

September 24, 2023  
LWML Sunday  
Pastor Matt Duerr

### “The King is Coming-Part I”

Grace mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen. I'm sure all of you have heard that little joke, it's very simple, it goes like this: Do want to make God laugh? Make plans. It applies to someone who's like me. I tend to make plans and get things organized and I'm always planning in advance; and then you have weeks like I've just had. A two-week period that just did not go at all the way I planned.

First of all, Pastor Tim had called, and he had said, ‘hey I'd like to do a two-week sermon series on the church,’ to which I said ‘great!’ Because in the back of my mind, I was looking at it going, this falls right at the time when Tracy’s going to be out for a week because of her wedding; and so not having to do the sermon will be most helpful without having a secretary here. Second, I was a little behind on where I wanted to be and writing Bible studies and if I don't have to write sermons and put together a worship service then I could spend more time writing Bible studies. And I've been really wanting to finish off some seminar work I've been working on when it comes to you know; LGBTQ, IADEI, critical race theory, and all that stuff. It was going to give me a chance to finalize some of the last little things that we need to take care of in terms of our performing the Corporate Deanery. And finally, at home, it would let me get caught up on stuff around my house and finish some projects at my son's house. And so, I was kind of excited about this. And it was like 24 hours later that I get a phone call from a good friend of mine Pastor Cal over at Saint Paul in Tracy asking me if I'd be willing to be a presenter at the upcoming district men's retreat, which fell right in this two-week period. Yeah, no notice at all. And my response was you know Cal, I can't. I just have so many things on my plate right now. And he said, oh gosh Matt really, it's on prayer; we're going to be focusing on prayer. And having just done that sermon series prior to vacation on the powerful prayers of Pentecost; I think it was the Holy Spirit that said, ‘Matt, just do it.’ And I said, ‘OK, yeah I can do that.’

It was the next day that I got my first of three calls about members who have been put into Hospice care. One who three days later, passed away. And

then there was a variety of staffing issues we had within our childcare center, and a variety of things around the church that needed to be fixed, or this, or that, or whatever. And it was just one thing after another, after another. And then I had my physical with my doctor where I found out my PSA number had doubled. Yes again, very small, but still it doubled. And when I told Margie about it, she said, 'you probably feel like Tom Hanks, don't you?' I knew exactly what she was talking about. It's that movie The Money Pit. They have this house they're trying to fix it up and everything just keeps going wrong. Eventually the bathtub actually goes through the 2nd floor. It falls on the first floor. Tom Hanks is staying there he goes, 'Ha! Ha!' and that's right where I was at. And when the phone rang the next day and I found out that 'hey you know LWML Sunday is in October the first Sunday or we could do it on the second Sunday and I had already made plans for a six week sermon series and this was going to be right in the middle of it. Ha! I just prayed, "Oh Lord Jesus, help."

And then came the answer almost immediately. What's the theme for LWML Sunday? The King of Glory is Coming. Well, there was my answer. It comes from Psalm 24, a Psalm of David. We did it for our introit this morning. The King of glory is coming, how is He described? Well, the King, the Lord, He's strong and mighty. The King, the Lord, He is mighty in battle. And really let's be honest, when it comes down to the church, where is the first battle? The first battle is within the church, within His own people. In fact, think of Jesus Himself and the struggle that He had.

If we go to our gospel reading this morning, which comes from Luke chapter seven, we again have to put it into context. Luke chapter 6 is the Sermon on the Mount. It's the condensed version, so when Luke writes at the beginning of Luke 7, "after He had finished all these sayings;" he's referring to the total Sermon on the Mount. And if we go to the Gospel of Matthew, we find that it is three whole chapters long. And we also find that when Jesus had finished the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew, the crowds were astonished at His teachings. For He was teaching them as one who had authority and not like one of the scribes. Poor scribes, I mean they probably had a good heart. They probably tried to teach well, but how do you go up

against the King of Glory, against the Son of God? And I imagine you could think they were maybe and wee bit envious. Scribes, His own people.

As he was coming down from the Sermon on the Mount and in Matthew, we read a leper came to Him and he said, 'Lord if you will, you can make me clean.' And I love Jesus' response. First, He shows authority. He touches the man; that's against the Levitical law. But the law doesn't apply to God. He touches the man, and He answers the man according to how the man had come to Him. The man had said 'Lord if you will.' Jesus said, "I will." It's His will. "I will, be clean and immediately the leprosy left him."

Now we go back to Luke 7. Jesus has done the sermon on the mount, he's healed this leper, people are astonished at his authority, and he comes into Capernaum. And what happens? He's confronted by a centurion who says, 'Lord, my servant is sick, the servant who I love, he's sick, heal him. And Jesus says, 'OK, I'll come with you and heal him.' That's when the centurion says, 'no, for I understand, I know you have authority. I have authority, I tell one of my soldiers go, and he goes, do this, he does this. Lord, just say the word, and I know my servant will be healed. And Jesus says the word, the servant is healed, and Jesus says, (again, this takes authority to say what He says) "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith."

How do you think the scribes the fairies the statuses the elders all of the leadership would take for that phrase? "Not even in Israel have I found such faith." From there He enters that little village of Nain, where He meets a funeral procession. The only son of a widow had died and was going to be buried. What does that mean? Well, since her husband is dead, and her only son is dead, she has no legal standing in the Jewish courts. Therefore, those people with money can swoop in and take out the estate and leave her absolutely destitute. And He stops the funeral procession. Why? Well, we read, "when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her. That is what a true King should have. And He told her, 'do not weep.' There's a certain amount of authority to tell a widow who has lost everything, don't weep. But He backs it up by taking action, which a good King would do. "Young man, I say to you arise." And he got up. Now that is real authority! And we read; "and this report about Him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country."

Then John the Baptist's disciples arrive. John's in prison because he had spoken out against Herod and how Herod was living a life of adultery. And so, Herod had him imprisoned. John's message to Jesus comes in the form of a question. Are you the one to come? Which one? The King of Glory that King David spoke of. Are you the One to come or shall we look for another? Now if you're like me, you probably have John, the Baptist way up here on a pedestal. Because he's an amazing guy. And you might be saying, 'John had questions like this? Sure, he did because Jesus wasn't acting like a physical, worldly, king. And that is what was being taught was that the Messiah would be a worldly king.

Jesus doesn't respond to those disciples with any words. Instead, we read: "in that hour He healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits and gave sight to many who were blind. And then He said to John's disciples, 'Go and tell John what you have seen.'" What have they seen? They've seen the King of glory, mighty and strong, just as King David said.

After they left Jesus puts everything into perspective. He again speaks with authority because He says, "No one greater than John has ever been born." How do you think the spiritual leaders at that time felt about that statement? And it was a proper statement because John was not at all like the spiritual leaders of that time.

And the result of Jesus saying that, Luke records that the pharisees and lawyers of the time rejected the purpose of God. What was the purpose of God? To send His Son as the King of glory who would come and redeem His people. How dare Jesus speak with such authority was their mindset. Their mindset was probably something like this. How dare you talk like that? You're not even a Levite, you're not of the Levitical clan. Therefore, you're not a priest. It's not your job to preserve knowledge. You don't lead temple worship, you don't lead the atoning sacrifice, that's the job of us Levites! Meanwhile the Pharisees would say nor are you a Pharisee, a legal expert. We would today call them the modern day educated elite. Now again, let me make something very clear here so you don't get confused about what I'm talking about. There's different levels of education and areas where you get, shall we say, an elite level of education. They are the doctoral programs. I am not talking about a PhD. Ph stands for philosophy. These are people who get doctorates in

philosophy, or of philosophy. Philosophy is man-made wisdom or man-made understanding. I'm not talking about PhD. The Pharisees would be a modern day ThD the Doctor of Theology or a DoD, a Doctor of Divinity. And let's be honest if you were in a group and you're speaking about the Bible, and there's someone there who has their ThD or DoD and they say something about the Bible that that you think might be off base; are you going to take them on knowing they've got that Doctor of Theology or a Doctor of Divinity? And if you did respond what would their response to you be? 'What do you know? I'm the expert.' I think that we probably can look at some of the areas in our world today and see where that expert card just gets played to nullify whatever anybody else says. That was the

Nor was Jesus the Sadducees who would have said to him something like this because they were the Jewish aristocrats and had total control of both the temple and the functions that took place in the temple. The Sanhedrin they would say something like this, 'oh Jesus come on, you don't have the lineage. You're not a Levite nor are you a direct descendant of Seth like we are. Those Sadducees played that card well. They were well, they were the Jewish aristocrats. Again, in total control of the temple, total control of the Sanhedrin, they made a pile of money. They were the politicians of faith at that time. You know we have politicians today who claim to be servants of the people, and yet they themselves have three or four mansions or something that's the way the Sadducees work. Annis, his mansion, his house in Jerusalem where Jesus was taken for His trial; that house was 6000 square feet. And that wasn't his only one, he had others around. Caiphas as well. You know today we look at 6000 feet and think he has a big house, but there's bigger ones in Hollywood, stuff like that. At that time, when your average everyday house was about 300 square feet, 6000 square feet was really big. It would be the equivalent of today looking like a 40,000 square foot mansion compared to the average home.

All of these rejected Jesus because Jesus didn't play by their rules; their rules are Gods. Nor did He meet their expectations. And this is where Peter writes in our New Testament reading this morning. First Peter 2 Jesus is the cornerstone the cornerstone of faith provided by God that the Pharisees the Levites the Sadducees they tripped over Him because He didn't meet their

expectations, He offended them. Again, not because He did anything wrong but because He didn't meet what they thought He should meet.

And then Peter, he used one of the most powerful words we have, Pastor Tim talked about it last week. It can be used well, "but." So, in contrast to the religious leaders, "but you are a chosen race." We know something about race. Those are people who have traits in common. And that is our faith. We are a royal priesthood, that means kingly or of the king led by the King, a royal priesthood. Jesus is our King, and we are His priesthood, a royal priesthood, His own possession. And that is on two counts. Number one, He created us and if you make something, that thing belongs to you. He made us, we belong to Him. But we sinned, falling away from Him and so He has redeemed us, and brought us back to being His own.

So, we are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, His own possession. Why? So that **you** may proclaim the excellency. Again, notice the royal hint there. Your excellency, you may declare or proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of the darkness and into His marvelous light. Proclaiming His excellencies; that is the role of every member of the church. That is the role of every ministry that takes place within the church. And that is the role of the LWML. And why they have chosen that theme, the King of Glory is Coming. Because He is coming! But what He wants is a *holy* and *dedicated* and *committed* priesthood to proclaim His excellencies.

And that is exactly what is needed in this world today. A day where there's so many experts, in so many different ways, that are saying things contrary to God's word. We are called, men, women, children to be His royal priesthood, to prepare the way for His return. Because mark His words; the King of glory is coming! In our Savior's Name, Amen.