

WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL

Fundamentals of the Faith

Charlie DiPalma

LESSON #39 — HIS REIGN

But not only did the Father raise Jesus from the dead, but He did something else that is very important for us to keep in our minds today. We see that in passages like Ephesians chapter 1, verse 20. And we want to turn to that passage, and read it with you at this time. Ephesians 1, verse 20. “Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

Here, we learn of God's mighty power, which He worked, which He demonstrated in raising His Son from the dead. But it didn't end there. It went further than that. The Father raised Jesus from the dead to sit at His own right hand in the heavenly places in heaven. The right hand is a position of power and authority. So the picture that God is drawing for us with these words, is that Jesus has all the power and authority. After He was raised, He was raised to be ruler. He was raised to be king, as we've seen. And Paul says here, that Jesus is “far above all principality, power, might and dominion, and above every name, that is named,” again, showing His superiority, His authority, His power. And where does He exercise that? In the church, which is His body. He is the head of His spiritual body, His church, not any man made denomination or religious group, but His church. So, the Father raised Jesus from the dead, but He raised Him to be in a position of power and authority.

He is ruling today. He does not have to come back to this earth to rule as some teach in the religious world today. He has been ruling since the first century, when He ascended back into heaven, and is sitting at the right hand of the Father, the throne, the power, the majesty. Jesus is ruler, and the Christian needs to be encouraged by that, and strengthened by that, and receive peace and hope, that helps us to know that we serve one who is KING OF KINGS, AND LORD of lords, no matter what else happens. He is there as our ruler.

In that position, as our ruler, over all things, and over us, Jesus performs several different functions for the Christian, for the faithful child of God. Let's look at some passages that tell us that. First of all, in 1 Timothy, chapter 2, verse 5. 1 Timothy 2, verse 5. “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” What is the function that God talks about there that Jesus performs? He says He is mediator. What is the purpose of a mediator? A mediator serves the function of bringing together two parties who have been separated. We have, as the one Mediator, not one of many, but one, Jesus, the Son of God, who is also man. He is a perfect mediator. We couldn't get a better mediator than to have the Son of God and the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, mediating for us in heaven. So we need to rejoice in the fact that He is our mediator.

Then in 1 John chapter 2, verse 1. 1 John 2, verse 1. “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” Our goal in life is to strive not to sin, if we're faithful Christians. But we're not perfect, and God knows that, and we must know that. We're going to fall short. If we do sin, then what, John? John said, when we sin, we have an advocate with the Father. What is that word advocate mean? It means a defense attorney, one who defends another person in a court of law. We have as our defense attorney, Jesus Christ, the righteous one, the perfect one. We don't have some frail human being that has been plagued with sin all of their life. We don't have some rich, high powered lawyer on this earth. We have the Son of God, Jesus, the righteous, defending us, in heaven, at the right hand of the Father. You couldn't buy that kind of defense in heaven. But God has made it possible for us, available to us. And we can't earn it, but we can receive it, through His mercy and grace, and through our faithful and loving obedience. Jesus is the Christian's advocate.

Then in the book of Hebrews, chapter 7, verse 25. Hebrews, the seventh chapter, and verse 25. A beautiful passage of Scripture that ought to fill our hearts and minds regularly. He says, “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” Here we have the picture of Jesus as making intercession, interceding on our behalf, pleading for us, before the Father. And He is able to save to the uttermost. He can save, no matter how bad the things that we have done in the past have been, if we're willing to lovingly, obediently fulfill His commands, then we can be saved. And He is interceding in heaven for us. And He ever lives to do that. So Jesus is our mediator. He's our advocate. He is ever living, to make intercession for us before the Father in heaven.

Then another passage of scripture along these lines in the book of Ephesians. Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 23. Ephesians 5, verse 23. “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” We want to focus on the last part of that verse. Christ is the Savior of the body. What is the body? The body is the church, as we saw in Ephesians 1:22-23. So He is our Savior. He is representing us in heaven as our mediator, the one who is our advocate, the one who makes intercession for us, the one who is our Savior. The one who was willing to die the cruel death of the cross that we might be saved from our sins. We'll continue our study of this wonderful topic, Lord willing, some of the things that Jesus does for the Christian in His position as ruler, reigning in His position as head over His Church, His body.

TRANSITION

Welcome back to our study of lesson number two, we're talking about man's problem with sin from the beginning of time, and God's wonderful solution, His abundant love as embodied in His beloved Son, Jesus the Christ. And in this last section of our study, we're studying some of the reasons that the Christian can know that Jesus is our best friend. We know that He's our best friend by His life upon this earth, by His humiliation and suffering for us, by His death,

and His shed blood. And in these last several classes we've been studying about His resurrection, and His present reign, or rule, as King of kings, and Lord of Lords.

We want to continue now, along those lines, and look at several other passages of Scripture, showing us some things that Jesus is or does, in His capacity in ruling as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Let's look now in the book of Ephesians, the fifth chapter, verse 29. Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 29. "For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church." Here God, through the apostle Paul tells us, that the Lord nourishes and cherishes His church. Now, the word "nourish" has with it the idea of feeding and taking care of tenderly and lovingly. Jesus feeds His church through His Word. It is His Word that is described as the sincere milk that the Christian needs to grow (1 Peter chapter 2, verse 2). And it's His Word that is described as the strong, solid meat, solid food, in Hebrews chapter 5, verses 12-14. So Jesus is still alive. He's still in His church, working in His church, through His Word, and through His providence, providing for His church. And we're thankful that He does that. He nourishes us through His Word.

But He also cherishes His church, that is, He places a high value upon it. He loves His church. He has shown that He loved His church by His willingness to suffer and bleed and die, to purchase that church with His own precious blood (Acts chapter 20, verse 28). So Jesus nourishes and cherishes His church. He takes care of His body. Now, we're not talking about any miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, or anything of that nature. But we are talking about the fact that He is here. He is among us. He is nourishing us as we feed on His wonderful Word, even at this very time. So Jesus nourishes and cherishes His spiritual body, the church.

Then another passage, this one in John 14, verse 6. John 14, verse 6. Here we see the wonderful words recorded in John's account of the gospel. "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Very exclusive language used by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, saying, "I am the way. The way, what? The way to live, the way to heaven. The only way, the life, the truth, the Word of God, expressed in a beautiful way through His life upon this earth. But He said, "No one comes to Me, except through the Father." So we know that He is the only way to go to heaven, where the Father is located. And if we want to approach God, and if we want to spend eternity in heaven, then we're going to have to do it through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. By being His disciples, His pupils, His learners, those who follow Him and strive to obey His will. Those who continue in His Word, in the reading of it, and the applying of that Word to our daily lives. He is the only access we have to the Father. It is through Him whom we pray, as we've seen in passages like Hebrews chapter 7, verse 25. So the only approach that we have to the Father is through His beloved Son, Jesus, the Christ. And those religions who try to approach God by any other means are not going to receive what they're striving for, according to the Savior. That's not something that we have made up out of our own mind. We're just trusting Him in His Word. He says He's the only way to the Father. And so we want to approach God through Him, while we're here on this earth, in prayer. And when we leave this life, we want to approach God, the Father, through His beloved Son to spend eternity in Heaven with Him.

And then in Matthew, chapter 11, verses 28-30, Matthew 11, verses 28-30. This is a beautiful passage of Scripture that tells us one of the blessings of being a Christian. Jesus

said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." What a wonderful passage. Can you see, in these verses, the Lord talking to us, and showing that He is a place of refuge, a place to go in times of trial and difficulties, as we approach the Father through Him in prayer? As we think about Him, and how He has promised to always be by our side? Jesus calls us. He says, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, are loaded down with the work of doing the kingdom of God. And he says, "I promise you that if you come to Me, you're going to find rest, you're going to find the rest that you need.

In verse 29, He talks about a yoke. And of course, we know that a yoke is an instrument that we put upon an animal of some kind, a cow or an oxen so that we can gain work from that oxen. And that's what the Lord is talking about. We need to put on His yoke. That is, we need to be actively involved in His work. We need to be laboring for Him. And that labor needs to be a labor of love, a labor of joy, a labor of thanksgiving, that we can serve Him. And He says, if we take His yoke upon us, and we work in His vineyard, if you will, in His kingdom, then we're going to receive rest for our souls. And you see, those ideas are normally not connected together by man, that is, work and rest. But that's what Jesus is saying: that we ought to approach our labor for Him as a way of rest, that is, as a way of satisfaction of gaining appreciation and thanksgiving, that we can serve Him in that way, by doing His work.

And He says, "Learn of Me, for I am gentle." We need to learn of the Lord. And we need to strive to walk in his steps, as we've seen earlier in our study. We learn of Him as we read His Word, and we meditate upon His Word. And that's how we learn the work that we ought to do in serving the Lord.

And then in verse 30, He says, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." That is, if we have the right attitude, and the right spirit, we will be engaged in a labor of love, as Paul talked about in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 1. And we'll be enjoying the work that we do for the Lord. And we'll find rest and satisfaction and peace in that. And I believe that is involved in this, we can be looking forward to a better rest, as the Hebrew writer talked about, in the fourth chapter of the Hebrew letter. He said, "There yet remains a rest for the people of God," looking forward to the time when we leave this life, and this earth, and go to a better place prepared for those who are willing to follow Jesus, wherever He would lead through His Word, and through His example. So Jesus is a place of refuge. We ought to think of Him in times of trial and difficulty, and rejoice in our relationship with Him, because He is truly the best friend that we could ever have. That finishes our study of this particular thought, His rule, His reign, after His resurrection from the dead. And so we'd like to briefly summarize the verses that we've seen in these last two classes.

We began with 1 Timothy 2, verse 5, we've seen that in His capacity as ruler, King of kings, Lord of lords, Jesus is the one mediator between God and man, the one who can join together man and God, and we're thankful that He does that for the faithful Christian.

Then in 1 John chapter 2, verse 1, He is our advocate. And again, we talked about that term means, our lawyer, our defense attorney, one who is defending us in the courts of heaven, defending us against the accusations being made by Satan against us.

Then in the Hebrew letter, in chapter 7, verse 25, we learned that He ever lives to make intercession to those who come to the Father, through Him. So He is one who is interceding for us. One who is making intercession for us before His Father's throne.

Then in Ephesians chapter 5, verse 23, He is the Savior of the body. He is the one who is coming back to take His Church, His body, His kingdom, and take that church to heaven to be with God, the Father and Him for all eternity.

And then in Ephesians chapter 5, verse 29, He nourishes and cherishes His church, His spiritual body, feeding us through His wonderful Word, the bread of life, the sustenance that we need, spiritually, to keep us going while we're here on this earth.

And then in John 14, verse 6, He is the only way to the Father. There is no other way given to us in the Scripture to approach the Father, either through prayer while we're here on this earth, and by going to heaven in eternity. Only through Jesus can we approach the Father.

And then the last passage we just studied, Matthew 11, verses 28 through 30, He is our refuge. He calls us to come to Him, and to receive rest in the midst of our labor for Him.

When we think about, now, all of those passages of Scripture which God has given to us in His Word, and we think about this theme that we've been studying in this particular section of lesson number two, then we ought to rejoice, and we ought to say and thank as we sing, truly, "What a friend we have in Jesus." And our hope and prayer is that each of us will dwell upon these thoughts and upon the Scriptures on a regular and frequent basis, so that our lives may be more meaningful, and filled with purpose and joy and satisfaction. And knowing Jesus is there, He is our best friend. And He has demonstrated it in so many ways.