

THE KING HAS COME

“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Luke 19:38, NIV)

AS HAS BEEN TYPICAL THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER, golf fans come down on both sides of excitement regarding Tiger Woods’ return to competitive play last weekend. Some are highly eager to see him play again; others were hoping he was pretty much done with the game. But this time, there is also a group in the middle: those given to caution. They want to see what Tiger might have to challenge the young guard, but they’re allowing time to tell whether another injury is waiting to send the 14-time major winner to the sidelines again.

Your opinion on Tiger Woods, in the framework of eternity, is of course incidental. And while his coming to the golf world made all kinds of difference in all kinds of ways, it made no difference to anyone’s soul.

Sorry, Tiger. No offense. But you see, there was this guy named Jesus, who came in another place at another time for a whole other reason. It’s a reason that endures.

Perhaps the most important universal question in all of history is this: *Why did Jesus come to earth?* Even if we march our way through the validation of the manuscripts and show that he did come and do what the Scriptures said he did, we would find nothing particularly unique in his story: born, worked, traveled, died. It’s the *why* that matters. For Jesus, and for the rest of us. Yes, it gets personal. Because the most important question for you and me then follows: *When I know why he came, how do I respond?*

We can go to Jesus’ own words for a direct answer to the first question: “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10, ESV).

Jesus came to bring life. Pretty simple by itself. It’s the rest of his teaching that allows us to understand what kind of life he was talking about. It was a kingdom life, wherein we find peace, joy, grace—the very things we sing of at this time of year.

Now do we want such a life? That is, do we want Jesus to come to our house today, just as he did with Zacchaeus? Not everyone does. We have to remember in all this that every kingdom has a king. Jesus is such a one. He offers us his kind of life, which stretches into eternity, but only if we will give up our self-reign for his kingly rule. That’s no small consideration.

Opening questions What favorite player from the past would you like to see come back to face the young stars today? • How are you challenged in accepting Jesus Christ as king of your life?

READING John 12:12-33

The king rides in (John 12:12-16)

Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem fulfilled Old Testament prophecies (see your Bible’s footnotes). How do the prophecies support our understanding and faith?

The cry of the crowd (John 12:17-19)

Do you think the crowd’s eagerness was motivated by faith or by spectacle? What was the Pharisees’ take on the crowd’s affection?

The reason for the hour (John 12:20-33)

What are the central components of Jesus’ purpose as he explains them in this passage? What do you think it means to be drawn to Jesus by his death?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2017 Links Players International.