



# The Kingdom Perspective

## The “Threatening” Good News

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

The message of Jesus’s Gospel was very difficult for the ancient Roman Empire to process. The word “gospel” was not unfamiliar to the Romans. They would have spoken of the “good news” of the rise of a new emperor. For example, when Augustus, who a few years earlier had conquered all the rebellious factions within Rome, was established as emperor on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 27 B.C. monuments were soon erected proclaiming statements, such as, “Providence... by producing Augustus [has sent] us and our descendants a Savior, who has put an end to war....” Such language sounds quite religious to us, but it was actually quite natural for one to use of the empire. The state demanded ultimate allegiance. Thus, the state and its leaders took on, what we would call, “religious significance.”

So, when the message of Jesus comes on the scene proclaiming Him as “Lord and Savior”, His followers are not using “religious language” but are borrowing from secular. They are saying that there is an allegiance higher than all earthly kingdoms. Thus, is it any wonder that this was seen as a threat to the peace and stability of Rome? It was actually this implied threat that helped seal Jesus’s fate. Remember, the crowd at Jesus’s trial shouted: “If you release this man, you are no ‘friend of Caesar.’ Anyone who declares himself a king is a rebel against Caesar” (John 19:12). And so, Jesus was executed by Rome.

Now, today’s Christians have, perhaps, the opposite difficulty the Roman state had against Christians. Since we live in the wake of 2,000 years of Christian influence, we have a hard time processing the audacious claims of Jesus. We have a hard time seeing how our “private and personal” beliefs could be a threat to anyone. However, Jesus is not just your “personal Savior and Lord”; He’s Lord...of *all*!

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

“In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

~ Luke 2:1-11 (ESV)

Thank you for listening to and supporting The Kingdom Perspective! The Kingdom Perspective is a ministry of Christ Redeemer Church of Hanover, NH. To hear more episodes you can subscribe on Apple Podcasts. To donate [click here](#) or to find out more about the ministry and resources offered by Christ Redeemer Church visit [www.christredeemerchurch.org](http://www.christredeemerchurch.org).