

The Worthy King

The resurrection of Jesus gives us a map of reality and a King worthy of our trust.

Matthew 28:1-10; Romans 1:1-6

I. Introduction

This past fall, much of the nation was shocked while watching MNF when Buffalo Bills Safety Damar Hamlin collapsed to the ground after making a tackle. Within seconds you could tell this was deadly serious (some reports indicate his heart stopped on the field) as the medical personnel quickly gathered around Damar to offer aid.

The strongest professional athletes were quickly brought to tears with anguish on their faces. Most of them eventually dropped to their knees in prayer crying out to God to save Damar.

As the nation looked on, we were shocked by the sight, and many were immediately in touch with our fragility, our limitations, our mortality – our utter powerlessness in the face of death.

It was as if God, in prime time, was hitting the pause button on our incessant busyness; hitting the mute button on the unending noise in our lives; pulling the curtain of reality back from the mirage that we are ultimately in control over our lives – the captains of our fate.

That night and the following days possibly millions of Americans offered up prayers that night – possibly to a God they have mostly ignored – everywhere you looked you say – “Pray for Damar Hamlin.”

ESPN analyst Dan Orlovsky literally led the *NFL Live* broadcast crew in prayer on live TV as the other studio analyst bowed their heads in what appeared to be humble, reverent prayer to God.

Damar’s collapse on national TV caused a lot of raw emotion to surface in our national consciousness.

“Two of the closest people in the world to me, my wife and you – my broadcast partner for years – are deeply religious people, and I am not. And it made me a little envious in that moment and since then that I didn’t have that foundation of, I don’t want to say, a greater purpose or a higher power or something. Because I feel like at times like this, when there’s an inexplicable tragedy, you’re almost flailing about, like, ‘Why? Why did it happen to this kid in this moment?’” – Nick Wright, FOX Sports personality speaking to his cohost Chris Broussard

Some Christians have been refreshingly bold in their public comments.

“The questions about what happens after this life, where you will spend eternity, are coming up for all of us, not just for football players. But thank God that he provides an answer through his Son Jesus Christ.” –Benjamin Watson, former NFL player appearing on CNN with Anderson Cooper

All four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – tell the story of the bodily resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. They are all refreshingly honest in the way they tell the story too. We just read for us Matthew’s account.

“Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.”
Matthew 28:6

The earliest Christians worshipped Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God and King worthy of our trust and allegiance. One of the most unlikely Christians was Saul, who became the Apostle Paul.

Paul spent the rest of his life trying to proclaim the good news of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, and help people understand its meaning for their lives. About 2/3 of the NT is written by Paul.

II. The Good News of God

“Paul, a servant of King Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the good news of God – the good news He promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendent of

David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared to be the Son of God in power by his resurrection from among the dead: King Jesus our Lord. Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the peoples of the earth to the obedience that comes from faith. And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus the King.”
Romans 1:1-6

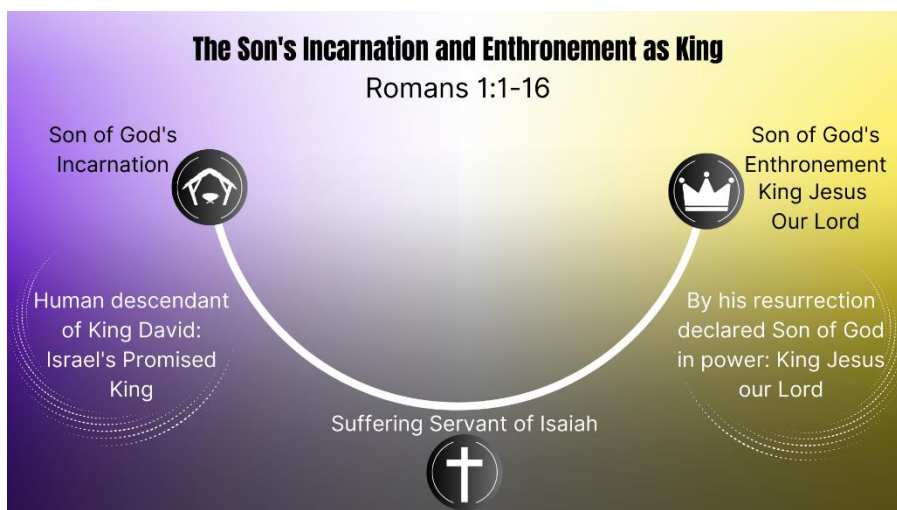
A. A Map of Reality

1. There is a God, who has good news. The Christian gospel is good news, and it's for everyone. It's not the invention of any man.
2. You can trust God because He always keeps His promises.
3. God's good news is about His Son Jesus, who became a man in the physical line of King David. Jesus of Nazareth is God's promised King come to rescue and renew God's groaning creation.
4. As God's promised King, the God-Man Jesus became the Suffering Servant promised by Isaiah, bearing our sin on the cross. What is made explicit elsewhere, is implied here by the fact of Jesus' resurrection.
5. By resurrecting Jesus from the dead, God has declared Jesus to be the Son of God in power. Jesus now reigns in Heaven as King Jesus our Lord.

B. A King Worthy of our Trust

“And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus the King.” Romans 1:6

Even now King Jesus calls men and women, boys and girls to come to him, to entrust themselves to him as Savior, Lord and King. Even now King Jesus gives to us the gift of new life with him now and forever in God's beautiful kingdom.



III. The Good News

It's interesting to take note of how Paul speaks of the gospel here in Romans 1. We've been looking at the gospel as it's preached by Jesus and the Apostles and realizing it's so much bigger than many of us have heard.

The gospel is the good news that God has kept His promises to Israel to rescue and renew His groaning creation from Satan, sin, and death through King Jesus (his life, death, resurrection, and ascension). Life in God's beautiful kingdom is available now and forever to all who entrust themselves to King Jesus and follow him as Lord.

"God will redeem the whole universe; Jesus' resurrection is the beginning of that new life, the fresh grass growing through the concrete of corruption and decay in the old world. The final redemption will be the moment when heaven and earth are joined together at last, in a burst of God's creative energy for which Easter is the prototype and source." – N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*

"What God did for Jesus on that first Easter day, he has promised to do for each one who is in Christ, each one indwelt by the Spirit of Christ." –N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*