

Wednesday of Populus Zion, A✠D 2010

John 1:43-51

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

1 “Give us a king! All the other nations have kings. Why can’t we have a king?” Almost from the time God brought His people into the promised land of Canaan, they were dissatisfied with the judges, those God appointed to exercise political and spiritual authority. Having a judge didn’t earn you any points in conversations at the local watering hole. All the surrounding nations had kings. In fact, only wandering tribes didn’t have kings. Every nation worthy of respect had a king. So God’s chosen people complained vociferously enough until God gave into their demand for a king. To Samuel, God said, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them” (1 Sam 8:7-9). In preferring a king, the people forsook the Lord God their true King.

2 But God did not forsake His people. Despite their persistent rebellion, despite their preferring to do things their own way, despite their mistrust of how the Lord promised to work among them, despite their clamoring to be like all the godless nations, God never ceased to be their King. Despite the desire of postmodern people to be free from any authority, despite the waning popularity of churchgoing and faithfulness, despite the secular hostility toward any notion of a god, God has not ceased to be King. Despite your preference to do things like the nations, like your godless neighbors, despite your bristling under the notion that you are not the boss of you, despite your self-indulgent desire to be your own king, God has not ceased to be your King.

3 The wait for your King continues in this season of Advent, a season of preparation, a time of weeks and days and hours to prepare for an encounter, an eternal audience with your King. He is coming, heralds Advent. There is a King coming. Be ready. Prepare yourself. He will come with pomp and fanfare, with an awesome spectacle that everyone will see, with a trumpet blast and a fanfare that everyone will hear, with a company of attendants that will impress everyone. Jesus is coming again. He is the King of kings, a King unlike any other, with more power than any earthly ruler, with all authority in heaven and on earth given to Him.

4 Jesus is the long-awaited King, the rightful descendant of David, the eternal King of the New Israel, the Church. What do you know about this King? He is the Wonderful Counselor, whose very words give you the forgiveness and life you so desperately need, whose words of counsel deliver the benefits of His death on the cross. And He is Mighty God. When Nathanael marveled that Jesus could know where he was without even seeing him, he confessed, “Rabbi! You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these. Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.” Your King is coming. The Mighty God is coming.

5 Jesus is God. Not a god, not good, not god-like. God. The Mighty God, the eternal Word through whom all things were created, apart from whom nothing was created. Greater things than miracles will you see. Greater things than healings will you see. Greater things than giving sight to the blind, speech to the mute, hearing to the deaf, or life to the dead you will see. Nathanael would see God crucified. God in human flesh nailed to an instrument of human torture and execution. What can be greater than that? The Mighty God, the King of the Jews and Gentiles, the God who took human

flesh in the womb of the virgin made His first advent in order to die on the cross. God gave His life for sinful humanity.

6 Because Jesus, Mighty God, gave His life on the cross, you have hope. You are not without a King. Even when your heart wants to rebel against the authority of the King, you have His words from the throne: It is finished. His work of redeeming, buying back His creation from captivity to sin and death and taking His place on the throne is complete in His death on the cross.

7 Even now, you have hope. Jesus is your King and your Mighty God. Even when you seem to struggle constantly against your sinful flesh, you have hope. Jesus delivered you from the tyranny of sin and death. Even when your flesh seems to break down and fail to do what it was once able to do, you have hope. Your King rose from the dead. Even when the world seems to have the upper hand, even when you seem outnumbered, even when it seems like hope is vain, you have certain hope. Jesus your King, the Mighty God, will return.

8 Take heart. You have a King. He is Mighty God, your creator and redeemer, who will establish His perfect, loving reign over you when He returns.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria

Pastor Jeff Hemmer