



Jason Smith – Our King

Part 4: A King Like No Other

Text: John 18:33-37

Key Verse: John 18:36

Introduction: The King We Didn't Expect

Good morning, church... We're now in **Week 4** of our sermon series, "*Our King*" And over the last weeks, we've been on a journey through Scripture—and through the human heart.

Week 1 Our Soon Coming King

In **Week 2**, we saw the moment when Israel cried out, "*Give us a king like the other nations.*"

They wanted a ruler they could see and control—something tangible, something powerful. But in asking for an earthly king, they were actually rejecting **God's reign**.

Then in **Week 3**, we looked at Solomon—the wisest king, blessed by God, admired by the world. And yet even Solomon's heart turned away.

He built monuments for himself. He used his power for his own purposes. And in the end, his kingdom crumbled—because no matter how strong a human leader appears, **earthly kings always fall**.

But today—**today we meet a King unlike any other.**

He doesn't fit our categories.

He doesn't grab for power.

He doesn't ride in on a warhorse—He's handed over in chains.

He doesn't wear gold—He wears thorns.

He doesn't sit on a throne—He's lifted up on a cross.

And yet, He is the King above all kings. He is the ruler this world desperately needs, but never expected. As Jesus stands on trial before Pilate, we are invited to ask a deeper question:

What kind of King do we really want—and what kind of King do we truly need?

Let's open to **John 18:33–37**, and see what Jesus' kingship reveals about His heart—and about ours.

A King Like No Other

Read John 18:33–37

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” ³⁴ Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?”

³⁵ Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?”

³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews.

But my kingdom is not from the world.”³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king.

For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

1. Jesus Is a King, but Not the Kind We Expected

Re-Read: John 18:33-36

The scene is tense. Jesus stands before Pilate—the Roman governor, the representative of Caesar himself. And Pilate asks a pointed question:

“Are you the king of the Jews?” (v. 33)

It’s not a question of curiosity. It’s a question of control. Because if Jesus is a king—then He’s a threat.

A threat to Roman rule. A threat to political peace. A threat to power. But Jesus’ response turns everything upside down.

“My kingdom is not of this world.” (v. 36)

In other words: **Yes—I am a king. But not the kind you’re used to.**

Not one who rallies troops or draws swords.

Not one who claims land or raises taxes.

Not one who manipulates, intimidates, or dominates.

Jesus’ kingdom doesn’t come by conquest. It comes through surrender. It doesn’t look like Caesar’s empire—it looks like heaven breaking into earth.

Zechariah 9:9 – “*See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey.*”

Jesus had already fulfilled this prophecy just days earlier—riding into Jerusalem not with military fanfare, but on the back of a donkey. Gentle. Humble. Deliberate.

And now He stands before Pilate—unarmed, unafraid, unshaken. The irony? Pilate thinks he’s in control, but the true King is standing right in front of him.

Satan is a modern-day Pilate. He thinks he’s winning, he thinks he’s in control, and yes, it is true. He has won some battles.

There is so much division and confusion in our world, but friends, Satan may win some battles, but Jesus wins the war. Jesus is our king.

In our text:

This is not the kind of king the world expects.

- He doesn’t seize power—**He lays it down.**
- He doesn’t ride a war horse—**He rides a donkey.**
- He doesn’t demand allegiance—**He invites relationship.**
- He doesn’t rule through fear—**He rules through love.**

This is a different kind of kingdom. It’s not of this world—because it comes from above.

Isaiah 55:8–9 – “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,*” declares the Lord.

And maybe—just maybe—**that’s why so many people missed Him.**

Because we're drawn to kings who look impressive. We expect leaders who show strength and control.

But Jesus shows us that **true kingship is marked by humility, truth, and sacrifice.**

So let me ask you today:

Are you following a king who looks powerful... or the King who is humble and true?

Because there's a difference. And your answer will shape everything about the way you live.

2. The True King Wears a Crown of Thorns

After Jesus speaks of a kingdom "not of this world," Pilate doesn't know what to make of Him. So, like the world always does with what it doesn't understand—he tries to shame Him.

"Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head."

(John 19:1–2)

Let that image sink in. **The King of heaven is crowned with thorns.**

Not gold. Not jewels. But the sharp, cutting mockery of a broken world. The soldiers are trying to humiliate Him.

But without realizing it, they're revealing a deeper truth: **This is the kind of King Jesus really is.**

Isaiah 53:3 – *"He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain."*

He's not a king who distances Himself from our suffering. He steps into it. He doesn't rule from the palace—He walks into our pain. While earthly kings display their power, **Jesus displays His love.**

While earthly kings surround themselves with comfort,
Jesus is surrounded by thorns.

While earthly kings avoid suffering at all costs,
Jesus embraces it—for our sake.

And that crown of thorns... It didn't just pierce His skin. It revealed the very heart of His kingship.

- **He reigns not by crushing His enemies—but by forgiving them.**
- **He rules not with iron fists—but with nail-scarred hands.**
- **He leads not by domination—but by self-giving sacrifice.**

This is the King we follow.

Philippians 2:8 – “*He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!*”

And here's the challenge for us: We live in a world obsessed with **power, status, and control.** But we follow a King who chose **humility, suffering, and love.**

Question: Are you chasing the world's version of power... or are you willing to follow a King who walks the path of humility?

Because the kind of crown your king wears will shape the kind of life you build.

3. His Kingdom Is Not of This World

Read: John 18:36-37

Standing before Pilate, the most powerful man in the region, Jesus makes a declaration that turns the entire idea of kingship on its head:

“My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest... But now my kingdom is from another place.” (v. 36)

His kingdom is not secured by swords.

It's not upheld by policies.

It's not driven by popularity polls or military strength.

It's something entirely different.

Philippians 2:6–8 – *“[Jesus], being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage... he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!”*

Jesus had all authority—**He could have called down angels.** He could have crushed His enemies.

But instead, **He laid down His life.** Not because He was weak, but because His kingdom runs on different rules.

- The world's kingdoms are built by **violence**—Jesus' is built by **love**.
- The world's kingdoms are protected by **armies**—Jesus' is protected by **truth**.
- The world's kingdoms are advanced by **power**—Jesus' is advanced by **sacrifice**.

Jesus didn't come to climb the ladder—**He came to flip it over.**

Matthew 20:26–28 – *“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant... just as the Son of Man*

did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

In the kingdoms of this world, greatness means being above others. In Jesus’ kingdom, greatness means kneeling lower to serve. And here’s the question:

Are we building our lives on the world’s image of power... or on Jesus’ image of humility, love, and truth?

Because if we’re citizens of *His* kingdom, then our lives will look upside down to the world—and perfectly right-side up to the King.

Conclusion: A King Like No Other

So let’s come back to the question: **What kind of king are you following?**

This world offers kings who look impressive—powerful, polished, in control. But we’ve seen where that path leads.

In Week 2, we saw how the people of God demanded a king they could see—**and in doing so, they rejected God’s reign.**

In Week 3, we watched even the wisest king—Solomon—**fall under the weight of his own pride.** And today, we’ve come face-to-face with a different kind of king entirely.

Jesus is a King—**but not the kind we expected.**

He doesn’t fight for control—He offers grace.

He doesn’t flex strength—He displays love.

He doesn’t rule by intimidation—He rules by humility.

While other kings wear crowns of gold,

He wears a crown of thorns.

While other kings avoid suffering,

He walks straight into it.

While other kings demand loyalty,

He lays down His life for His enemies.

And His kingdom?

It doesn't look like anything we've seen.

It's not driven by political force.

It's not built on human pride.

It's built on truth, love, and the cross.

So what kind of King are you expecting - and are you willing to be surprised by Jesus?

Because only one King gave everything for you.

Only one King conquered sin and death.

Only one King still reigns today—and forever.

No king but the True King.

Let's pray together.