

Keynotes from Tim Gamston's am Sermon on 5/6/2022

"The Queens KING" (Platinum Jubilee)

Text: Ephesians 1 verses 15-23

Scripture references from the ESV

Ephesians 1:15-23 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

When the Queen made her coronation oath (see p4) on 2nd June 1953, aged only 25, she responded to the promises she made by saying: 'The things which I have promised, I will perform and keep. **So help me God.**' In her speech later that day, she was very clear that without God's help and the prayers of her people, she would not be able to serve the people of the Commonwealth and Empire (see p4) in accordance with those promises.

On her 90th birthday, she again referred to this saying: 'I have been – and – remain very grateful to you for your prayers and to God for his steadfast love. I have indeed seen his faithfulness.' As she took on the role of Queen, a role that was humanly beyond her, she looked outside her own resources to the living God. God's grace to her has been evidenced over the last 70 years of her reign, as she has lived her life in the public gaze. Like any family, hers has suffered the effects of sin, but she has continued to serve the people under her charge, dealing with other heads of state and her own government despite all the pain she was going through.

**By her own testimony, the strength and grace to do all of that has come from her KING
– the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Whatever life we have been called to live, none of us are able to do it in our own strength, though we might like to think we can. Dependency is part of what it means to be human. All of us are dependent on someone, particularly when we face situations that are bigger than us. Consider two powers that none of us are able to control – the power of evil and the power of death. We cannot stop evil in the world. In fact, we can't even stop ourselves from doing evil things, and we certainly can't stop death.

What challenge are you currently facing? Perhaps it is exams, or a person who scares you, or health issues or a problem at work. Going deeper, perhaps it's a sinful habit or a fear of death. **Who will you turn to for help?** We might reach out to human helpers but what happens when they don't have the strength, wisdom or resources to meet our need?

The verses above tell us that there is power for living that exceeds every power in the universe and that power is available to us, just for the asking.

Paul has given us a prayer we can pray, and that prayer is to know God (v17 above). In prayer, our greatest priority is not to pray for healing, exam success or a comfortable life but that

We, God's people, will know God more fully.

- We need to know God experientially as Father, Son and Spirit – the one who is at work in our lives to guide us, save us and strengthen us.
- We need to know him not just intellectually, but as the one who is with us to walk beside us through life.

In knowing God, we experience power for living (vv18-19 above). As God comes alongside us, so he empowers us to live a consistent Christian life, and, one day, to enter our eternal rest. That great power is ours for the asking.

To show how great this power is, Paul points us not to an earthly monarch who has known God's help to rule well but to

the Lord Jesus Christ – the one who is the Queen's KING and our KING.

To know whether God is able to strengthen us through life, and especially to give us victory over sin and death, bringing us into our eternal rest, we need to see his power displayed in the Lord Jesus Christ. In particular we need to see the way Jesus Christ is exalted over three powers.

1. **Christ is exalted over death.** (v 20 above). All of us are powerless over death, despite what modern medicine can do. Death will come to us all. We cannot stop it and we can't escape from it. That is not true for Jesus.

Jesus went into death and came out alive.

Every world leader who has died is still dead, but Jesus was resurrected by the power of God.

He died an agonising death on the cross, a death witnessed by his followers and confirmed by the Roman centurion. Three days later Jesus was raised to life. That resurrection was witnessed by over 500 people, who gave their lives proclaiming Jesus is alive. Paul points to the resurrection to show the greatness of God's power.

This is the power of God to raise Jesus to life after he had died and give him a body that would never die again

2. **Christ is exalted over all rulers** (v20 - 21 above). Today there is a real human being sat on the throne of God.

- He is the Lord Jesus Christ who is fully God and fully man.
- He is seated on the throne of God by the power of God

That throne is the throne above every throne just as Jesus is the king above all human kings and leaders.

Jesus is the Queen's KING

Jesus is king over every spiritual authority and power, especially those evil spiritual powers that lie behind the evil in our world and behind our own sinful actions. We face a spiritual battle against spiritual opponents who Paul describes as rulers, authorities and powers (**Eph 6:12** see p4). v21 (above) tells us that Jesus is exalted over those very opponents.

Jesus has authority over spiritual and human forces by virtue of who he is. On earth:

- He cast out demons. No one else could help, but the demons had to submit to Jesus (**Matt 17:14-20** see p4)
- Pilate thought he had authority to put Jesus to death, but Jesus told him otherwise. (**John 19: 10-11** see p4)

Jesus also has authority by virtue of what he has accomplished.

- He went into battle with sin, Satan and death and defeated them all through the cross and his resurrection.
- As a reward for his victory, he ascended to the throne of God to take his rightful place as creator and God.

Today, Jesus the KING rules over every force, good and evil, human and spiritual.

This is the power of God to seat Jesus above every authority in the universe.

- 3. Christ is exalted over the church (v22 above).** The Queen is Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Henry VIII had made himself Supreme Head, but the title was changed because they recognised that the church has only one head – the Lord Jesus Christ. No earthly monarch, Pope or Archbishop etc has any right to claim to be head of the church.

Christ Jesus is the church's only head

- He governs the church, determining what she is to do, how she is to act, who she is to be and who are her members.

It is his church, purchased with his own precious blood.

- He governs the church by his Word (the Bible) and by his Spirit, through godly men (elders) who are set apart to teach what Christ commands in his word.

However, Christ's governance of his church is very different to human governance of the church.

- An elder, appointed by Christ, will teach what Christ commands, but he is powerless to change anyone, including himself.
- An elder will preach the Gospel, showing us what God has done to save us through his Son but he is powerless to bring about the heart change necessary for you to repent and put your trust in Jesus.

In contrast, Christ's governance means that:

- sinners are saved and brought into the church, his body
- members of his body are changed so that they no longer live the way they did, and become more like their head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the power of God seen in Christ governing the church with true authority and power.

Paul wants more for us than to just acknowledge God's great power at work in his Son. He wants us to experience the power of God at work in us and so we are meant to pray this same prayer on a daily basis to know that power.

- We need to ask that God will make himself known to us so that we experience his power at work in us.
- We need to pray this for ourselves, our families and our church every day.

a) That power is a life-giving power. Paul wants us to understand that this resurrection power is at work in us in two ways. It will secure for us our own bodily resurrection when Jesus returns and it gives us new spiritual life now. We were dead in sin (**Eph 2: 1-3** see p4), spiritually dead though physically alive. We could not see any beauty in Christ or anything of the goodness of God, but a day came when suddenly Christ became beautiful to us and God was seen to be good.

Guilt from sin was replaced by joy in Jesus.

God made us alive, resurrecting us by his Spirit from spiritual death to spiritual life. We have assurance, too, that one day, even though our physical bodies will die, they will be raised to life, and will never again suffer the effects of sin.

Ask God to make himself known to you so that you can experience his resurrection power. You also need this if:

- the Gospel doesn't make sense and Jesus does not appear beautiful to you
- the beauty and goodness of Christ has become tarnished because of the pressures of life, sins you have committed, or sins that have been committed against you

b) That power is a sin-defeating power. We know that we are powerless to defeat the sin that still dwells in us. Many of us struggle with persistent sins, unable to get

victory over them. Those sins define our character so that we are known to be a grumpy, irritable, sarcastic, cynical or grumbling person – sometimes all of those! When we come to know Christ and experience his power at work in us, we discover that, having defeated all his enemies, he has therefore defeated our enemies.

- The world, our own sinful flesh, and the devil lie crushed beneath his feet.

As we walk with Jesus day by day, the world, the flesh and the devil lose their power over us. We can never win against the enemies of our soul by our own efforts, but when we have fellowship each day with Jesus, listening to what he says in his word, turning from sin to God in prayer and trusting in his promises then we will experience his power to live the life the New Testament outlines for us, giving victory over sin.

Christ rules over the entire universe in the interests of the church.

He is exalted over death and all rule so he is able to govern both death and every human and spiritual authority for the good of his people, the church. He governs everything by his sovereign power for our good and his glory.

The Queen's KING is FOR us and that same power is available to us every moment of every day just for the asking.

Coronation Oath:

Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the Peoples of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon, and of your Possessions and the other Territories to any of them belonging or pertaining, according to their respective laws and customs?

Queen. I solemnly promise so to do.

Will you to your power cause Law and Justice, in Mercy, to be executed in all your judgements?

Queen. I will.

Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law? Will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established in England? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges, as by law do or shall appertain to them or any of them?

Queen. All this I promise to do. The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep. **So help me God.**

Queen's speech to the nation: When I spoke to you last, at Christmas, I asked you all to pray for me on the day of my Coronation - to pray that God would give me wisdom and strength to carry out the promises that I should then be making. Throughout this memorable day I have been uplifted and sustained by the knowledge that your thoughts and prayers were with me.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Matt 17:14-18 ¹⁴ And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and, kneeling before him, ¹⁵ said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly. For often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. ¹⁶ And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." ¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked the demon,^[b] and it^[c] came out of him, and the boy was healed instantly.^[d]

John 19: 10-11 So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

Ephesians 2: 1-3 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body^[a] and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.