

WE LOVE HIS BENEFITS, BUT WE RESIST HIS REIGN

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV)

By: Pastor Samuel A.J. Williams

Day 1: The Comfortable Contradiction

Devotional We live in a strange tension. We love what Jesus can do for us - His healing touch, His provision, His ability to open doors we thought were permanently closed. We celebrate these benefits with genuine joy and gratitude. Yet when He asks us to forgive that person who hurt us, or to change a habit we've grown comfortable with, or to trust Him with our finances, we suddenly find ourselves hesitant. This isn't a new struggle. Throughout history, people have wanted a powerful God who serves their needs without demanding their surrender. We want His strength without His sovereignty, His blessings without His boundaries. But Jesus didn't come just to be our helper - He came to be our King. The beautiful truth is that His authority isn't meant to burden us but to bless us. When we resist His reign, we're actually resisting the very thing that will bring us the deepest joy and purpose. His commands aren't restrictions - they're invitations into the abundant life He designed for us. Today, consider where you might be loving His benefits while resisting His reign. Remember, He's not asking for your submission to diminish you, but to transform you into who you were always meant to be.

Bible Verse *'Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."' - Matthew 28:18-20* **Reflection Question** In what area of your life are you most comfortable receiving Jesus's benefits, but most resistant to His authority?

Quote *We love his benefits, but we resist his reign.*

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Prayer Lord, help me recognize where I've been loving Your benefits while resisting Your reign. Give me the courage to surrender every area of my life to Your loving authority.

Day 2: All Authority Belongs to Him

Devotional

When Jesus declared that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Him, He wasn't making a suggestion or expressing a hope - He was stating a legal fact. The Greek word 'exousia' means the absolute, binding right to rule. This isn't borrowed power or temporary authority; it's complete sovereignty over everything that exists. This means there's no area of your life where Jesus doesn't have the right to speak. Your career decisions, your relationships, your private thoughts, your financial choices - everything falls under His rightful authority. We might try to create compartments, keeping certain areas 'off-limits' to His influence, but His authority doesn't recognize our boundaries. The challenge isn't whether Jesus has authority - He does, completely and eternally. The challenge is whether we'll acknowledge and submit to that authority. Many of us believe Jesus is powerful, but we struggle to live like He's actually the King of our lives. This isn't about fear or control - it's about recognizing reality. Jesus already reigns whether we acknowledge it or not. When we align our lives with His authority, we're not giving up freedom; we're stepping into the purpose and peace that comes from living under the rule of perfect love.

Bible Verse *"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." - Matthew 28:18-20*

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Reflection Question What would change in your daily decisions if you truly lived like Jesus has all authority over every area of your life?

Quote *There is no area in life where he doesn't have the right to speak. No corner of your heart that he cannot enter. No hidden habit that you think that nobody else knows about that he can't get into.*

Prayer Jesus, I acknowledge that You have all authority in heaven and earth. Help me stop compartmentalizing my life and surrender every area to Your rightful rule.

Day 3: From Attendance to Obedience

Devotional

There's a significant difference between showing up and following through. Many of us have mastered the art of attendance - we show up to church, participate in activities, and enjoy the community. But Jesus calls us beyond attendance to obedience, beyond being fans to becoming followers. The Great Commission isn't primarily about going somewhere; it's about making disciples. And you can't make disciples if you aren't one yourself. A disciple isn't just someone who attends; a disciple is someone who follows, learns, and obeys. It's someone who arranges their life around Jesus's teachings rather than just adding Him to their existing schedule. This shift from attendance to obedience changes everything. An attender might show up when it's convenient, but a disciple follows even when it's costly. An attender enjoys the benefits, but a disciple embraces the transformation that comes through submission to Christ's authority. The beautiful truth is that obedience isn't about earning God's love - it's about experiencing the fullness of life He offers. When we move from simply attending to actively obeying, we discover

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that His commands lead us into deeper joy, stronger relationships, and greater purpose than we ever imagined possible.

Bible Verse *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* - Matthew 28:18-20

Reflection Question Are you currently living more as an attender who shows up, or as a disciple who follows and obeys?

Quote *We measure attendance, but he measures obedience. An attender can show up, but a disciple will follow.*

Prayer

Lord, transform me from someone who merely attends to someone who truly follows. Help me embrace obedience as the pathway to the abundant life You offer.

Day 4: Saved by Him, Ruled by Him

Devotional

It's possible to be saved by Jesus without being ruled by Him - at least in our daily experience. We can genuinely celebrate Him as our Savior while keeping Him at arm's length as our Lord. We shout with joy when He blesses us, but grow quiet when He corrects us. We love His grace but struggle with His guidance. This creates a spiritual immaturity that limits our growth and impact. When we embrace Jesus as Savior but resist Him as Lord, we miss

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out on the transformative power of His complete reign in our lives. We become spiritual consumers rather than committed followers. The truth is, Jesus didn't just come to get us out of hell; He came to bring heaven's reality into our daily lives. His lordship isn't an add-on to salvation - it's the natural expression of a heart that truly understands what He's done for us. When we grasp the magnitude of His sacrifice, submission becomes our joyful response, not our reluctant obligation. Today, consider whether you've been living with Jesus as your Savior but not your Lord. Remember, His desire to rule your life comes from His love for you, not His need to control you. He knows that life works best when lived under His perfect authority.

Bible Verse

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Reflection Question

In what ways have you embraced Jesus as Savior but still held back from fully accepting Him as Lord of your life?

Quote

Saved by him is not the same as ruled by Him.

Prayer

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Jesus, thank You for being my Savior. Now help me fully embrace You as Lord of every area of my life, trusting that Your rule brings freedom, not bondage.

Day 5: The King Who Already Reigns

Devotional

Here's a liberating truth: Jesus isn't running for office. He's not campaigning for your vote or hoping you'll choose Him as your leader. He already reigns. The resurrection wasn't just about Him getting up from the dead - it was about Him taking His rightful seat of authority in heaven. This means the question isn't whether Jesus will become King; the question is whether we'll align our lives with the reality of His current reign. He's not waiting for our permission to rule - He's inviting us to experience the joy and purpose that comes from living under His perfect authority. When we finally stop resisting and start submitting, something beautiful happens. We discover that His authority isn't meant to restrict us but to release us into who we were created to be. Under His reign, we find freedom from the chaos of self-rule and the peace that comes from trusting perfect wisdom and love. If you've been loving His benefits while resisting His reign, today is your opportunity to change that. You can stop fighting against His authority and start flourishing under it. His kingship isn't something to fear - it's something to celebrate, because no one loves you more or knows what's best for you better than He does.

Bible Verse

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Reflection Question

What would it look like for you to stop resisting Jesus's reign and start celebrating His kingship in your daily life?

Quote

Jesus is not running for office. He is not campaigning for your vote. He already reigns.

Prayer

King Jesus, I acknowledge that You already reign whether I submit or not. Help me align my life with the reality of Your kingship and find joy in Your perfect rule.



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