

Notes for sermon on Luke 17:20-37
Simon Vibert, preached 19th November 2011 at St Leonard's Eynsham

Questions I wrestled with in the text/sermon prep

- What is the relationship between the Kingdom and the King?
- How much is speaking of near future and how much far distant?
- What does “the kingdom is within you mean?” (Leon Morris helped)
- How do I deal with the “rapture”/left behind aspects of the passage?
- How many points do I make (because they are related)
- How can I say the points so they stick in people’s mind (repeated “Jesus is a king...” – partly because they asked me to speak about that; I would have liked them to be snappier!)

Summary of the sermon (includes main points and examples/application in detailed homiletical form)

1. Introduction/hook from my experience living by the sea in Jersey: “Time and Tide wait for no man”

2. What kind of a king is Jesus? (body of the sermon)

- **King Jesus is active and present (vv20-24)**
 - He reigns in the human heart? (within you?) (cf Rom 14;17);
 - or perhaps, the kingdom is present because the king is present (among you?)
 - **Joke:** “Jesus is watching” ... but he really is!
- **King Jesus will bring everything to a dramatic climax (vv22-25)**
 - v22 seems to hint that there will be certain intrigue (e.g Harold Camping; Christopher Columbus (1656); Sir Isaac Newton (1948).)
 - But there is no private inside track, no further advanced warning: this IS the warning ... Jesus will bring everything to a sudden and climactic end and all will see it (like the lightning)
- **King Jesus will catch many by surprise (vv26-29)**
 - It will be like the days of Noah: eating, drinking, marrying
 - It will be like the days of Lot: eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building
 - People will be going about the normal business of life
 - Not horrendously wicked, but living normal life as if it will carry on forever
 - **Winston Churchill:** *Men stumble over the truth from time to time, but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing happened*
 - Occasional beautiful sunset; spine tingling piece of music, death of a loved one remind us of our mortality and that we will soon meet our maker, but we return to “business as usual”
 - neither Noah nor Lot were particularly saintly people – they just heard the warnings and did something about them!
 - In an atmosphere of general complacency or indifference do you hear the serious warnings which Jesus gives here and live differently?
 - He is patient, but not forever (2 Peter 3:8-10); Don’t live life as if this was all there is; Don’t think you have forever to make decisions for God
- **King Jesus summonses us to be ready for him (vv30-33)**
 - e.g. Preparation for the Queen’s visit to Australia last month
 - the man on the roof and the worker in the field won’t have time to go back and turn the oven off or collect that precious item;
 - **Quote** “Remember Lot’s wife!” (Charles Spurgeon sermon, 24th August 1879)
- **King Jesus will bring about the ultimate separation (vv34-37)**
 - we divide people into groups: good/bad; rich/poor; attractive/ugly; successful/failures etc etc.
 - with the second coming of Jesus there will be ultimate distinction

- one will be “taken” the other will be “left”
- **Tim Lahaye and Jerry Jenkins** “Left Behind series” those who, like Harold Camping believe that Christians will be taken and others left;
- “I wish we’d all been ready” (Larry Norman song)
- huge impact on me as a teenage. “It could be today”

3. Conclusion/application

Follow the model of the thief on the cross: **Luke 23:42**

King Jesus is coming! Are you ready for Him?

- the present isn’t all there is’
- there is a future day of reckoning/of final separation
- good things can distract from the most important things
- you’ve been warned – so get ready! It could be today!

Don’t get caught out

- Final **e.g.** Moving programme about people ignoring: Tsunami warnings