for many of them - even to have children. And they didn't worry about the fact that they were seeing society go to pot as a result. But here's the problem: Jesus guaranteed that when the church stops acting like salt and light, society *will* go to pot. Jesus guarantees it. Our King will not honor such short-term vision. He will not. Failing to be driven by the long-term vision of this Psalm has been disastrous. So that's the first theological enemy of Christ's reign - an eschatology that produces short-term vision.

A related attitude is thinking that it is hopeless to win. Forget about whether we are in the last days or not, some people think it is hopeless to win at *any* time. In 1977 Salem Kirban wrote a book called, *Countdown to Rapture*, in which he said, "We have reached the point of no return. We are on an irreversible course for world disaster."² Wow! Talk about pessimism. If its irreversible, why bother *trying* to reverse the evils in America? And he didn't. Most Christians with that pessimistic outlook did not. This brand of pessimism thinks that it is hopeless to even try. That was back in 1977. No wonder we've had so many problems since then. And people do indeed feel hopeless in a task when they think that it will be futile. So his Premillennial theology robbed him of hope. Well, that makes that theology an enemy of what Christ is doing.

Continuing with this same theological error, I want to pick on the Amillennialists because many of them are just as pessimistic. Let me quote from Herman Hanko. He is an Amillennialist. He said, "Forgotten is the fact that sin and the curse made it forever impossible for the cultural mandate to be fulfilled in this present world."³ With that attitude it's no wonder that his followers didn't bother trying to obey God's cultural mandate. In another place he said, "The world [is] filled with sin and getting worse, a

¹ Hal Lindsey, *Late Great Planet Earth*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1973) p. 145.

² Salem Kirban, *Countdown to Rapture* (Irving, CA: Harvest House Publishers, 1977), p. 11.

³ Hanko, "An Exegetical Refutation of Postmillennialism," p. 10.

hopeless situation beyond repair and impossible to salvage”⁴ Can you see why I call these things theological enemies of Christ’s reign? They may be sincere believers, but their bad theology is still at enmity with Christ’s reign.

The bottom line is that we must never say “impossible” for God. Jonah’s message of repentance may have seemed impossible when he came to the wicked city of Nineveh, yet that entire city repented because *he did what he was supposed to do*. He didn’t do it with the best attitude, but at least he obeyed. And Christ said that Nineveh had a genuine repentance. Can God do the same today? Yes, His hand is not too short that it cannot save. The only question is, “*Do we have the faith to believe it?*” Hebrews 11:6 says, “without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” He *only* rewards those who have the diligence that springs from faith. Without faith it is *impossible* to please Him. Well, that means that Christ opposes theologies that kill faith and that kill diligence. And *we* should oppose them too. Don’t treat eschatology as being unimportant. Our view of the kingdom and of the future is critical to success. And by the way, hyper-preterism has no Biblical promises that could give the any better hope concerning our future because on their eschatology Christ has already ended His reign in AD 70. Ludicrous. But worse than that, it robs people of faith.

Jeremiah 18:7-9 says that we should not give up on a nation as being too far gone. It says, “The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.” He’s saying, “Don’t give up on a nation. Call it to repentance. *Do* something. But there is always hope if there is still time for repentance.” These pessimistic eschatologies paralyze the church. Psalm 110 is a great antidote to that paralysis because it explains the *true* nature of Messiah’s kingship. Unlike full preterism, it says that He must continue to reign until there are no more enemies left on earth.

Here is another theological belief that is an enemy to Christ’s current kingship. Walvoord said, “perhaps Christians are not as concerned about social, political, and moral conditions in the world as they should be; but, on the other hand, it is not God’s purpose in our present age to have social justice...”⁵ And my reaction is, “Excuse me! Jesus was indeed concerned about justice.” The parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18 is about a widow seeking justice. Christ’s conclusion is this: “now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them speedily.” Why is the church not seeing justice in America? Because the church is not crying out to God for justice with faith that He will bring it. We have an antidote to such discouragement because we believe that Jesus is interested in our seeking justice. And there are many Scriptures that show this.

⁴ Hanko, “The Illusory Hope of Postmillennialism,” p. 159.

⁵ David Hunt, *Whatever Happened to Heaven*, (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1988), p. 43.

Isaiah 42 is quoted by the New Testament as beginning to be fulfilled in the first century, and it says of Jesus, “He will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth.” Bringing justice to the earth in history is one of the central purposes of His Kingship. Now granted, that verse acknowledges that there will be a long time of resistance to Christ’s purposes just like Psalm 110 predicts that there will be, but Isaiah 42 guarantees that He will not get discouraged until He establishes justice in the earth. And Christ’s lack of discouragement *should* be encouraging to us.

OK, *escapism* is another theological enemy that fights against the advancement of Christ’s kingship. One kind of escapism was given by J. Vernon McGee. And I love J. Vernon McGee; but he had an escapist theology. He said, “You don’t polish brass on a sinking ship.” His idea was that this world is a sinking ship and our *only* goal is to save souls from drowning. But, was John the Baptist polishing brass when he sought to bring reforms to politics in Luke 3:19? No. He was doing what *all* the prophets in the Old Testament did - confronting evils in society and seeking to make a difference.

If the world was not important (if it is just an abandoned sinking ship), why does the 2 Corinthians 5:19 say that God was in Christ *reconciling* the world to Himself? Not sinking the ship, but reconciling the world to Christ. And many times He uses judgments to bring that reconciliation.

If the world was not important to save, why would Jesus promise, “the meek shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5)? Why would Jesus be given all authority in heaven *and on earth* in the Great Commission? Why would Romans 13 say that the civil magistrate is God’s servant, a minister of justice? Why would the New Testament say so much about employers, employees, economics and stewardship of the earth? Obviously the world was pretty important to God. In fact, the world is so important that God plans to redeem it and has sent us into it to claim every square inch for King Jesus. As the Christmas hymn, “Joy to the World,” words it, God’s grace goes, *far as the curse is found*. That’s pretty far.

I’ll just mention one more theological enemy of Christ’s kingship, and that is the idea that the Bible doesn’t provide any solutions to the world’s problems. And its astounding how many Christians believe this. I’ll just pick on one theologian. Walvoord said, “Christians have no immediate solutions to the problems of our day... [the only] solution is that Jesus Christ Himself is coming back to bring peace and rest to the world.”⁶ But that flies in the face of Paul’s statement that the Bible is sufficient to make the man of God complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. That’s 2 Timothy 3:16-17. The Bible is *filled* with solutions. One of the projects I am working on is showing how the Bible provides the foundational axioms for mathematics, physics, logic, economics, hermeneutics, and more than fifty other disciplines. It *does* have the answers. 2 Peter 1:3 tells us that the Bible gives to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. It sounds like a solution to me.

⁶ John F. Walvoord, in Charles Lee Feinberg, *Prophecy and the Seventies* (Chicago, IL; Moody

So the bottom line is that we need to make sure that we don't have attitudes or theologies that make Christ fight against us.

VII. How Christ extends His kingdom

But I am going to end today's message by looking briefly at *how* this Psalm says that Christ will extend His kingdom. It's completely different from *all* futurist versions of the kingdom.

A. Through the day of His power, i.e., the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (v. 3 with Acts 1:8; 2:1-39; Mark 9:1; Luke 24:49)

First, verse 3 says that Jesus would begin to advance His kingdom through the day of His power. Futurist eschatologies often take that as the final day of history - destructive power rather than redemptive power. But in context of these verses, what is the day of His power? Verse 3 ties the day of His power with the gathering of volunteers who will extend His kingdom. And the broader context ties it to Christ's ascension. And that's what the New Testament does as well.

Mark 9:1 says that His disciples would not die before they saw the kingdom of God coming with power. Some of them wouldn't die before that day came. That means the day of His power isn't future to us; it's in the past. Luke 24:49 gives more details about this promise of power, saying, "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." There was one day when the church was perpetually throughout this age given all of the power that it would need to achieve its mission. And that day was Pentecost. In Acts 1:8 Jesus said, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." That sounds just like verse 3 "Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power." Pentecost empowered the church to volunteer to preach the good news of the kingdom to the ends of the earth. In Acts 2 the power of the Spirit comes upon them, and Peter quotes Psalm 110 and says that the shedding forth of the Spirit is a sign that Christ is at the right hand of God. *His* interpretation of this Psalm was that the day of Christ's power was Pentecost. If you have the Holy Spirit, you have everything you need to advance the kingdom of Jesus. You need to daily be filled with the Holy Spirit to maintain this power.

B. Through weak volunteers like you and me (v. 3 with Acts 1:8; 2:1-39)

Second, Psalm 110:3 says that Jesus would advance His kingdom through *volunteers* - volunteers like you and me. It's not specialists or elite people or only pastors who advance His kingdom. Verse 3 says, "*Your people* shall be volunteers in the day of Your power." The *whole* people. The volunteers are simply those who receive the Holy Spirit. After being filled with the Spirit we sign up as volunteers and say, "Yes, Lord. Use me."

But it really is cool that Christ intends to reign *through* His people. He's not going to do it while we watch on the grandstands and do nothing. As long as the church remains passive,

Christ is going to allow the church to suffer. It is critical to realize that He has chosen to advance His kingdom through volunteers.

Now think about this. For the Almighty God to accomplish all of this through volunteers is absolutely staggering. It's not just that divine sovereignty and human responsibility are consistent. Obviously they are. But there is more to it than that. Many passages like this indicate that God has ordained that His sovereign kingdom *must* be established *through the weakness of human volunteers*. In His book, *An All Around Ministry*, Charles Spurgeon speaks in awe and wonder that God would choose to use the feebleness of our mouths and our actions to gradually bring about this new creation. He said,

It is strange that, instead of speaking, and saying with His own lips, "Let there be light," He speaks the illuminating word by our lips! [Spurgeon is speaking about the wonder that God would convert people through the foolishness of preaching and lay witnessing. He goes on:] Instead of fashioning a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness, by the mere fiat of His power, He couples Himself with our weakness, and so performs His purpose!"

I don't know about you, but this blows me away! This humbles me but also excites me. I want you to lay hold of this because it is life transforming. How does Christ extend His kingdom? He won't extend the kingdom one single inch except as He does it through volunteers. Why are things in such a mess today? Because we don't have the volunteers needed for a Gideon's army. And how do we get those volunteers? It is only as they have experienced the day of His power. Not all Christians experience that power of the Holy Spirit. Most Christians act just like the bulk of Israel acted in Gideon's day – they only got involved when things got exciting. Until that time they blithely continued to be preoccupied with their own agendas. They were not consumed with a passion for Christ. It takes the power of God's grace and the gift of His Spirit to give us the boldness of the Christians in Pentecost. *But there is no other life that is worth living*. And if you are one of the Gideon volunteers, don't be discouraged. It only takes a dedicated minority to turn the world upside down. And while it takes great dedication, it will bring you fulfillment in life and treasures in heaven.

C. As believers acknowledge Christ's reign (vv. 1,3)

Third, Christ advances His kingdom as believers acknowledge Christ's reign. Just as David calls Jesus "my Lord" in verse 1, the two Hebrew words that are translated by the one English word "volunteers" indicates a people who give their hearts as a freewill offering. It takes God's power to accomplish that willing submission within us. When Peter quoted this Psalm, he called on the people to repent and to acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior. And then it says that the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

That's why God had Gideon narrow his army down. He wanted a dedicated group of people who trusted God and had an unconditional surrender or submission to God. How do we get there?

Well, there is a book that I want to recommend that you read. It's a book written by Buddy Hanson. The title is, *It's Time to Un-Quo the Status*. I know, it's out of print, but if you can get hold of a copy, it's pretty cool.

You all know about the Status Quo. Well, he says it is time to un-quo that status quo. This book highlights the missing ingredients that are keeping Christians from being effective volunteers. These are the missing ingredients that keep them from living out the connection between Christ's Priestly Kingship and their status as powerful volunteers. Every Christian has a role to play in God's kingdom *if they will embrace it*. And the weakness of the volunteers is immaterial to their success. It's our radical commitment to *His* powerful Kingship that makes the difference. We must be a sold-out Gideon's army. Let me list some of the chapters he unquos:

The first Un-Quo: Identity Theft. He shows how our identity must be in Christ, not in what others think of us. And when that identity is stolen by our culture, we become impotent. We become wrapped up in the wrong things.

The Second Un-Quo flows from this: Reclaiming our Identity in Christ. There are practical steps for doing that. But it will cost you. It will cost you time and energy. It will cost you reputation. It will cost you name-calling. You will be slandered because the part of Gideon's army that didn't qualify- the ones who lapped water with their tongues won't like the fact that you are different that they are. Hard core people make the average Christian a little bit uncomfortable.

Third Un-Quo: Satan's devices to distort our worldview. We've touched on some of those devices. But Buddy Hanson shows you what to do about it. And there are some fabulous worldview books out there. Robert Fugate has written one and there are other good ones out there.

Fourth Un-Quo: Your vision for the future. A faith-building eschatology is so important. It's tempting for the sake of peace to make Postmillennialism an unimportant doctrine, but it undergirds faith in Christ's Kingship, hope for the future, and energy to be His volunteers.

And he gives several other ways to un-quo the status quo and begin to be a revolutionary army that has the potential to once again turn the world upside down instead of being conformed to the world.

The bottom line for Palm Sunday is that God calls us to celebrate Christ's kingship with joy and faith that if He is for us, who can be against us. Our job is not to be strong in ourselves, but to receive the Holy Spirit and to be strong in the power that flows from the heavenly Zion. Jesus is King and we have the tremendous privilege of being His foot-soldiers. Let's embrace that privilege and advance the Lordship of Christ over all of life. Amen?