

king-of-kings

And I hope you will become acquainted with as many as possible, because this is a remarkable opportunity in a setting that reminds one of the middle 1950s, or the early 1950s, in the church of God.

And once one grows, of course, you don't have the same contact with people day after day.

And I think it important to realize that when you can have that opportunity to meet people who are not in your local congregation, you should take the most advantage of it that you can.

The title King of Kings and Lord of Lords was assigned, as one of, if I may use the word assigned, one of the topics that could be addressed.

I asked that others make the decision they wished, and I would take those titles which would seem to have been left over because there were more titles than those speaking since we have formal services four times on two days.

And that left, this is one of the titles.

I thought it would be appropriate because it is fundamental to the traditional understanding of this season of the year.

What does it mean to be a King of Kings and a Lord of Lords? A term that, of course, is found in the book of Revelation chapter 17 and verse 14, and in chapter 19 and verse 16, in the first case it is reversed, so sometimes it's Lord of Lord and King of Kings, sometimes King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

We live in a world in which our government has neither a king nor lords.

There are countries where there are kings and lords.

Kings in that sense would be a function of the nobility rather than directly of the kingship.

And so it is defining a form of government.

That is, there is a form of government that indicates a regal state, if you please, when we use these terms.

This is why we are called a royal or a regal priesthood.

That is, this is not a democratic priesthood that is the church, even though as individuals we have access to the Creator through Jesus Christ, but we are a royal priesthood because Christ was born to be king.

But let us go back for the moment and ask what do we mean by the word Christ.

Many of us may be able to answer it correctly, some only after thinking it through.

There was a person born in Bethlehem who was called Jesus.

He was so named as a result of a message from on high.

This person came to be known as the Christ, so we speak of him as Jesus Christ.

Even in actuality there is much more to the story than that.

Because it goes back to the fact that Jesus is a name in English that we derive from the Greek, and the Greek gave a pronunciation rather unusual for the Hebrew word that was the real name that Jesus had among Hebrew and Aramaic speaking people.

This word goes back to the very famous general who led the children of Israel into the promised land after the death of Moses.

Now that name we read in the Old Testament is Joshua.

And interestingly what has happened in language is that we refer to the man who was a general who brought the people to the promised land by a word in English which is derived from the Hebrew sound whereas our word for Jesus is derived from a Greek transliteration of that word which had a different sound.

Even though the Greeks used the same word to refer to Joshua the general as also Jesus the Christ.

Those are some of the peculiarities that have happened.

But the meaning of Joshua or Yahoshua is a very important one because it means the eternal Yah, the short form of Yahweh, the name God revealed in the days of Moses at Mount Sinai is the Savior.

So in a sense Joshua's name was that of a person whose function when the children of Israel entered the promised land was to foreshadow the saving of a people who also would enter a promised land not however as temporal but one that is eternal.

So Jesus means the eternal God that is the Lord is Savior.

And the Greeks had a word in their language for one who was anointed for a specific task or function.

Many countries have an ordination ceremony.

In this case it might involve oil hence the word means to anoint or to smear with oil usually olive oil in the Middle East in Tonga we use coconut oil.

They don't grow olive trees there and people are anointed with coconut oil.

That was an interesting experience when we were there first my wife and I in 1972.

The Hebrew word has come to us in the term Messiah.

Messiah is a kind of transliteration of the original Hebrew word Messiah.

So we have Joshua the Messiah or Jesus the Messiah or Jesus Christ.

Now I go into this because I've read material in which ministers have said I believe in Jesus Christ but I can't prove he's the Messiah.

Now if you believe in Jesus Christ and can't prove he's the Messiah then you haven't proved he's the Christ.

And it's not enough to be Jesus there are many of them Jesuses are all over Southern California.

It's a common name not in English but in Spanish Joshua used to be not uncommon it isn't common anymore but it's not enough to be Jesus there were other Joshua was born in Bethlehem.

What is important is he is the Messiah and the Messiah was to come from the house of Judah and the house of David.

Now if you've never thought seriously of this you should because many times we take things for granted.

You see there was a man long ago who received the promise of the forgiveness of sin and that he ultimately should be heir not only to the land of promise that we call the holy land between the river that was the border of Egypt and the Euphrates.

He received the forgiveness of sin.

He received the promise of being heir to the world Romans 14:13 from him should descend the one who would forgive the sins of the world.

That man was Abraham Abram originally and he was to be the father of a multitude of people.

In many places of the Bible we have the story given by Paul in his epistles to the different groups of members of the church to whom he wrote and that is that Abraham received the promises and if we are to inherit the promises made to Abraham we must be the children of God through Jesus Christ that is we must be the heirs of Christ of Jesus the Messiah.

Let me explain something which you all should understand the promise that humans should receive eternal life and inherit the world was given to the ancestor Abraham and not to other nations how they should inherit eternal life came to be lost to them because either they were living elsewhere and never heard or paid no attention to what they might have learned from the presence of Abraham and the promised land.

To him a promise was made and that promise involved inheriting the world because of obedience to God but every one of Abraham's children at some point or another disobey and as each generation inherited the opportunity to become an heir each one who descended from Abraham forfeited that right in his own generation because of sin but the promise was made to Abraham and to his children where the promise is clearly both intended to be singular and plural plural because of the use of the pronoun singular because of the collective use of the noun so when God made this promise to Abraham he also included to your seed in their generations plural never forget that but each generation that passed it on to the next forfeited such a right because of sin now there were those who sought God and I will not talk about them for the moment but you will see what I will say in after this there came a generation in the days of Herod the King in which a descendant of Abraham through Mary of the house of Judah related to the house of Levi was born God came to dwell in the flesh in what manner as the logos or the wisdom of God the very mind of God came to dwell as a human being and this person was to be named Jesus he was born to be a king and he was through life without sin and was murdered now when this happened something unusual took place because here for the first time from the days of Abraham to the days of Herod there had been found only one heir who had the right to inherit the world all others to whom the option was open because they were born of Abraham's seed they had forfeited this right by nature because they sinned that is they missed the mark and how to live sin is lawlessness and they did not live spiritually as they should each one from time to time did what was right in his own eyes but from this birth there was now one who was heir to the world Jesus of Nazareth once asked the question which one of you can if you please convict me of sin and they said nothing this person drew up a will it is sometimes called a new covenant sometimes called a new testament so let me explain there was a covenant anciently made at Sinai in which the knowledge of sin was given by means of the law the children of Israel in the days

of Moses accepted that as a relationship between God and themselves so that God would lead them they were all heirs of the promised land and ultimately they were by birth potential heirs of the world but each of them and in succeeding generations sinned that is the law of God that they thought they could observe they found they could not they fell short of knowing how we ought to live life Jesus Christ proposed the prophets earlier conveyed this message that a new covenant should be made in which God's spiritual law would be in us not on tables of stone or in a book not external it would be internal but there was no promise at Sinai as to how that was to be possible and that's why it is called in a prophetic way a forthcoming new covenant Jesus came as a messenger with the good news of that new covenant that's what we have laid out for us beginning with Matthew chapter 5 now in proposing this covenant Jesus proposed how the righteous how the merciful how the poor in spirit how the persecuted could inherit eternal life and the world that is this earth I'll be it a one renewed and he said that if you in principle if you do the things that I say you can be given the gift of eternal life what did he say he said repent believe the good news that I am bringing the gospel of the kingdom or government of God a word government we don't like to hear today it seems and be baptized where the word means immerse we don't like to dwell on that today because the world is confused on all these points the Christian world and you shall receive the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit that is God living in you through the presence of his very nature which is spirit and you shall receive therefore eternal life but this man who made this commitment God in the flesh who made this commitment said we would have to submit to him as Lord which means do the things he asks of you and we could become his heirs but he wrote this up if you please as a testament or will this testament or will had no force unless the man who drew it up God in the flesh should die and once this will or testament came into force with the death of the testator no man can alter it we need to understand it is more than a new covenant that's simply an agreement between two parties it comes to us as a testament or will it was not in effect before Christ died he talked about it once he died was murdered this will came into absolute force and as irrevocable cannot be altered there is only one way of salvation and that is through the name the authority of Jesus Christ through whom we have access to God as Father in heaven there is salvation in no other name and what he asks us is to repent not merely to feel sorry about ourselves but to repent of the spirit and attitude of disobedience and to acknowledge our sins and through faith believing that the Messiah means what he says that Christ means what he says we can receive through prayer the gift of the Holy Spirit and even though we should die in the flesh we have the promise of eternal life now this is a very important perspective Jesus was born to be king he is also born as Lord God is the ruler of all and when the logos the mind the wisdom the reason the thought of God dwelt in the flesh as a human being it was God present now as a human being who still is Lord and King and against any accuser such as the devil Jesus allowed himself to be tested in the wilderness those 40 days and he proved that God cannot be tempted by sin some of us know tragically that there are people who have left who think that in fact the logos laid aside all his divinity and became just a human being and by his own efforts zeal prayer by fasting punishing himself he was able as a human being to resist sin this doctrine is an error time and again I talked to a leader who's no longer with us on this topic Jesus Christ was the very wisdom the very mind of God God was present as a human being God is still God as an eternal spirit let me say as eternal spirit and strike the word an which is not the way to express oneself in English and not even possible to express oneself that way in Greek the Greek did not have an a or an an it is wrong to say God is a spirit God simply is spirit so God is spirit but as a human being God the Lord Jesus Christ as he is often called in the New Testament and when he gave his life he gave a life that was perfect and worth more than the whole of the human family if you please the whole of creation and we can become the heirs of Christ by accepting the terms and conditions he laid out in that will and testament the deotheque we enter into a new covenant relationship by coming to agree with the terms of the will and the will and the will and the will and

the will and the will and the will and the will by coming to agree with the terms of the will of Jesus Christ or with his testament and so there is made with each one of us a covenantal relationship all the people of Israel agreed to make a covenant at Sinai we must each individually agree to make such a covenant and collectively the church is those who covenant with God that is with Christ who covenant with Christ that we recognize him as Lord and Savior master that is teacher as the high priest and coming king now if you think these words were never known before then your ears must have been stopped because most all of you should have heard the words that I have just mentioned when you were immersed if baptism has come to you because not everyone has yet been baptized who has the privilege of fellowship with us here and we with you our children we expect to grow to a certain maturity so as a result of this we are all heirs of Abraham it's important to realize what Romans 8:17 has let us briefly look at this one because I think it is significant above all that I might quote from Paul elsewhere 8:17 we'll go back that the spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God sons of God and if children then heirs heirs of God joint heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with him that we may also be glorified together and if we are heirs of Christ we are also treated therefore as Abraham's children because Abraham was heir to the world and if you look at Hebrew sorry Romans 4:13 and 14 you will learn that Abraham before he was circumcised received the promise through faith what the law was given for was to define sin it was not meant to forgive sin it was to be a reminder of what would be needed for sin to be forgiven that is the shedding of blood and that's why animal sacrifices were important on every day there were certain ceremonies on every Sabbath on every new moon on every annual occasion to remind us that the Messiah the one who was anointed should die and yet appear again we call that the resurrection so it is significant that we recognize that when the New Testament refers to Jesus Christ as Lord the Lord the Lord Jesus Christ it is referring to his authority because he is pictured on occasion as a nobleman he is pictured as an heir to the kingdom of God the father in heaven being his father Matthew 21:38 there is a parable in which the leaders of the then nation of Judah decided you can see it as an analogy there it's just a story of individuals who decided to kill the heir and the nation wanted to dispose of the heir in this case the heir of Abraham the son of God it is repeated in Mark 12:7 Matthew 21:38 this is the heir let us kill him Luke 20:14 so Luke wrote it in Greek to those who were Greek speaking Mark in Greek to Jews who were speaking Greek living in the Aramaic Greco-Roman world Matthew first addressed it in Hebrew to the Jewish nation and then he translated the whole in Greek as we now have it as a part of Scripture so Jesus Christ was the heir apparent now he returned to heaven you've heard that explained in part in previous festivals within the last two weeks it is said that this heir went to receive for himself a kingdom and to return these are other parables you can see all of them put together Jesus Christ is going to come again and to receive us to himself he is going to come as a king in terms of the kingdom of God being within us that is because God is spirit and his spirit is in us he indeed is if you please the king and when he came through the person of Jesus the Christ in human presence he was and at that time also a king hence the kingdom of God is in your midst among you within you those terms are all a part of a problem as to how best to render a particular verse in the New Testament but king and kingdom were used synonymously as you should know from the book of Daniel the realm of a king is a kingdom God's realm is all that he creates God is the ultimate potentate 1st Timothy 6:15 God is the ultimate potentate he came to manifest himself as a son in Jesus Christ so Christ is also Lord of lords and king of kings as 1st Timothy 6:15 speaks of the eternal potentate God the Almighty who is Lord of lords and king of kings it is a kingdom it is not a republic it is not a democracy God's rule is best described as a kingship because the authority comes from him and Jesus lordship over us is the same we do not choose him to become a lord we do not choose him to become a king we may choose to have him be lord and king or not to have that's so but it does not change the fact that he is king and lord by nature by nature the term king most often refers to the ultimate responsibility that we associate with the word

government lordship is often associated with let's say a nobility and in the biblical sense where Jesus is called lord it often is to be perceived as affecting the relationship of religious matters it is a realm in which there is no true separation of what we call church and state but today the church itself is not a ruling kingdom on earth we are translated into the kingdom of God if we have become the children of God we are heirs not yet inheritors and what links us together is the spirit of God it is important now that we recognize that Jesus Christ made it all possible as a result of being God's gift for Jesus Christ is actually God giving of himself even to death I think of how tragic it is for people to use the excuse well I had to shoot the prisoners because if I wouldn't they would have shot me this excuse was made in Bosnia it's been made through the centuries Jesus Christ gave himself that the prisoners need not be shot because we were imprisoned under the condemnation of sin and the law held us in bondage not because the law told us to do wrong and therefore it is an evil law and we must get rid of it it's that we did wrong and the law had a claim over our life and that claim was death and Christ came to redeem us from it by the grace of God we are all here and it is through faith we prove our faith by whether we are submissive to Jesus Christ and obedient to his will we learn something about true religion and what it means to have true faith when we show that we love our brother our sister in the faith for he who says I love God and does not love his neighbor does not know God and abides in darkness I want to thank all of you for being loyal at a critical time some nearly two years many emotionally did not know how to handle themselves and walked away or fled some with different motives but I want to thank you many of whom I've known for decades for being here and letting Christ and the Father live the godly life in you as one who was of Gentile background and is by birth we may not have been Greeks but we were German and the same darkness prevailed north of the Alps as prevailed north of the Mediterranean when Paul writes in Ephesians 2:11 what it is like to be without God in the world and without hope the message of Jesus Christ over the centuries is penetrated but it has not yet penetrated to the point where any more than two fifths of the human family have come to be associated with the name Christian there are billions who have died in the past who were without hope not heirs of the world in any sense and it is this festival that opens our eyes to see what will happen when Jesus Christ returns to bring the full light of God's mind to the knowledge of all human beings because he will be king of kings and all nations are going to submit to him when Jesus said it is done on the cross he spoke of that which was done on the cross his murder to have been left there to have been buried and not resurrected meant that the job would have been unfinished only that which was accomplished on the cross was finished when he was there that which was necessary through the resurrection was accomplished in the tomb and if Jesus Christ had not ascended we would not have the Holy Spirit and if he would not return that which was finished would never be accomplished because without the return of Christ there will be no first resurrection let's not misuse the term it is finished and assume the death of Christ alone is essential the death of Christ is all that needed to be done to pay the penalty of sin but Christ is alive and doing the work of God as our high priest and shall come as king