

Theme for 2018

**WE ARE THE ARMY OF GOD &
WE ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!**

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)



***This Week’s Thought – April 1, 2018
Happy ResurrectionSunday!!***

“Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” John 18:33 (NIV)

This past week, leading up to today, Christians found themselves drawn into the story of Holy Week, journeying with Jesus from His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, to the intimacy of the upper room, to the horror and shame of the cross, and ultimately to the victory of the empty tomb which we celebrate today-Resurrection Sunday!

In this journey the Lord enters into the chaos and brokenness of this world and speaks order and life. He hears the cries of His people and responds with perfect love and compassion.

In this journey, Jesus turns the values of this world upon their head, showing us in the process the true nature of His rule and reign. Jesus isn’t a King who conquers by force or military might. He instead conquers through humility, self-denial, and love. This is a kind of conquering that the world has never known! This isn’t how earthly kings are meant to rule and reign. They reign by might and brute force. Yet Jesus says, *“My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”* (John 18:36)

Jesus’ suffering and journey to the cross was not an accident, nor was He overpowered against His will. No, Jesus’ self-sacrifice is fundamental to the character of God and the nature of His Kingdom. Here is why this is so important for us: because our journey of following Christ is primarily shaped and influenced by Jesus’ own journey, a journey that led Him to the cross.

Christian discipleship is a journey in Jesus’ footsteps to the cross, and so, this ‘*cruciform*’ life, this ‘*cross-shaped*’ life, is not simply a journey down the “yellow brick road.” It is a journey shaped and marked by the cross! Let us rejoice today in the reign and rule of Jesus as the true King of heaven and earth, and may we with courage and faith choose to follow in His footsteps.

“I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.” (Philippians 3:10-11)

Application: How does the upside down nature of Jesus’ rule and reign reshape your own journey and give you courage to walk through hard seasons of life?

Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week: “Learn to live above your circumstances. This requires focused time with Me, *the One who overcame the world*. Trouble and distress are woven into the very fabric of this perishing world. Only My Life in you can empower you to face this endless flow of problems and hardships with *good cheer*. As you sit quietly in My Presence, I shine Peace into your troubled mind and heart. Little by little, you are freed from earthly shackles and lifted up above your circumstances. Rest in My Presence, *receiving Joy that no one can take away from you.*” (John 16:33; Psalm 42:5; John 16:22)

“And then God answered: "Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.” Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King