

GOOD NEWS FOR LOYAL SUBJECTS

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A SERMON
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“He must reign.”
1 Corinthians 15:25

“MUST” is for the king, and concerning King Jesus there is a divine necessity that He *must* reign. He was once the King of misery—in that kingdom He reigned supreme. That thorn-crown is preeminent in the sorrows which it signifies. O King of grief and tears and death, who shall rival You? Today He is the King of glory, enthroned far above all principalities and powers, so glorious that when seraphs are asked, “Who is the King of glory?” they mention no other name but His.

He is the King, once dishonored but now exalted in the highest heaven. Of Him the text says not only that He must live, though that is a precious truth, for while He lives we shall live also. Nor merely that He shall enjoy a degree of reverence, though it is delightful to us to think of His being honored in any heart, and being had in reverence by even a handful of men. But it is said, “He must *reign*.”

Not a place, but *the chief* place shall be His, not bare existence, but preeminence; not honor, but superlative glory. He must reign. No seat but the throne shall become Him, no ornaments but those of royalty shall befit Him—“He must reign.”

He must reign because He is God. “The Lord reigneth” must ever stand a truth. JEHOVAH exists eternally, infinite in power and wisdom. Who but He should be King of kings and Lord of lords? And since the Man of Nazareth is the everlasting Father, since of His generation there was no beginning, and none can count the number of His years, He must reign from the very fact of His essential deity.

He must reign as man, for the Lord has made a covenant with David that the scepter should not depart from him, that of his seed there should sit upon the throne of Israel forever a King to rule in righteousness, and Jesus of Nazareth is that King.

Israel has no other monarch, neither have they sought after any other king. As a nation they have been broken and scattered and peeled, and as a united people they cannot be gathered under any other headship than that of the house of David, of which Jesus Christ is the lineal and rightful descendant, and who claims and keeps the scepter in His own hand.

He must reign also as the Mediator, the Intercessor, the Interposer, the Interpreter, one of a thousand. “He must reign.” Behold, at this time the sovereignty of the world is committed to His keeping, the headship of His church, the government of providence, the ruling of heaven, and earth, and hell, as the mediatorial Monarch. And until that time when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even our Father, He must reign, for so hath God appointed and settled Him to be a King and a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

What a sweet comfort it is to think that none can snatch the government from the hand of Jesus, for “the government shall be upon his shoulder.” None can drive Christ from the headship of the church, nor the headship of providence for the church. He must be at the helm, none shall remove Him. Both as God and man, and as the Mediator of the new covenant, according to the express words of our text, “He must reign.”

There seemed to me to be so sweet a thought wrapped up in these three words, so precious, so full of all manner of delights, that if the Holy Ghost did but enable us to enjoy it, we should not lack today for wines on the lees, well refined, and fat things, yea, fat things full of marrow. I shall endeavor, as I may

be helped, first, at some length to *discuss the reasons for this “must,”* then, secondly, to *draw out encouragement from it,* and thirdly, to *dwell upon its admonitions.*

I. First, “He *must* reign.” WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THIS “MUST”?

The answer shall be sevenfold. The Lamb, as seen by John, had seven horns of power, and here are seven reasons why He should possess the throne forever.

1. First, because *His empire in itself is such as to ensure perpetuity.* There have been many empires in this world of which men said for the time, that they must exist—and they supposed that if they were overthrown, the very pillars of the earth would be removed. Yet in due time they grew grey with years, and were swept away as outworn things, and it was a joy for the nations when the hoary abominations were consumed.

The most colossal empires have melted like visions of the night, and the most substantial creations of human power have passed away like the fleeting dew of the morning. But “He must reign.” He must reign, first of all, because His reign over human mind is based upon truth.

There have been various dynasties of thought, at one time Plato reigned supreme over thoughtful minds. Then Aristotle held a long and rigid rule—he so ruled and governed the entire universe of mind that even the Christian religion was continually infected and tainted by his philosophical speculations. But another philosophy found out his weakness and supplanted him, to be in its turn subverted by the next.

As men grow more enlightened, or the human mind passes through another phase of change, men say to their once-revered rabbis and honored teachers, “Stand out of the way, a new light has arisen. We have come to a new point of thought, and we have done with you.”

Things which were accounted sure and wise in years gone by, are now ridiculed by us as the height of folly. And why? Because these systems of philosophy and thought have not been based upon truth. There has been a worm in the center of the fair apple of knowledge. There has been a flaw in the foundations of the great master-builder, they have built upon sand and their edifices have tumbled to irretrievable ruin. But the truth which Jesus taught from the mountaintop, reads as if it were delivered but yesterday.

Christianity is as suitable to the nineteenth century as to the first, it has the dew of its youth upon it. As Solomon’s Song saith of Christ, His locks are bushy and black as a raven, to show His youth and vigor, so may I say of the Gospel, it is still as young and vigorous, as full of masculine energy as ever it was.

We who preach it fear not for the result. Give us a fair stage and no favor, and the Samson of divine truth, its locks still unshorn, will yet remove the pillars of the temple of error and bring ruin to the powers of hell. Jesus must reign as the royal Teacher because all He teaches is based upon the surest truth.

Our Lord’s dominion *over human hearts* too, is absolutely sure, because *it is based upon love.* To illustrate what I mean, I need only remind you of the life of the great Napoleon. He founded an empire—an empire which has not always been justly estimated, for perhaps undesignedly Napoleon was a grand advancer of human liberty, since he first taught the old kings that the pretense of divine right could not keep crowns upon unpopular heads, and that young men from the ranks might yet mount a throne.

He produced a code of laws, which, for simplicity of justice, has never been surpassed. Still, he relied too much upon coercion and the sword—his enormous armies were his bulwark and security. Strong battalions were the cornerstone of his empire, and though for a while he stood firm, and armies advancing against him were only like so many waves dashing against the rocks of his tremendous power, yet, after all his many wars, he was overthrown and he was said to have uttered in St. Helena that memorable speech, “My empire has passed away. I founded it upon the sword, and it is gone. Jesus Christ established a empire upon love, and it will last forever.” So will it last.

When all that kings and princes can do with state-craft, and with power, shall have dissolved as hoar frost in the sun, Christ's kingdom must stand because it is based upon the law of love. His person is the incarnation of love. His teachings are the doctrines of love. His precepts are the rule of love. His Spirit is the creator of love. His whole religion is saturated with love, and because of this His kingdom cannot be moved.

Once more, the Kingdom of Jesus must exist because *it is the one great remedy which this sad woe-begone world requires*. Though men know it not, this is the only balm for earth's poor bleeding wounds. Earth cries out every now and then like a sleeper in delirium. She cries out for the coming man, and eyes everywhere are watching—men scarce know why—they look for a man who shall right the wrong of mankind, and commence on a glorious era—that good time coming for which men have looked so long.

Jesus is the coming Man, He alone is the day star from on high who shall visit us with light and healing, and replace our darkness with an everlasting morning.

The world is like the troubled sea that cannot rest, tossed to and fro, and there is but one foot which can tread its waves, and but one voice which can say, "Peace, be still." The world's joy lies now in the tomb. It has been dead four days already, and by this time it stinketh, and the poor world does not know that there is only one voice that can bring back earth's paradise, give a resurrection to her buried mirth.

Jesus of Nazareth it is who is the true Liberator of captive nations, "To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the valley of the shadow of death." The world will never rest till it rests in Christ. It groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, scarcely knowing what it wants, but to us it is given to know that earth needs her Lord to reign over her, and He shall bring her joy and peace.

The agonizing groans of earth demand the sovereignty of Jesus, and therefore we believe that He must reign, for God will yet give His creature what it needs. Our Lord's dominion is in itself so securely founded upon truth and love, and is so demanded by a bleeding world, that "*He must reign.*"

2. Secondly, He must reign because *His Father decrees it*. How delightful it is to think of the eternal purposes concerning our Lord! Our God did not make this world without a plan, nor does He rule it without a scheme. Whatsoever JEHOVAH decrees, stands fast and firm, for these are His words, "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Whatever the eternal mind resolves upon is certain to be fulfilled. Though men should strive against it, and devils should rise with infernal rage, yet if JEHOVAH decrees it, who shall stand against the eternal will? Go, thou fool, who thinks to stand against God, and dash yourself upon the bosses of His buckler and be broken in pieces, or run upon the point of His glittering spear to your own destruction. For against the Eternal, who shall stand?

His thunder in the heavens, though it be but the whisper of His voice, makes the nations tremble. The going forth of His might in nature, though it be the hiding of His power, makes all the inhabitants of the earth shake. Who shall stay His hand, or say unto Him, "What doest thou?"

The eternal purpose of God has ordained that Jesus Christ shall reign eternally. He must reign from the river even to the ends of the earth. Up till now God has maintained the throne of His Son.

Read the second psalm and see, "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."

Yes, the divine determination, the everlasting covenant, the immutable promises of covenant grace, all unite in the resolve that Christ shall reign, and therefore well saith the text, "He must reign."

3. But in the third place, *divine justice demands it*. Jesus Christ must reign. Beloved, you cannot imagine for a moment that He who judges all the earth will be unjust and unjust to His own Son. Our Lord came into this world to bleed and die that He might have a reward for His pains. And the Father covenanted with Him, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days." "I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong."

The Father promised that He should be a leader and a commander of the people, and determined as the result of His humiliation that He should mount to a superior throne as the Son of man and the Son of God. Shall God belie His Word? Begone, blasphemous thought! Shall God defraud the Only begotten? Down, suggestion of the pit! Shall Jesus die in vain? Shall He pour out His soul unto death, and shall there be no crown for Him? Shall the promised diadem be withheld? Beloved, we know it cannot be so!

As we stand at the foot of the cross, we feel that every pang He suffered guaranteed to Him that He should be King of kings, and Lord of lords. Oh! it were indeed sad for us to imagine that yonder wondrous work of His in redemption should remain unrewarded with the promised crown. It were vain for us to trust in the redemption, for we might be as well deluded in it as He, if there were no honor brought to Him for all that He endured for us.

Courage, men and brethren, there can be no doubt about it, since immutable justice demands it, Jesus “*must reign.*”

4. The fourth reason is found in this, that *Christ’s reigning is in-wrought into the order of providence.* A few months ago snow was on the ground, the frost was sharp, the winds were cold, the trees were bare. But it was in the order of providence that there should be a spring, and though the seasons grew colder and the dreary months passed on, and not a snowdrop peeped up from under the soil, nor a golden crocus opened its cup, yet God had purposed it—the spring must come.

Walk in your gardens today, when all the fruit trees are opening their blossoms and pouring forth their perfumes in the air, and the birds are at the highest point of song and you will think, “Yes, it has surely come, spring smiles on us after all.”

The cold blustering winds, and the cold dark nights could not prevent it, the vernal blossoms are on every bough. Here is spring, and in its right hand it holds a faithful promise of the coming summer. We cannot say that in any one day in all these last months, spring seemed to make any great advance. You cannot put your finger upon a certain day or hour and say, “Now the weather is manifestly turning.” But the sweet days of bud and blossom have been introduced with a beautiful gentleness and growth.

Even when the days lengthened we saw no great progress, for the cold strengthened, and if we enjoyed a mild day, there came a biting night of frost. But surely and steadily the veins of the trees were filled with the life-blood of sap, and the buds first swelled and then revealed their glories, while mother earth yielded to the roots of plants and trees fresh vigor, and helped them to put on their green array, and now we look for the beauties of summer, and the golden sheaves of autumn with sure and certain hope.

So Christ’s reigning is woven into the warp and woof of providence, and though He has long been lifted on high, and has not yet drawn all men to Him, it is coming, and if we have faith we may almost see it.

His kingdom is coming. The time of the singing of the birds is drawing near. There have been dark times, but the light has arisen. There have been times of shameful lukewarmness, but anon, a live coal has been sent from off the altar to touch the lip of some favored seer whose power has turned the tide of the church’s zeal once more. Rest assured that nothing can possibly resist the kingdom of Jesus Christ—His kingdom shall come. He shall have dominion, and His foes shall bow. He shall come in His own proper person, and shall sit upon David’s throne.

Though the wheels of providence are so high that they are terrible, they are all full of eyes, and every eye looks to Christ. “Upon one stone shall be seven eyes,” yea, all the eyes of providence look upon Jesus our cornerstone, and in the divine economy, “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose,” and chiefly for the glory of Him who loved God best of all, and was first chosen in the divine decree. That Jesus shall reign is the end, aim, and design of providence.

How I rejoice to believe that if we serve God, the very stones of the field are in league with us, and the beasts of the field are at peace with us! and as it was said by Deborah in her memorable song, “The stars in their courses fought against Sisera,” so all created things are allies of the righteous cause and adversaries of evil. The marches of years, the advance of months, and the arrangements of days, all fight

like armed men the wrong, and march side by side with the armies of the Lord of hosts sworn to do battle for Jesus and His throne—for “*He must reign.*”

5. I must not tarry long on any one point, and therefore our fifth argument for Jesus’ kingdom is that *the Holy Spirit has been given to the church to subserve this glorious end.* At the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out, then the whole church was baptized with a sacred influence, and ever since then the Holy Spirit has never been withdrawn from the Christian church. “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.”

We often unbelievably pray for the Holy Spirit as if He were not still with us, as if He were not perpetually resident among the sons of men. But He is here, always here—always dwelling in the Christian church.

Now consider who the Holy Spirit is—He is the blessed God Himself—one person of the glorious Trinity in unity, and He is therefore the possessor of infinite power. In the world of mind He can work according to His own will, and can convince men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He can soften the most obdurate, He can turn to kindness the most cruel, and lead into light the most darkened. There are none beyond the range of the operation of the Holy Spirit, and none who shall be able finally to resist His influence when He puts forth the fullness of His might, for who can stop omnipotence?

Now, brethren, the possession of the Holy Spirit is the church’s treasury. Here is her battle-axe, and here her weapons of war. Do you speak of the tower of David, whereon did hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men? The possession of the Holy Spirit secures a far greater power than all the bucklers of mighty men could be.

Solomon speaks of the church’s bed, and says that around it were fourscore men, each man with his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night. But the Holy Spirit is a greater protection than the ablest bodyguard of warriors. His dovelike wings perpetually brood over the Lord’s chosen, and guard them from every ill, according to the promise, “I, the LORD, do keep it, I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.”

Ho, you who preach Christ in the street, or teach Him in the school, do not become discouraged under difficulties, when you recollect that you are workers together with God, and that with you, when you speak the truth for Jesus, there goes forth an irresistible power from the Holy Spirit Himself, which none shall be able to gainsay or to resist. This is the church’s power, let her seek more of it, and possessing it let her rest assured that the purpose for which she has been raised up will be accomplished, for Jesus Christ must and shall reign if the Spirit of God is at work to ensure His sovereignty.

6. Sixthly, our Lord Jesus Christ *must* reign because *He is naturally the Chief of the human race.* When all Israel were gathered together to choose a king, they selected Saul who was in stature head and shoulders taller than the rest. They would have the strongest soldier to lead the van. But if my Lord and Master were to come into this world, if men’s eyes were but opened, and their senses were but trained to right perception, they would no sooner put eyes on Him than they would say, “He is the chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely: let Him wear the crown.”

Recollect that in this present state the good often go to the wall, and the most worthy are the least esteemed, but in the long run it is a rule of God’s government that the best shall be uppermost. And when the last great rectification shall come, you will find that those who were really lowest in character will be lowest in reprobation, and those who were highest in their service of God shall be highest in esteem amongst the sons of men.

Jesus Christ must take the highest place, because He is highest, and there is none to rival Him.

*“No creature can with Him compare
Among the sons of men,
Fairer He is than all the fair
That fill the heavenly train.”*

Once but get a clear, spiritual glimpse of Him, and you will own His surpassing superiority.

*“Soon as faith the Lord can see,
Bleeding on the cross for me,
Quick my idols all depart,
Jesus gets and fills my heart.”*

O stone-blind eyes, if you could but see Him, how you would be fixed on Him in one long fascinated gaze! O blind world, if you had grace enough to see but half the beauties of Christ, how you would cease your rebellion, and fall down to worship the matchless Prince! but the blindness and obduracy of the humankind make men enemies to their best friend, and make them see no comeliness where there is all comeliness, and no perfection where every perfection dwells.

As well might men say that there is no light from the sun, as declare that there is no loveliness in Him. As well might they say that there is no salt in the sea, as that there is no sweetness in Christ, for He is altogether lovely. All preciousnesses, at its very highest degrees, are found commingled in His gracious character. Let Him be King then! He must reign.

It is impossible that yonder black prince, that fiend of hell, that traitor, that enemy of the human race, should always reign. Down with him, down with him, as they did in the town of Mansoul, when they broke the images of Diabolus, casting them to the ground. It is not possible that the devil should always be king over God’s creatures. Let Immanuel be exalted, and let His loyal subjects bow before Him, and rejoice in His crown and scepter. He must reign, then, because of the excellence of His character.

7. And lastly upon this point, He must reign because *the power to reign belongs to Him*. “It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” “He has all power given unto him in heaven and in earth.” “Go ye, therefore,” saith He, “and teach all nations.” Jesus Christ is no puny pretender to the throne, nor a rightful owner without power to win His own, but as His cause is good, His arm is strong. The power of Immanuel is equal to His right, He must, therefore, reign.

What a vision that is of Christ on the white horse, riding forth conquering and to conquer, and all His saints following Him in the same triumphant style, His sword going out of His mouth, the preaching of the eternal Gospel being still the power of God unto salvation! This is what He is doing now, this is what He shall do till He comes with His iron rod to break the nations in pieces, like a potter’s vessel, and dash His enemies to pieces.

He has the power to reign, a power of love, which He puts into the Gospel which by and by He will exchange for the power of vengeance, when He takes the throne and sits there to judge the nations according to their works. What a total overthrow the powers of darkness will sustain! They will not have a thought wherewith to comfort themselves.

When the last great battle shall come, and the campaign between Christ and the prince of evil shall be over, there will not remain a handful of spoil in the hand of the enemy, not one old banner or tattered flag belonging to the Lord’s hosts to hang up in the hall. “They will be beaten,” as the text puts it, “like the chaff on the summer’s threshing floor.” “And thou shalt winnow them,” says the prophet, “and the wind shall carry them away.”

The black horse went down to the sea of almighty love with his rider, and began to drink up that sea, but he could not do it. He snorted, and drank, and drank again of the brine which sickened his very soul, but malice urged him on, and so he drank again, and waded breast-deep into the ocean. Nor stayed he in his fury, but plunged farther and farther, till he was drowned in the inexhaustible depths.

I think I see the black carcass submerged far down in the abyss—death and hell drowned in the sea of almighty love and power, and the kingdom of Jesus rolling like a mighty stream over all those who were determined upon His destruction. Glory be unto God! we fight, and victory flies to congratulate our banner. Ours is no desperate warfare, but a royal crusade, in which every soldier is even now a priest

and a king, and is on the way to the banqueting halls where men feast with God, and Jesus forever and ever wears the fadeless diadem.

II. Time allows but a few words upon THE ENCOURAGEMENT to be gathered from the “must” which lies in the soul of the text.

1. The first encouragement is that if He must reign, *then all our enemies shall be subdued*. This text occurs in that memorable chapter concerning the resurrection, and it especially points to death. “He must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet.” “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

Now, beloved believer, you are called to fight daily with sin, and here is your consolation, Jesus must reign. The Christ in you must bruise Satan under your feet. His atonement has forever destroyed the damning power of your sins. Christ reigns supreme on the milk-white throne of mercy, as the pardoning God. Even so Jesus must reign over the active power of sin within your heart, for His death is the double death of sin. He has pierced its heart, and nailed its hands and feet, it shall not have dominion over you.

Jesus, the King of kings, must hold His court in the castle yard of your heart, and all your powers and passions must do Him cheerful homage. Most sweet prince, thou shalt wear Thy royal robes in the coronation chamber of my affections. Thou shalt reign over my quick imperious temper. He shall put His foot on the neck of my pride, and shall command my every thought and wish. Where I cannot rule, Jesus can. Rebellious lusts own the spell of the cross, and indwelling sin falls like Dagon before that ark.

Jesus has made us kings and priests that we may reign over the triple monarchy of our nature—spirit, soul, and body, and that, by our self-conquest He may be undisputed sovereign of the Isle of Man. O you who are contending with your corruptions, push on in the war, for He must reign. Corruption is very strong, but Christ is stronger, and grace must reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I think I hear you groaning, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Harken to the answer, it rings like a sweet Sabbath bell, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” You may die with Jesus, but you shall certainly rise with Him, for He will leave none of His members in the grave of their corruptions. This Joshua will slay all the Canaanites. He will drive out the old dragon from his throne, with all his hellish crew, and your entire manhood shall be a fair temple for the Holy Ghost’s indwelling.

Long as we live in this world, and when we live again in the coming world, Jesus shall be the Well-beloved Monarch of our hearts. This ought to put away all fears of death, for Christ must reign, must reign over death. When the last enemy appears in view, it shall only be an opportunity for new triumphs, when the Lord of life shall reveal Himself with renewed splendor.

Imagine not that death shall ever reign over Christ. Ah, no! in your departing moments you shall have most extraordinary grace, so that with joyful heart your lips shall sing, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” When your body shall have molded to ashes, Christ must reign, and every precious particle of that dust shall be attracted to its fellow, bone shall come to bone, and the flesh shall come upon the whole, and you shall live. Though worms destroy your body, yet in your flesh shall you see God.

And so in your resurrection Jesus Christ shall reign. What a lamp is shining in the vaults of death! The day breaks upon all our darkness when we see that He must reign.

The next cool cup of encouragement springing from this well is this—*our efforts are, after all, not in vain*. If Christ must reign, then every soldier who fights for Christ is contributing to the victory, and everyone who in any way advances the cause is working with sure and great results. You have not wasted those many silent prayers and those bitter tears. Those feeble efforts of yours which were so imperfect that you could scarcely hope them to be successful, are all co-operating to produce a victory the shouts of which shall be heard all down the ages.

You may but lay a single stone of the heavenly temple, but if it be done for Christ, it is a stone which will stand the fire, and your share of the building will remain to the last, while many a great one who has

built a mass of wood, and hay, and stubble, shall see his labors all consumed in the day that trieth every man's work.

O my fellow soldiers, as we rest in this bivouac today, waiting till another fight begins, let us be of good courage, and the Lord shall strengthen our hearts. Wait, I say, on the Lord, for the Lord is on our side. Our foes are tall as Goliath, and mighty as Pharaoh, and proud as Nebuchadnezzar, but in the name of God we will destroy them, for in the name of Jesus again we will again say JEHOVAH-Nissi, and setting up the banner, we follow our Captain whose vesture is dipped in blood. He rides forth conquering and to conquer, and we follow Him to absolute victory. It is but a little while ere we shall hear the shout of "Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

One sweet drop of comfort may be pressed from this text, "He must reign"—I must confess the sweetest comfort I have ever tasted. I know not why it is, but if I sink in spirit (and I do full often), I very seldom get any cordial anywhere except from this one thing—that Christ must reign.

"There," I have said in my soul, "then what becomes of me is of no consequence at all. If He will only take me into the royal galley, and chain me down to the oar, and let me tug and pull till I have no more life left, I will be satisfied, if I may but row my Lord towards His throne, and have but the smallest share in making Him great and glorious in the eyes of men and angels."

What cares my heart for herself if she may but see Jesus set on high? It is a heaven to me to think that Christ is in heaven, and another heaven to believe that He will reign among men. If Christ be glorious, it is all the heaven I ask for. If He shall be King of kings, and Lord of lords, let me be nothing, if He shall but reign, and every tongue shall call Him blessed, it shall be bliss to me to know it. And if I may be but as one of the withered roses which lie in the path of His triumph, it shall be my paradise.

Comrade in arms, as you and I in this ditch lie bleeding on the skirts of the battle, it is sweet to hear the shouts of victory. This is better than wine, better than healing, better than life. Look yonder, He rides with His crown upon His helmet. There He rides on His white horse in the very front of the fray! Can you not hear Him as He cries, "Onward!" and the enemy fly, and His forces march on to victory?

You and I may lie down and die, what matters it, for the cause is safe, Jesus is King! Rest assured that Christ's victory is ours, and He will no more forget us than a woman will cease to think of the son of her womb.

Oh, to put our heart into Christ's heart, to wish His wishes, and to love His loves, this is to enjoy peace like a river, and bliss like the waves of the sea. Blessed thought for you who love Him! Treasure it. "He must reign."

How this ought to inspire all of you who grow downhearted about the cause of Christ. Some of my friends are frightened with that everlasting bugbear of Roman Catholicism. According to some we are going back to Rome, every mother's son of us, and old England is to be a rank popish country. Many in these days are fine hands at painting ugly pictures, and believing them to be realities, but I believe my text, namely, that Jesus must reign, therefore I do not fear the Pope or the devil. All the driveling priests of Rome with their Jesuitical tricks, shall find their master, for hell itself cannot shake that decree, "He must reign."

"Jesuits," you say, "are creeping in unawares." I know it, but behold we shall tread upon the lion and the dragon—yea, the young lion and the dragon shall we trample under our feet. Do you not believe in the Gospel as the power of God? Do you imagine that an unrighteous and unscriptural church establishment is needed as a bulwark to the Gospel? Shall rotten wood defend the steel? Nonsense, blow the establishment to a thousand pieces with the big guns of justice, and then the Gospel will hold its own with all the greater ease.

The Gospel is quite able to take care of itself, without your hierarchies, and tithes, and royal headships, you encumber the church with your bulwarks of wood, and hay, and stubble. You clog our David with the royal armor. My Lord Jesus Christ can do well enough in Ireland without Caesar or his pennies. He needs you not to drain wealth from those who serve another lord in order to uphold His

cause. He hates your robberies which you call burnt-offerings. He has always taken care of Himself and His ministers, and will continue to do so.

The ark of God of old was never captured till it was defended with carnal weapons, and even then so soon as it was left alone it rescued itself. When there was not a soldier to take care of it, when it was imprisoned in the temple of Dagon, then Dagon fell, and Philistia was humbled. And so in England and Ireland, state alliance is bringing the Gospel into jeopardy, but if that alliance can be broken which is the worst of ills, then the Gospel in its grandeur of unaided might will confound all adversaries.

Never be afraid—it does not become a Christian to fear. It is unmanly, unchristian, to talk as if Christ's cause were going to be trampled out like a spark under our feet. It cannot be. As enduring as the earth itself, and far more eternal far—as everlasting as the throne of God are the cross and honor and dignity of Christ. Let us feel this, for He must reign, and anticipated changes, instead of preventing Him from reigning, will help Him to reign more universally. And the shaking off of old abuses, instead of being an injury to the cross of Christ, will give its glories ampler space, for He must reign, let men say what they will.

III. Once more and I have done. There is an ADMONITION in the text, “He must reign.”

My hearer, has He ever reigned in your heart? Where are you, my hearer? for I want you now. I must get you by the ear. “Jesus must reign,” what have you to say to this? You have been opposing Him, have you? You are kicking against the pricks with naked feet, you are stumbling upon this stone, and you will be broken. And if the stone shall take to rolling down, like a massive rock, on you, it will grind you to powder.

Persecutor, beware! You have gone upon a very very desperate errand. You are like a crawling worm that is fighting with the fire—you wiggle already in the heat of it, but if you continue long, what can you expect? You are like stubble contending with the fire-brand, or like chaff wrestling with the whirlwind. What can you do?

O man, sheathe that sword. Take counsel whilst you are in the way, “whether thou canst with ten thousand meet him that cometh against thee with twenty thousand.” “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.”

Another thought, if Jesus Christ must reign, then you who have never submitted yourselves to Him to accept Him as your Monarch, will find His reign as terrible as it is sure. He *will* reign over you, either by your own consent, or without it. He will either reign over you with that glorious glittering silver scepter of mercy in His hand, or He will rule over you with the heavy iron rod, with which He will break you in pieces.

Now, which is it to be? One or other. His blood must be on you, either it must be on you to accuse and condemn you, as the Jews found it when they said, “His blood be on us, and on our children,” or else it shall be on you to cleanse, to pardon, to save. Which shall it be?

This morning, in the name of God I entreat you answer this question for your own good. Does Jesus reign over you this morning, or not? Oh, if He never should reign over you in this life, then, when you die, you shall find that you cannot escape from His power.

He will then reign over you while you are a prisoner, manacled in fetters of iron in the place of everlasting misery. He will reign over you, and you will be compelled to confess it too, as you bite your iron bands, and weep, and gnash your teeth in anger and in shame. He will reign over you absolutely, for you will not be able to lift a finger to contend against Him in the day when He cometh to judge the quick and the dead.

*“Ye sinners, seek His grace,
Whose wrath ye cannot bear;
Fly to the shelter of His cross,
And find salvation there.”*

May eternal mercy bring you *now*, like loyal subjects, to bow before Jesus. To give yourselves up to Him, trusting in Him, and in Him alone. That is the matter—to confide simply in Him is life eternal. There is the whole sum and substance of godliness. Then shall it be your joy and feel that “He must reign.” The Lord bless you, and make you a blessing, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—
REVELATION 6 AND 19:1-16**

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.