

# JESUS AFFIRMS HIS KINGSHIP

## JOHN 18:33–38

### *Introduction*

In the behaviour of Pilate is seen the picture and tragedy of an indecisive man. The Roman trial of Jesus is a dramatic picture of indecisive compromise. The scene flows along with Pilate *moving* back and forth to Jesus and to His accusers or the people. Despite his enormous and proven ability as a leader, he was indecisive as he stood before Christ. He knew Christ was innocent, for he saw no evil in Him (see Lk. 23:22). Yet he had to tread carefully with the Jewish authorities lest he fall into their disfavour. If they reported him to Rome, he could lose his position and wealth. Here Pilate questions Jesus in order to hear His defence. Note two points.

1. Jesus' challenge to Pilate (v. 34). Jesus challenged Pilate to think through the issue himself. In judging Jesus, a person is responsible for his own verdict.

**Thought 1.** A person is personally responsible for his verdict about Jesus. Everyone *now* has to make a choice, for Jesus claims to be the Son of God, the only Saviour of the world. We have to give our verdict: He either *is* or *is not* the King of the Jews.

**John 1:11-12** *He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*

**Thought 2.** People usually choose to follow the man of power and fame and wealth over the man of love and morality and peace. Just take a moment and think how true this is. The immoral emphasis of films and the violent emphasis of the news alone are prime examples. Is there any wonder man has never known a world of love and peace and true justice? The problem is the human heart, the problem which Jesus alone can solve.

**John 5:43-44** *“I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?”*

**Mat 15:18-19** *“But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man ‘unclean.’ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.”*

**Luke 6:45** *“The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.”*

**Luke 8:15** *“But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.”*

---

**Rom 10:10** *For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

**Prov 4:23** *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*

2. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world, not of the physical dimension of being. It is of heaven, of the spiritual dimension of being (see *Kingdom of Heaven*, Mt. 19:23-24).

**John 18:36** *Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."*

**Rom 14:17** *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

**Heb 1:8** *But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom.*

**2 Pet 3:13-14** *But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

**Rev 11:15** *The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."*

3. In John 11:25-26 Jesus speaks of his kingdom, of the spiritual dimension of man. He makes two great promises: believe and two phenomenal things happen.
  - a. "He who believes *in me will live*, even though he dies (kan a pothanen)."  
He lives in the other world: in heaven, in the spiritual dimension of being, in the very presence of God Himself. The believer who has passed from this world is not some place...
    - in a semi-conscious state
    - in a deep sleep, locked up in a compartment someplace
    - in space moving about and floating around on a fluffy cloud

The believer is fully alive: he lives in heaven, in the other world, in the very presence of God Himself. Another world exists just as this world exists. It is not a world that lies out in the future; it is a world that exists now — a spiritual world — a spiritual dimension — a world that the Bible calls heaven. It is the spiritual world and dimension where God and Christ and angels and all those who have gone on before now live.

The point is this: when a person who *has believed in Jesus* dies, he goes to live in heaven, in the spiritual world where God and Christ and the heavenly hosts live. *Hallelujah!* is the only word that can express the hope and joy that fills the soul of the true believer.

**Luke 9:30-31** *Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendour, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.*

**Luke 23:43** *Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."*

**John 12:26** *"Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me."*

**John 17:24** *"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."*

**2 Cor 5:8** *We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.*

**Phil 1:23** *I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.*

- b. "Whoever lives and believes in me will never die." The idea is that the believer will never taste death, that is, never experience death. Quicker than the believer can blink an eye, he passes from this world into the next world. He is transported and transferred into heaven. The believer never loses a single moment of consciousness. One moment he is conscious and living in this world; the next moment he is conscious and present in the next world. There is only one difference. He is immediately made perfect: transformed, made much more conscious and aware, more knowledgeable and alive than ever before.

**John 3:15** *"That everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."*

**John 5:24** *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."*

**John 8:51** *"I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."*

**Gal 6:8** *The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

- c. Note a crucial point. Receiving eternal life is conditional: a person must believe. It is "who believes" and "whoever lives and believes" that lives and never dies. It is as Jesus asked Martha: "Do you believe this?" If a person believes Jesus, he never dies; he will live forever. ■

## JOHN 18: 37 THE CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST

*“You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”*  
**John 18:37**

There are several claims here.

1. His birth was a means to an end – to be King (Mt. 2:2; Jn. 1:49; 1 Cor. 15:25).
2. He did preexist – He came out of heaven from the very presence of God (see *The Word, Jesus Christ, Son of God*, Jn. 1:1-5).
3. He was the truth – absolute reality.
4. He revealed the truth (Jn. 14:9-11).
5. He was heard *by* those of the truth (Jn. 8:45-47). □

## JOHN 01:01–05 THE WORD, JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD

The *Word* (logos) is Jesus Christ. John faced a serious problem in writing to the Gentiles, that is, the non-Jewish world. Most Gentiles had never heard of the Messiah or Saviour who was expected by the Jews. The idea was foreign to them. However, the Messiah was the very centre of Christianity. How was John going to present Christ so that a Gentile could understand?

The answer lay in the idea of the *Word*, for the *Word* was understood by both Gentile and Jew.

1. The Jews saw a word as something more than a mere sound. A word was something active and existing. It was power – it possessed the power to express something, to do something. This is seen in the many Old Testament references where *The Word of God* was seen as the creative power of God, the power that made the world and gave light and life to every man (Gen. 1:3, 6, 11; Psa. 33:6; 107:20; 147:15; Isa. 55:11).
2. The Gentiles or Greeks saw the *Word* more philosophically.
  - a. When they looked at the world of nature, they saw that things were not chaotic, but orderly. Everything had its place and moved or grew in an orderly fashion, including the stars above and the vegetation below. Therefore, the Greeks said that behind the world was a mind, a reason, a power that made and kept things in their

proper place. This creative and sustaining mind, this supreme reason, this unlimited power was said to be the *Word*.

- b. The *Word* was also seen as the power that enabled men to think and reason. It was the power that brought light and understanding to man's mind, enabling him to express his confused thoughts in an orderly fashion.
  - c. More importantly, the *Word* was the power by which men came into contact with God and expressed their feelings to God.
3. John utilized this common idea of the Jews and Gentiles to proclaim that Jesus Christ was the *Word*. John saw that a word is the expression of an idea, a thought, an image in the mind of a person. He saw that a word describes what is in the mind of a person. Thus, he proclaimed that in the life of Jesus Christ, God was speaking to the world, speaking and demonstrating just what He wanted to say to man. John said three things.
- a. God has given us much more than mere words in the Holy Scriptures. God has given us Jesus Christ, The Word. As The Word, Jesus Christ was the picture, the expression, the pattern, the very image of what God wished to say to man. The very image within God's mind of the Ideal Man was demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the perfect expression of all that God wishes man to be. Jesus Christ was God's utterance, God's speech, God's Word to man. Jesus Christ was the Word of God who came down to earth in human flesh to bring man into a face-to-face relationship with God (vv. 1-2). Jesus was the *Word of God who came to earth to live out the written Word of God*.
  - b. Jesus Christ is the Mind, the Reason, the Power that both made and keeps things in their proper order. He is the creative and sustaining Mind, the Supreme Reason, the unlimited Power (v. 3).
  - c. Jesus Christ is the Light, the Illumination, the Power that penetrates the darkness of the world. He, the Life and Light of the world, is what makes sense of the world and enables men to understand the world (vv. 4-5). □