

Our Conquering King Psalm 110

Intro:

Last week we looked at the first part of this Psalm and saw that what we believe about doctrines like Christ's deity and humanity; His life, death and resurrection. His kingship and the timing of the kingdom – all have enormous ramifications. Sometimes these doctrines affect us without our even realizing it. But more often than not, we have to very self-consciously allow those doctrines to grab our soul and transform us. Too many times we live inconsistently with our doctrine just as the drivers in India (that I talked about last week) seem to live inconsistently with the lines painted on the streets. Our focus last week was on the implications of Palm Sunday.

But today I want to examine the implications of Christ's resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father. Is Jesus doing anything up there right now? If so, what? Is His present work strictly that of a priest interceding for His people? We will see that this is a critical work that all branches of the church believe He is engaged in. But is there more? What can we expect from our risen Lord? The answer to that question will make (or at least *should* make) a huge difference in how we live. He is a king (verses 1-2). He is a King who rules by a gracious priestly work (verses 3-4). He is a King who judges all rebels (verses 5-7). And I want to encourage you to respond to His Word as we study it with reverence, worship, love, gratitude, repentance where necessary, faith, hope and praise. Let your hearts worship our King, Priest and Judge.

VI. Christ's Reign Is Gradually and Progressively Advancing (v. 1,3,4; Matt. 13:31-33,36-43; Mark 4:26-29; 1 Cor. 15:22-28; Heb. 1:13)

And we will probably spend most of our time on point VI since it is the least understood. Point VI says that Christ's reign is gradually and progressively advancing, which logically means that Satan's kingdom is gradually and progressively losing ground. A majority of Christians today deny both the "gradual" part of the equation (they believe we are not in the kingdom and the kingdom will be brought in instantaneously and perfectly at the Second Coming) and they deny the "advancing" part of the equation (they think things are getting worse and worse and that the church will one day be extinguished). For example, one very famous Reformed author said, "...there will be comparatively few true believers upon earth when He comes again. True faith will be found as rare as it was in the days of Noah, when only eight persons entered the ark, and in the days of Lot, when only

four persons left Sodom." (J. C. Ryle)¹ His version of Christ's manifesto is, "I will try to build My church, but the gates of hell will eventually prevail against it." That is exactly the implications of his theology.

When controversies like this come up, some people immediately get impatient. They think, "Who cares? What difference does it make? I'm just going to be a pan-millennialist. I'm not going to worry about it because it will all pan out in the end." But we saw last week that it won't all pan out if the church is not active. God has chosen to work through volunteers. It won't all pan out if the church doesn't have faith. And you can't have faith if you don't understand God's promises for the future. Your sense of morale, courage, hope and faith flows out of what you believe. Let me illustrate that. General Wellington commanded forces at Waterloo on behalf of the British, and he had a decisive win in that particular battle. That was the turning point of the whole war. When the battle was over, he spelled out by code, "Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo." The problem was that the fog set in right after the words "Wellington defeated" were spelled out, and it brought great discouragement to the people. If Wellington was defeated at Waterloo, it meant that continued fighting would be hopeless. But when the fog cleared the message continued: "Wellington defeated *Napoleon* at Waterloo." Well, that made all the difference in the world, and there was not only great rejoicing in the streets, but a renewed determination to finish what they started. We need to spell out the whole message of Palm Sunday, Resurrection Day, Pentecost Sunday and beyond if the troops are to once again have the faith, hope and courage to continue. So that's my goal today.

There have been many soldiers who have been willing to lay down their lives for a good cause that they believed would be won. For example, the soldiers under Robert E. Lee enthusiastically charged into battle even against enormous odds because they trusted their leaders and really thought that it was a winnable battle. With the death of Stonewall Jackson, it took the wind out of their sails. And I think it is significant that he got shot by one of his own soldiers. We are not defeated today because of the strength of the enemy today. We are being defeated today because the church can't get its theological and moral act together and it is shooting itself. What you believe about doctrine has a profound affect upon your life.

So let's look at the evidence. Verse 1 says that this battle is winnable. It's promising a time when all enemies will be beneath Christ's feet. Verse 2 reinforces that. Verse 4 assures us that our General will not relent; He will

¹J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, Luke, II* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1976), p. 258

not give up. Verses 5-7 make it clear which side you better be fighting on. It's clear who wins in this Psalm. Jesus does.

What about the second side of the equation? Will this be won all at once at the Second Coming? Or will it be won gradually over history? Let's look at the evidence. The word "till" in verse 1 implies a long period of history to make enemies Christ's footstool. It's not the Second coming that wins. He won't come back till the last enemy is already conquered. In 1 Corinthians, Paul says that every other enemy will be subject to Christ except for death. Death will be conquered as He comes back when we are caught up to meet Him in the air. So every other enemy is put down before that. We have already seen that verse 2 implies that enemies are not conquered overnight. He's ruling for a period of time while enemies are still around. The enthusiastic volunteers in verse 3 are not enthusiastic because they start out as a majority. Far from it. They started off in Acts 2 as only 120 disciples in the upper room. Just a tiny mustard seed. They were enthusiastic because they really were convinced that the Great Commission could be achieved by God's power. Then verse 3 uses three metaphors or images to convey a gradual process: one is a womb, which indicates conceptions and beginnings. It's the place of initial growth.

The second metaphor is morning. The womb of the morning indicates the very beginnings of the morning. So this Psalm indicates that when Christ ascended to the right hand of the Father, the morning of the kingdom was just beginning. What does that mean? For Westerners, a day begins at midnight and ends at midnight. So it starts in darkness and ends in darkness. But that is not the way Biblical days were counted. God didn't count days from midnight to midnight or even from morning to evening. Genesis begins with darkness and then mentions some evening/morning progressions. **So the evening and the morning were the first day, the second day, the third day, etc.** So we can see that God's days started with darkness at about 6 pm and end with light. This is the way it is in history. This is God's established pattern. History is not running down to darkness. The darkness of the Old Testament gives way to the dawning of the kingdom in the New Testament. And by the way, there will be no end of the metaphorical day, because at the end of the day we will be ushered into eternity.

By combining those two images (**the womb of the morning**) he powerfully conveys a number of ideas. He is not denying that there was life before Christ's ascension. There was wonderful life, but it was still in the womb. A womb speaks of growth, but what comes out of the womb must grow up as well. This image speaks of beginnings, and what is beginning is the light of the Messianic Kingdom.

Now it's true that the New Testament predicts that in the last days of the Old Covenant leading up to 70 AD, there would be a falling away, and things would be getting worse and worse as the birth pangs of the kingdom came upon it. Scripture describes those days from Christ to 70 AD as birth pangs. But those were just the last days of the Old Covenant. And the Bible speaks of the bride travailing and giving birth during those days. Once 70 AD hit, the church began to take off so fast that within 250 years a majority of the Roman Empire was Christian despite persecution. Was the church of the fourth century young and immature? Yes it was, but it is still growing. So those are the first two images of the womb and the dawning of the morning.

The third and fourth images in verse 3 are the refreshing dew that waters the earth and the image of a youth. And I think this is such a beautiful picture of Pentecost. The refreshing dew (that's the Holy Spirit) came down in the youth of His kingdom. In other words, the time of Pentecost is when Christ's kingdom is in its childhood.

There are other indications of this gradual progressive growth of the kingdom. Verse 4 says that He won't relent: **The Lord has sworn and will not relent.** Well, what does that imply? Two things: 1) that there is opposition and 2) secondly, that God will persevere. God will keep at it for a long period. Why? Because He is ruling in the midst of enemies – there is opposition. Verses 5-6 also indicate that it is being advanced over quite a period of time as He wars against nations and executes heads of countries.

Now when you think about it, this gradual progress makes perfect sense. How does He subdue our own hearts to Himself (as individuals)? Does He sanctify us overnight? No. We grow in grace over time. If individual sanctification is gradual, why should we expect it to be any different with Christ's reign in society as a whole? There are literally hundreds of Scriptures that speak of a progressively growing kingdom that is disputed by Satan and his forces. And I won't take the time to go over all of those. Instead, I want to give you a mental picture. Any time you want to think how this Psalm will be fulfilled, think of how the land of Canaan was conquered in the Old Testament. Hebrews says that conquest of Canaan is a picture of our work in the Great Commission. So Joshua goes into the land. Does he win it in one day? Obviously not. One year? Obviously not. There are still enemies to be subdued when Joshua dies. There are hundreds of years of Judges when Israel sometimes does well and sometimes does poorly. Then Saul and David finish off the conquest and Solomon reigns for a time of peace. That is a picture of the gradualness and the ups and downs of the last 2000 years, and (who know?) perhaps another 1000 years. In

Exodus 23:29-30 God says, **I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beast of the field become too numerous for you. Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land.** God is a God of order, and He establishes the kingdom more and more *as the people are ready*. Let me repeat that: *as the people are ready*. Are you ready for God to be using you? Are you volunteers in the day of His power?

I've harped on this point because I have seen so many people discouraged over God's purposes. I've seen people give up on their sanctification because they expect to overcome their enemy instantly. And when it doesn't happen, they become disillusioned. Why? They had a false hope of instant victory. That's not the way God usually works. And many others are discouraged because they don't see a national election won, or abortion instantly abolished. There are so many who have lost hope because they were banking on a false hope.

Amillennialist Herman Hanko said, "The world [is] filled with sin and getting worse, a hopeless situation beyond repair and impossible to salvage"² Did you get those words? Filled with sin; getting worse; hopeless; beyond repair; impossible. Do those words describe you? He and many like him dread every day because they believe Satan is gaining all the ground. It reminds me of the Peanuts comic strip I read one time. Charlie Brown had been criticized for his negative outlook on life, and one day he says, "I have a new philosophy. I'm only going to dread one day at a time." But we ought *not* to be dreading life as if all things are working together for the church's disaster and extinction. According to this Psalm it would be much more Biblical if the church would have a vision of Christ's kingdom that made them convinced that it is *Satan* who is dreading every day; that it is *Satan* who is doomed, and that even when he roars against the volunteers who are walking in His Spirit-power, there is nothing he can do to stop the church militant. He can slow them down for a time, yes. He can give them temporary setbacks, yes. He can make them backslide so that even God fights against His people for a time, yes. But even those things are designed to purify the church and make her stronger. Even the blood of the martyrs blossoms into hundreds of new converts. And this is one of many passages in the bible that gives a full-hearted hope in the power of the Gospel to conquer this world for king Jesus. When you begin to get discouraged over the state of America, stir up your faith by meditating upon these words: till,

² Hanko, "The Illusory Hope of Postmillennialism," p. 159.

sit, footstool, Your power, womb of the morning, the dew of Your youth, etc. They are designed to give us hope and perseverance.

VII. Christ's Reign Advances Through Us (v. 3; Rom. 8:37; 1 Cor. 15:57)

Point VII (or the second point for today) is that Christ's reign advances through us. I love that first phrase in verse 3. It indicates that we can never pit the doctrine of Christ's Kingship against the doctrine of human responsibility. When the power of God came upon the apostles and believers at Pentecost, it didn't turn them into robots. That's the accusation some people give – "If God is sovereign then we are robots." But verse 3 says, **Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power.** Far from producing grudging submission, God's sovereign power produces willing submission – volunteers! It makes His people delighted to make sacrifices for their glorious king.

What kind of volunteers are these? The Hebrew conveys the idea of signing up for the military. Here's how one version puts it: "Your people will volunteer when you call up your army." (GWord) The Old Geneva Bible (used by the Puritans) captures it this way: "Thy people shall come willingly at the time of assembling thine armie." So the imagery is of a General enlisting soldiers, and a whole host who volunteer willingly. What are they volunteering for? To take on the same enemies that Jesus takes on in verses 1-2. There's your call for life. We're not fighting a different war. Nor are we passive while Jesus subdues these enemies. No, King Jesus is leading us into battle. Think of your mental image of Joshua. When Joshua went into Canaan, the Israelites didn't get on the grandstands with popcorn and coke and watch God conquer Canaan for them. They had to risk their lives and livelihoods to take Canaan. No great thing was ever won without sacrifice and work. Our founding fathers in America risked their lives and fortunes to establish this nation, and we will not get this nation back without similar sacrifice. So that's point VII – Christ's reign advances through His people; through His volunteers.

VIII. Christ's Reign Advances Holiness (v. 3) Through Salvation ("Priest") and His Lordship ("King"). (vv. 3-4)

But point VIII shows the nature of this kingdom. It is to advance the beautiful holiness of God. Look at how verse 3 words it. Verse 3 starts by showing *who* will advance the kingdom – **Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power**. He then gives the character of this kingdom that they are advancing – **in the beauties of holiness**. He then indicates that it will start small and grow over time. **From the womb of the morning**. Then comes a description of the power needed to accomplish this growth. **You have the dew of Your youth**. We need the Spirit.

But the heart of that verse is the beautiful holiness that God desires for planet earth. Our passion should be the Lord's Prayer – **Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven**. In heaven, God's will is perfectly done. There are the beauties of holiness there. And we are praying that the same beauty of holiness would be done on earth. Jesus tells His people in Matthew 5, **Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**. Seek it. Seek it. Seek it. He prophecies in Isaiah 62:2 that this seeking will be successful: **The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory...** They are going to see it. This is not an empty promise. Jeremiah 23:5 says, **Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness. A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth**. It's not just in heaven, but also in the earth.

But how is this righteousness advanced? If all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags apart from Christ (Isaiah 64), then we've got a problem. And verses 3-4 give the solution to the problem. We've already mentioned that the dew is a reference to the Spirit's power. But look at verse 4. **The Lord has sworn and will not relent** [this solution comes from God, not man...] **"You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek**. Since "Melchizedek" means "king of righteousness," it would literally be, "you are a priest forever according to the order of a king of righteousness." This means that the righteousness of God's kingdom will be advanced through the work of Christ as priest and king. He's already been described as king in verses 1-2, but He repeats it here. Jesus is not just interested in your salvation from sin, but also in your restoration to righteousness. He is not just interested in being your priest. He is also interested in being your King. Another way of saying it is that Jesus is both Lord and Savior. Melchizedek was called a king and a priest in Genesis 14.

So verses 1-2 show that Jesus is presently king even when people don't acknowledge His kingship. Verses 3-4 add that He is a priest. The

salvation that this priest brings helps us to enjoy His kingship, rather than suffering under it.

Let's just apply this to our own situation. Should God's law be promoted in America? Some people say, "No. You need to evangelize first. You can't legislate morality." My response is that morality is the only thing that you can legislate. Look at the progression in this Psalm. It starts with kingship confronting enemies, then speaks of His priesthood in verse 4, then goes on to speak of judgment to those who neglect both. But Jesus doesn't wait until people receive His priestly work before He is willing to rule. Verse 2 makes clear that He rules even in the midst of enemies. Even if America is not Christian, it is still responsible to God's laws.

Secondly, this same truth informs us on the best method of evangelism. The evangelists of old would always start with the claims of God's law, their rebellion against their King and the terrors of His judgment. They preached 80% law and then (if people cried out for salvation) they would preach the sweetness of the Gospel of our High Priest. Until you realize you are lost you have no interest in salvation. So whether we are talking individually or culturally, the law is always appropriate. It is a necessary aspect of Christ's kingdom. Sometimes in the Old Testament magistrates converted and imposed God's laws from the top down. Other times laws were changed as people converted by grace from the bottom up. God can do it either way. I don't think we can separate His priestly and kingly work artificially. If people are confronted with their rebellion to His kingship first, then it drives them to His solution as priest. If they are spared confrontation by tasting of His priesthood first, it always leads them to enjoy His kingship.

Third, it is holiness that makes Christ's kingdom beautiful. He speaks of it being **in the beauties of holiness**. If you are selling God's kingdom and His righteousness, does His kingdom look beautiful or is it dressed in rags? Are you good ambassadors for the central purpose of His kingdom? Do you yourself love holiness? According to Romans 11, when Israel was cast out, we received the riches of the kingdom (verse 12). But this display of His riches was designed to provoke Israel to jealousy (verse 11). And Paul sought to live in a way that Jewish individuals would become jealous of what he had (verse 14). And what was true of individuals, the chapter says will eventually be true of cultures. When Christ's holy kingdom captivates an entire nation, other nations will envy the beauty of holiness and desire it for themselves. Deuteronomy 4 says so. So that's the third application: do we adorn ourselves with holiness? Do we make it beautiful to the world? Many Christians today are despising the very thing that Deuteronomy 4 says

is beautiful. They paint God's give of the law as an ugly thing. But Isaiah 42:4 prophesies that Christ's kingdom will advance to a degree that **the coastlands shall wait for His law**. They will see holiness as beautiful.

The fourth application is that we should never seek holiness in our own strength, but must seek it through the life that Christ gives us. Receive daily cleansing from your Priest, Jesus. Receive daily power from your King, Jesus. It is only through His grace that we can live life as we should.

The fifth application is that this holiness does not happen all at once, but gradually advances in our lives individually and in cultures corporately. **In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.** The beauties of holiness starts in the womb of the morning and grows. Don't be discouraged. Press upward.

IX. Christ Reign Is Cosmic in It's Scope: Heaven (v. 1) and Earth (v. 6); Within the Church (v. 2) and Outside the Church (v. 2ff); With Friends (v. 3) and With Enemies (v. 1,2,5,6)

Point IX indicates that Christ's priestly kingship is cosmic in its scope. It is comprehensive. Verse 1 indicates that He has authority in heaven, and verse 6 indicates that He has authority on earth. When was Christ given all authority in heaven and on earth? Matthew 28 says that it's already happened.

Unfortunately, even within Reformed circles there is sometimes a tendency to look at the kingdom in a reductionistic way – seeing it as purely within the church. But verse 2 indicates that Christ rules within Zion (that's the church), and verses 2 and following indicate that He is also ruling outside of Zion. Verse 3 indicates that He rules over friends, and verses 1,2,5 and 6 indicate that He rules over enemies. David Chilton very rightly said, “Every aspect of life throughout the world is to be brought under the Lordship of Jesus Christ: families, individuals, business, science, agriculture, the arts, law, education, economics, psychology, philosophy, and every sphere of human activity. Nothing may be left out. *Christ must reign, until He has put all enemies under His feet.*”³ And all I can say is “Amen.” His reign is comprehensive, and our interests must therefore be cosmic. We try to give our children an interest in God's whole cosmos in their home schooling. “All for Jesus” should be our heart's passion. It's all relevant. It is this doctrine that should make a Christian physicist passionate about making discoveries at an atomic level, or a chemist passionate about finding a cure for malaria, or an astronomer overcoming humanistic interpretations of the

³David Chilton, *Paradise Restored* (Fort Worth, Texas: Dominion Press, 1987), p. 213.

cosmos. We cannot be satisfied until all of life is consciously glorifying its Creator in our minds. All for Jesus!

X. God Will Not Give Up, And Neither Should We ((v. 4)

A tenth point is that God will not give up and neither should we. Verse 4 says, **The LORD has sworn and will not relent.** Relenting is exactly the problem we have many times. And I am so thankful that God does not relent despite the fact that we sometimes do. We give up because the task looks too hopeless and the enemies around us look too many. This is what got the ten spies into trouble in the book of Numbers. They looked at all the giants in the land and they relented in their determination to advance.

And during those times when we get discouraged and want to give up, David is telling us to take our eyes off of our circumstances and off of ourselves and to put them onto the sufficiency of Christ. David didn't see himself as the answer: he looked to Christ as Lord. Isaiah 42 says that the Messiah would not grow discouraged or give up until He has established justice in the earth. As Balyeat said, "The Church has been paralyzed by its false short-termed, pessimistic, predestined view of the future. The enthroned Christ, who has been given all power and authority and dominion, has stretched forth His mighty hand to the paralyzed cripple, and said, "*Arise, take up your mat, and walk!*"⁴ And again, I say, "Amen." God will ensure that Christ's priestly and kingly work is successful. God will not go back on either his purpose to save or His purpose to rule through Christ. He has sworn, and He will not relent. There should be no turning back for us either.

XI. Christ's Reign Will Tolerate No Competition (v. 5-6)

But now we get to the scary part of this psalm. Notice in verses 5-6 that Christ also brings judgment in history. He is not just a King. He is not just a Priest. He is also as Judge. **The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries.** In some ways those are chilling words. Every nation down through history has had a day of wrath when it has been in rebellion. Does that mean that America might suffer a high body count and high losses of leaders if it does not repent? I believe so. Psalm 2 says that Christ takes His rod of iron and smashes every nation that rejects His rule.

⁴Joseph Balyeat, Babylon, *The Great City Of Revelation* (Sevierville, TN: Onward Press, 1991), p. 192.

America is not an exception. There is no way we can escape without repentance when we have been killing millions of babies through abortion. There is no way God can turn a blind eye to pornography, sexual perversions and all the other sins that moved God to cast the ancient nations out of the land of Canaan. I see God's hand of judgment all over America. He has given us up onto a reprobate mind.

Verse 5 says that these judgments of Christ flow from heaven – **The Lord is at Your right hand.** But the rest of the passage indicates that His work *from* God's right hand *affects the earth*. It affects kings, nations, places, bodies, heads of countries. This is very tangible stuff. God used Rome to smash Israel in the first century, and He used others to smash Rome. The last 2000 years of history is a series of smashings from Jesus. And I don't believe that we can be exempt. That is why I am so passionate about calling family, church and culture back to God. Without repentance we are in deep trouble.

But the encouraging thing about these judgments is that they are redemptive judgments. In fact, most judgments down through history have been used redemptively by the Lord to save multitudes. So all is not lost. Judgment on rebels many times results in rest for His church. Even the threat of judgment has sometimes brought repentance.

So the rest of the Bible calls us to be in agreement with His judgments. Don't fear them; be in agreement with them. And the easiest way to do that is to pray the imprecatory Psalms against His enemies. Revelation 8 promises that should the whole church rise up to do so, there would be immediate responses of judgment from God. It describes a censer of incense filled with the prayers of the saints, and verses 5 and 6 say, **Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.** And then it describes regiment after regiment of angelic warriors being sent into battle. If Jesus is the General, and we are the volunteers of His army, then we too must take up this spiritual weapon (this rod of iron) and ask for God's judgments. I believe that when we seriously do so, we will see the advancement of God's kingdom as we have never seen it before.

XII. Christ Will Gain The Final Victory (vv. 5-7)

And ultimately Jesus will gain the victory. Verse 4 says that God has sworn to it. His very integrity is at stake. Likewise, that is the symbol being portrayed in verse 7. **He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; therefore He shall lift up the head.** Christ is pursuing the enemies until He

can lift up His head in triumph over them. Here's how Isaiah 42 words it: **He will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law.** But that means that even His volunteers must be just as dedicated.

God never said Christian conquest would be easy; sacrifices are involved. Sanctification is not easy; sacrifices are involved. War is always difficult, and we are in a war with the world, the flesh and the devil. Our sword is the Bible and our armor is described in Ephesians 6 and our power is the Holy Spirit. But this verse gives us the comfort that Christ is leading the battle and that He has no intentions of giving up and going back to camp until He has completely vanquished every foe.

One of the professors at Westminster Seminary was asking his daughter what the book of Revelation teaches, and her answer is the best answer I have heard. The girl said, "Jesus wins!" And we need to keep that firmly in mind. During those times when we grow discouraged in our growth in holiness, remind yourself that Jesus wins and He is on your side. Remind yourself that He won't give up on you until He has brought you all the way to glory as a bride without spot or wrinkle. Don't give up on yourself. Don't give up on each other. And when you are tempted to grow discouraged about Christ's battle against other outside enemies, remind yourself that 1 Corinthians 15 quotes this psalm and interprets the enemies as all rule, all authority, all power, and all things in this world; and Paul says that Christ is not going to give up on this world until all those enemies are put under His feet. This psalm should be a tremendous encouragement to us.

Father, thank you for guaranteeing Christ's victory. Thank you for your judgments. Thank you for your salvation that is offered to all, full and free. We do not want to worship a God made in our own image. We want to see you as you are, and glory in your plan for history. Thank you for giving us the privilege of being volunteers. We seek your power to do so in holiness. We seek your wisdom for our work. We devote our lives to your cause. In Jesus name. Amen.

Let's close, by singing Spurgeon's Battle Hymn, which captures the gracious reign of Christ in our lives as priest, king and judge.

A Battle Hymn

Forth to the battle rides our King; He climbs the conquering car;
He fits His arrows to the string, and hurls His bolts afar.
Convictions pierce the stoutest hearts, they smart, they bleed, they die;
Slain by Immanuel's well-aimed darts, in helpless heaps they lie.

Behold, He bares His two-edged sword, and deals almighty blows;
His all-revealing, killing Word 'twixt joints and marrow goes.
Who can resist Him in the fight? He cuts through coats of mail.
Before the terror of His might the hearts of rebels fail.

Anon, arrayed in robes of grace, he rides the trampled plain,
With pity beaming in His face, and mercy in His train.
Mighty to save He now appears, mighty to raise the dead,
Mighty to staunch the bleeding wound, and lift the fallen head.

Victor alike in love and arms, myriads around Him bend;
Each captive owns His matchless charms, each foe becomes His friend.
They crown Him on the battle-field, they press to kiss His feet;
Their hands, their hearts, their all they yield: His conquest is complete.

None love Him more than those He slew; His love their hate has slain;
Henceforth their souls are all on fire to spread His gentle reign.

Charles H. Spurgeon