

Session Two Handout:

Jesus is Lord: A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis

Opening Prayer

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is discord, union;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

(Prayer attributed to St. Francis)

Your Kingdom Come, Your Will Be Done

Matthew 6:9-15

⁹ Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And do not bring us to the time of trial,

but rescue us from the evil one.

¹⁴ For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; ¹

¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Reflection:

- What stood out for you as you heard the reading from the Gospel of Matthew?
- What does this scripture call you to believe about Jesus?
- When we say, “Your kingdom come, your will be done,” what does that mean for you?

Jesus is Lord

Jesus is Lord. That is our foundational confession. It was central for the early church and needs to again become central to us. If Jesus is Lord, then Caesar was not—nor any other political ruler since. If Jesus is Lord, no other authority is absolute. Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of God he announced, is the Christian’s first loyalty, above all others. We pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). Our faith is personal but never private, meant not only for heaven but for this earth.

The question we face is this: Who is Jesus Christ for us today? What does our loyalty to Christ, as disciples, require at this moment in our history? We believe it is time to renew our theology of public discipleship and witness. Applying what “Jesus is Lord” means today is the message we commend as elders to our churches.

What we believe leads us to what we must reject. Our “Yes” is the foundation for our “No.” What we confess as our faith leads to what we confront. Therefore, we offer the following six affirmations of what we believe, and the resulting rejections of practices and policies by political leaders which dangerously corrode the soul of the nation and deeply threaten the public integrity of our faith. We pray that we, as followers of Jesus, will find the depth of faith to match the danger of our political crisis.

Reflection:

- Who is Jesus Christ for us today?
- What does our loyalty to him require?
- What does it mean to be disciples who regard Jesus as Lord at this moment in our history?

Closing Prayer

Read in unison

Matthew 6:9-15

9 Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And do not bring us to the time of trial,

but rescue us from the evil one.

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; ¹

15 but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Amen.