

CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY



Who Sits On the Throne of Your Heart?

Over the holidays, my parents and I watched a wide variety of movies in the evening. As I was the only one who knew how to work the remote, I was the one that read out each of the options. And let me tell you ... it is not easy to pick a movie that everyone will enjoy!

My parents like to watch movies based on a true story – as I do as well. So, when I suggested “Rose Island”, I knew it was a possibility.

Rose Island tells the story of Italian engineer, Giorgio Rosa, who in the late 1960s, built his own island in the Adriatic Sea, about 12 km off the coast of Rimini in Italy.

Now, don't start envisioning a sandy island. Rather picture a 400 sqm platform suspended about 26 metres above the sea by steel pylons.

When completed, Rosa made himself the president and declared it an independent state – the Republic of Rose Island, thus creating his very own utopian micro-nation – a symbol of freedom and autonomy. He became known as the “prince of anarchists.”



Now, interestingly, I discovered, Giorgio Rosa is not the only one to declare themselves the president or ruler of their own domain. In fact, Australia has one of the largest number of micro-nations in the world.¹ Indeed, the desire for autonomy is one of the most prominent themes in our world today.

We live in a world that believes the more personal autonomy you hold, the more you'll experience the joy of freedom. This is encapsulated in an Eftpos TV Commercial which said,

"I am king. Master of my destiny. Ruler of my fate. I march to the beat of my own drum. I hold the reins. I press the buttons. I call the shots. I bow to no one. I am free."

Yet, this belief system stands in stark contrast to how Jesus urged His followers to live their lives.

Today, on Christ the King Sunday, we acknowledge, honour and worship the rule and reign of Jesus - not only as our personal King, but also as the universal King who sits in authority over every ruler in heaven and on earth.

¹ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-06/hutt-river-commonwealth-micronations-in-australia/12521668>

Yet to many, the expression “King Jesus” sounds a little strange. To our modern ears, ‘kingship’ is often believed to be antiquated and no longer relevant.

So, how are we to understand Jesus’ kingship in our lives?

Before making our confession today, we’ll hear the words of the two great commandments God gave His people. Each person is called to *“love the Lord our God with all of their heart, their soul, their mind and their strength.”*

The only way to obey this great commandment is by ensuring that King Jesus remains seated on the throne of our heart. Yet, although we’d all heartily agree the core responsibility of the follower of Christ is to give Jesus the right to sit on the throne of our heart, it really is easier said than done.

Point 1 | Jesus Christ deserves to sit on the throne of our heart. However, ultimately it is up to us whether we will give him that honour in our lives.

There is an old fashion skit that I watched years ago that really makes this point clear. Let’s watch it and then we’ll talk about some lessons we can learn.

[Watch 2 minute video]

Now, most of us here today have made the decision to allow Jesus to sit on the throne in our heart. That means, Jesus gets to make the decisions, not us. What He says goes. We don’t tell him what to do, how to do it, or what needs to be changed. When Jesus sits on the throne of our heart, Jesus holds total authority.

But as much as we *want* Jesus to remain on that throne – every moment of every day there are little decisions we make, which, like in the video, can have the effect of pushing Jesus off the throne, resulting in a struggle of who will be in control.



Point 2 | Although we may invite Jesus to sit on the throne of our heart, little decisions and choices will impact whether He remains there, or whether a fight for control will ensue.

We live in a world which prizes personal autonomy very highly. So, it is not unusual that the battle for who will be in control of our lives is a difficult one. However, although we may think this is a modern “game of thrones”, actually this battle has been around for centuries.

What it boils down to is the problem of pride. And the Scriptures reveal humans were not the first ones to enter this battlefield. When speaking of the Prince of Tyre, whom most Bible commentators recognise is referring to Lucifer, Isaiah prophesies,

“For you said to yourself, ‘I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God’s stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north.’” (Isaiah 14:13)

But, although Lucifer was the first to experience the fall that comes after pride, he is not the only one. The pride that causes us to want to hold onto control of our lives, remains in all of us.

This means none of us are exempt from the constant battle for who will be our lord and king – will it be us or will it be King Jesus?

Point 3 | Followers of Christ must choose to grant Jesus the honour and Lordship to rule our lives. This is not a once off decision, but rather is a constant process of surrendering to Christ’s Lordship.

That's why the Apostle Paul urges us to have the attitude that says,

"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
(Galatians 2:20 New Living Translation)

Jesus is Lord. We are not.

But it is very scary to give Jesus complete control of our lives.

What if He asks us to do something that simply doesn't make sense?

Or, what if Jesus asks us to do something we simply don't want to do?

Or, what if Jesus doesn't do things the way we think He ought?

Or, what if we're not sure whether God can take care of us as well as we can take care of ourselves?

These are the battles that take place on the battlefield of control.

Yet, all these battles are won by holding onto the same truth.

The Bible is clear, the way to overcome the battle of control is to trust and rest in God's faithfulness.

We know our Heavenly Father is completely reliable to do what He says.

He will take care of us, lead us, sustain us, and provide for us. (see Psalm 33:4, 40:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, Hebrews 10:23 for some examples.)

We learn and experience God's faithfulness, when we give Jesus the right to sit on the throne of our heart.

Application |

So, once Jesus is seated on the throne, how can we ensure Jesus remains there?

The first step is to daily make a commitment to obey what the Scriptures tell us to do.

This shows we really love Jesus. For Jesus said,

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

And throughout the day, as we're faced with decisions and choices, we listen intently to the voice of the Spirit. When Jesus asks us to do something we're not really confident about, or simply don't want to do ... we whisper quietly in our heart, "Yes, Lord, because I love you, I'll do as you ask."

Let us ask Jesus to help us to that every day.