

King or Slave?

#0352

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 14, 1976

Revelation the first chapter the first six verses. Through the years this book of Revelation has been growing on me and I'm growing on it. I love it. At one of our camp meetings a few weeks ago, it was my privilege to give a series on this book and we just got started with it. This morning we're going to note a beautiful, beautiful verse, the sixth verse, but we'll read the first five so that we're ready to appreciate it.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" Revelation 1:1–6.

With this beautiful beginning, the book of Revelation launches into a description of the work of Jesus in leading His people through to the final triumph. But in this scripture which we've read this morning, you notice in this fifth verse that Jesus is the Prince of the kings of the earth. He's number one.

"...[He] loved us, and washed us..." Revelation 1:5.

Loosed us.

"...from our sins in His own blood, And hath made us..."
Revelation 1:5–6.

What?

"...kings..." Revelation 1:6.

Suppose I should come in this morning and say, "Are there any kings here? Are there any kings here or queens? Any kings? Any queens?"

I suppose if I just caught you off guard nobody would say, "Yes I'm a king," or "I'm a queen."

But this verse makes a wonderful statement that Jesus has:

"...made us kings and priests unto God and His Father..."

Revelation 1:6.

That's what I want to study with you this morning, your privilege to be a king, a queen, in God's great plan. Well now, a king of course rules. The question is what your kingdom is. We know what Christ's kingdom is. It's the universe. He says:

"...All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth"

Matthew 28:18.

Well, what's your kingdom? What do you rule? Let's turn over to Proverbs the 16th chapter the 32nd verse. Here's something bigger and better than the kingdom of Alexander the Great, or Augustus Caesar, or Napoleon, or Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" Proverbs 16:32.

So, what is it that you're to rule? Your spirit, yourself. Can you rule yourself? Now, Jesus has plans for us through eternity. He told His apostles that those that followed Him would in the world to come, those twelve, be rulers over the twelve tribes of Israel. And God will have some responsibilities for you in the upper world. The people who have triumphed in this last generation will be called to special duties.

But just now, this morning, let's consider our present kingdom for He "has made us," not *will* make us, but He "*has* made us" unto our God kings and priests. So thank God, you're a king, you're a queen this morning. That is, you are if you know your privileges and have accepted them.

You know, there was a young man years ago when I was a young fellow who was the heir apparent to the throne of England. And at that time the British Empire was something to be the ruler of. But when he came to the throne he became infatuated with a woman who was the wife of somebody else. Before they got through, she divorced her husband, or he divorced her, and he decided that he would marry this woman.

But England didn't look kindly at that sort of thing, particularly in royalty. And so, he had to choose between being king or marrying Wallis. Well, he abdicated the throne and he married this divorcee and his brother took the crown. And it's his brother's daughter, Elizabeth, that's now ruling in England.

My point is friends, it's one thing to be born to be king. It's another thing to measure up to the responsibility and make the choices that are involved in it. And

like Edward, you and I are called to choose between satisfying our natural inclinations and being king.

Our text here in Proverbs says:

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city” Proverbs 16:32.

The great kingdom that you and I are called to rule over is ourselves. And don't dismiss that with a wave of the hand. It's something to rule yourself. Did you ever try?

I wonder how many of you here ever tried to train a horse. May I see your hands? Several of you. You like a horse that responds, don't you? It'll turn when you want it to turn and stop when you want it to stop and really get going when you're ready to go. But that's takes training, doesn't it? If there's any horse that's naturally born to do all that, I haven't heard about. And it's something to train a horse so that it responds.

Well, the horse you have to train is yourself. And if you succeed, you're a king, a queen. And oh, my friends, what a wonderful thing it is when *you* can control what happens.

In the book *Messages to Young People*, page 412, I read:

“Strength of character consists of two things—power of will, and power of self-control” *Messages to Young People*, page 412.

What does the strength of character consist of?

“...Power of will, and power of self-control” *Ibid*.

Perhaps, we may think of those as the accelerator and the brake. Do you like to have a car with an accelerator? Well, couldn't get very far if you didn't have it. Do you like to have a car with a brake? Would any of you knowingly get in a car and start out from here to Chattanooga if you knew it didn't have any brakes? But what's a brake for? It's not to push you forward.

A brake says, “No, no, no.” And sometimes a brake says, “I mean it. No!”

Can you say that to yourself? Can you push yourself forward when you know it's time to get going? Can you slow down at the appropriate turn? Can you stop when it's time to stop? If you can, you're a king, a queen. You're a ruler of something more important than London or the British Empire.

“Strength of character consists of two things: the power of will, and the power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for the strength of character;

but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man" *Ibid.*

Take a simple thing like the control of appetite. Did I say "simple"? Yes, it can be. Here we are, four o'clock in the afternoon. Some friend comes visiting.

And while they're here they say, "You know, I brought you something."

"Oh, what did you bring me?"

And they open up some package of goodies, whatever that is. And that friend may not know your principles, and the friend supposes that, of course, you'll do what? Sample the goodies. And if the goodies are goodies, after the sample you'll want what? Some more. Is that the way most people do it? Yes. Do you know why? Because they're not kings. They're slaves. They obey the impulse. And a person whose appetite rules him can really be a slave.

You know, Alexander the Great conquered the world and sighed for more worlds to conquer. But he literally drank himself to death in a drunken debauch in Babylon, celebrating the fact that he had conquered the world. He celebrated, all right. Finally, fell down dead as the result of just drinking, drinking, drinking alcoholic beverages.

Was he a great man? No. Was he a strong man? No. He was a weak man. Alexander the Great, the world calls him. He was a great slave, my friends.

And if you can say, "No," to the temptation to eat between meals or every other indulgence of appetite, you are *far* greater than Alexander the Great. He that rules himself is greater than the mighty.

"The real greatness and nobility of the man is measured by his power to subdue his feelings, not by the power of his feelings to subdue him" *Ibid.*

There are other feelings besides the impulse to indulge appetite. Take the passion of anger. Some people have a lot more of it than others.

I think sometimes of that professor over in Scotland who was known for his temper.

One day one of his students timidly approached him and said, "Professor so and so, I just wanted to ask you if you, being a Christian, didn't think that you ought to control your temper more than you do."

He looked at the young man and he said, "Young man, I'll have you to know I control more temper in an hour than you do in your whole lifetime."

He knew what kind of a horse he was riding. And my dear friend, if you are one of those unfortunate, or shall I say fortunate people that have a great deal of

temper to control—courage, courage. A spirited horse is sometimes in great demand, provided finally somebody can master it.

James White, the great early leader of this movement, was a man of real strength of character. And sometimes some of his friends thought that he ought to be milder. And there were times that he yielded to the impulse to tell people what he thought of them. Sometimes they deserved it, but it isn't always the thing to do to tell people the truth, you know. Jesus to His disciples:

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them” John 16:12.

But James White's wife, the prophet, was shown in vision that while her husband at times erred in that matter and needed to learn to be more kind and loving, yet he didn't err as much as people thought he did. The Lord showed her that it required a man of real spirit and strength to lay the foundations of this movement and help in the battle on organization and in many other things. James White was a man to go ahead and lead out and get other people to follow. And he had words of reproof sometimes for the laggards, the lazy, the slow.

So, as I say, if you are one of those people that have a great deal of spirit that at times breaks out and breaks over, take courage. God may have a special work for you. But like James White, you must learn to master your feelings, to be able to control yourself.

Moses was this kind of individual. Oh, what a powerful will Moses had. And you remember that when at 40 years of age he undertook the job of delivering Israel, in his anger (we might almost call it righteous anger) at that Egyptian that was beating and hurting one of the Israelites, He up and killed him. Well, that was an outburst of passion.

God didn't say, “Moses, I've got no use for you.”

But God took him off in the desert and had him spend 40 years doing what? Looking after sheep. And if there'd be anything to try a man's patience, that would be it. Well, he finally learned his lesson and for the next 40 years, he failed only once. *All* the rest of that time he had his temper under control.

But notice how God used him. When he came down from the mountain, and God had told him what was going on down there. The children of Israel were doing terrible things. They'd departed from God and were dancing around that golden calf. And Moses' righteous anger, note I say *righteous* anger caused him to take those tables of the law and break them as a sign that Israel had broken his covenant with God. He strode into the camp, summoned Aaron and told him in no uncertain terms what a terrible thing he'd done.

And do you know, we are told that the children of Israel stood by admiring Aaron's meek, gentle spirit, and they were disgusted with the attitude of Moses. But God didn't look at it that way. God was using Moses in his righteous wrath against

sin to stop that awful plague of rebellion that had infected the camp of Israel. Moses called for action. This was righteous wrath, and there is a righteous anger.

But later, when Moses got angry because the children of Israel had rebelled, and he struck the rock when God had told him to speak to it, God was disappointed and He told him he couldn't go in the land of Canaan because he'd failed. Just once in 40 years, he failed to rule his spirit. My point is he had a lot of spirit to rule. And he succeeded there for 40 years except for once. And so, may I repeat, if you have a lot of spirit to rule, take courage. God can help you as He did James White. He can help you as he did Moses.

There's the great impulse, emotion, motivating factor of love, love in all its various manifestations. What a tremendous power. Can you rule your affections? Or does the impulse rule you?

One thing that's been leading me to think along the lines I'm studying with you this morning is something that happened out in Colorado two weeks ago tonight. Sabbath was a beautiful day in Colorado, as it often is. But in the afternoon great black clouds gathered up in the mountains, and that evening there was a terrific downpour of rain up there, 11 inches in two hours.

Soon the Big Thompson River was overflowing and raging, and a wall of water came down that canyon 12 feet high, crushing everything in its path. The people that were out camping on the side of the river, they went up there to have a lovely weekend you understand, trapped like rats in a trap. Houses torn away from their foundations, swept into the raging stream.

The great flume that was up above the highway going into the canyon supported by great pillars—it was torn away. The raging waters just simply destroyed those pillars. Millions of dollars of damage done; over a hundred people drowned, still scores of people missing. All that happened just two weeks ago tonight. I've been thinking about it, the terrific power of water.

I have been up that canyon many a time. I've seen the electric power plant partway down that canyon. And there that same stream channeled through the proper channels, turns the turbines that make the electricity for the city of Loveland and other parts there. That same terrific power which destroyed scores of lives and millions of dollars of property, that same power, *exactly* the same power, harnessed, channeled, under control, produces light and heat and motion and refrigeration for thousands of homes.

What's the difference? Just one difference, just one. It's whether that water is under control or whether it's not under control. That's the difference, that's the difference.

And whether it is the passion of anger, or the emotion of affection, whether it be the passion to get things, to accomplish things, think of any impulse of the human nature, let me tell you friends, if it is under control it can accomplish much for God and humanity. But unless you're a king, that's something else.

Turn over to Proverbs again. This time we'll go to 25th chapter and the 28th verse. Here is destruction worse than that that took place in the Big Thompson Canyon. What is it?

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls" Proverbs 25:28.

Oh my friend, can you rule your appetite? Can you rule your affections? Can you rule your passions? What do you do with your impulses, your feelings? What do you do with them? What do they do with you? Are you the king, or are you the slave? Do you do what you feel like? Then, you're a slave, my friend.

"Oh! But," somebody says, "can't I ever do what I feel like?"

Well, bless your heart, friend, if your feelings are the right thing at the right time, then the king can decide and say, "Okay, we'll do that."

You know, when we're little children, babies, we're inclined to do anything that we feel like *when* we feel like it. When does a baby cry? Well, when it feels like crying. When does it want to eat? When it feels like eating. When does it sleep? When it feels like sleeping. And I might go on with all the things that babies do.

And do you know what God gave parents to babies for? To control them. That's right. And there is a time in a baby's life when unless the parents control the child it will never learn self-control. The One who knows has told us that before the child is old enough to reason he may be taught to obey [see *Education*, page 287]. And the child that has never learned to let father and mother rule him will never learn to rule himself.

I say "never." Of course, by the grace of God, we may go back to the grades we skipped. But it's difficult, as the proverb says, for an old dog to learn new tricks. And may I tell you, a boy in his teens is an old dog when it comes to what I'm talking about this morning. That's right.

And you young fellows that are grappling with the impulses of adolescence, the strong urges, if you learned when you were little to obey father and mother you've got a better chance now of teaching your impulses, your passions, your affections, your appetite to obey *you*. But take courage friends. No matter how much you missed in early life, you can start now.

And as my dad used to say about almost any subject that came up, "You'll never learn any younger."

That is, if you haven't learned it before, you'll never learn any younger.

What did I read here in *Messages to Young People* 412?

"Strength of character consists of two things: the power of will, and the power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for the strength of character; but the truth

is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man”
Messages to Young People, page 412.

Oh, this matter of purity, purity in the inner life, in the thoughts and the actions, the things you do, my dear friends, when you’re all alone. Do you have control of your impulses, or do your impulses control you? If you’re a king, you rule. And no matter what the temptation may be, no matter what the urge may be to do the thing that you know is not pure, not holy, not sanctified, if you’re a king you say, “No.” Instead of giving the horse the rein and letting the horse go wherever it wants to go at whatever speed, you hold the bridle, you hold the reins, you control.

“Well,” you say, “Brother Frazee, I’d like to do all that. I wish that I could control my temper. I wish I could control my affections. I wish I could control my passions. I wish I could control my appetite. But it’s hard, it’s hard.”

1 Corinthians the 9th chapter verses 24–27, Paul was writing to the Corinthians. Corinth is a city in Greece. The people to whom he wrote were familiar with the Greek games where men would train for months and sometimes years and then compete in the various athletic contests for a crown of laurel or ivy. That was considered a great thing, to win the race. And what did those young men do that competed in these contests? They put themselves through a rigorous program of training.

Now, Paul takes that figure:

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all...”
1 Corinthians 9:24.

That is, they all run. But how many receive the prize?

“...but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain”
1 Corinthians 9:24.

Run like that man that wins. How are you going to do that? Twenty-fifth verse:

“And every man that striveth for the mastery is...”
1 Corinthians 9:25.

What?

“...temperate in all things...” 1 Corinthians 9:25.

Another word for temperance is self-control, the ability to say, “No,” absolutely to the wrong thing; the ability to say, “No,” when you’ve had enough of things that are good. Abstinence totally from bad things; moderation in good things—that’s control, that’s temperance.

“And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but

we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly..."
1 Corinthians 9:25–26.

Thank God, we're not like those Grecian runners that even with all their training weren't sure they'd get the prize. We're sure. God hasn't restricted the prize to one. *Anybody* who runs the race can win. That's God's race. That's the only race I'm interested in, friends.

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection..." 1 Corinthians 9:26–27.

That's what we're studying about this morning.

"...lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" 1 Corinthians 9:27.

"Why Paul, you mean you have a battle on your hands to control your impulses, your emotions, your passions, your appetite?"

"Yes," Paul says, "I do. Every day," he says, "I have this battle."

"Oh my, I'd think you'd get tired."

How does the man keep up the battle, and how does he win? I'll put to you very simply, friends. You cannot do it without Jesus. You cannot do it without Jesus. And if you try, by sheer willpower you may succeed in some angle. But as surely as you succeed in some things by sheer willpower without Christ, temptation will overcome you unexpectedly in some other sectors. Absolutely, you cannot do it without Jesus, but you *can* do it with Him.

That's what the apostle Paul says:

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"
Philippians 4:13.

And so, the question this morning is simply this, are you connected with Jesus?

"Ah, but," somebody says, "Brother Frazee, even when I give myself to Jesus, it seems that I still have such a struggle."

Why sure. What do you think He gives you the strength for? So you can go to sleep? You see, there are two ways that God can solve the problem of meeting a lion. One is to kill the lion or make it go away. But the other is to give *you* the strength to deal with it.

How did God handle the lion problem for David? Do you remember what David told King Saul when he was considering going against Goliath, the giant?

He said, "Now, I've been a shepherd out taking care of my father's sheep. And a lion came in there and got one of the lambs. And I went after him and took that lamb away from him. And when he turned on me, I took care of *him*."

Now, David could have stood there and just said, "Oh Lord, I wish you'd cause that lion to turn loose of that lamb and let it come running back."

But David realized that *he*, David, had something to do about it. I think he prayed, don't you? Think I would if I were going up against a lion. The point is God answered his prayers *not* by sending fear and fright into the lion so it ran away, and David could just stand there and sing one of his songs. Oh, no. David took care of that lion in the strength of God.

And what was all that to get him ready for? To meet Goliath.

When he saw that man up there, that huge fella 10 feet high, David said, "God will help me take care of him just like He did that lion."

And he went after him just like he did the lion. Killed him with his own sword, you remember, after he'd used his sling to hit his forehead.

Oh friends, we have no conception of the strength of the human will when it's united with the divine power of Jesus. And I don't care how weak you are if you link up with Jesus, if you plug into the divine powerhouse you're more than a match for every impulse, every emotion, every temptation of Satan.

This is what education is all about is to learn this lesson. If a man has learned this lesson, he's educated. If he hasn't, he isn't. No matter where he's gone to school, whether it's at some great university, or right here at Stone Cave, he's not educated if he hasn't learned this lesson. But if he has, he's educated. And God calls him what? A king, a king.

Oh, think of the Prince of the kings of the earth calling you forward and saying, "I crown you a king."

[Recording ended in progress]

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