



BOOK REVIEW // MAN OF SORROWS, KING OF GLORY

JONTY RHODES // REVIEWED BY CASSIE WATSON

*What the Humiliation
and Exaltation
of Jesus Mean for Us*



MAN OF SORROWS

KING OF GLORY



JONTY RHODES

We need more books about Jesus. There are benefits to reading about topics related to the Christian life: marriage and singleness, suffering and joy, evangelism and prayer. But if there's one theme we ought to return to time and time again, surely it should be our Saviour Jesus Christ. We can never hear about Jesus too often, never plumb the depths of his goodness and glory. Jonty Rhodes's *Man of Sorrows, King of Glory* is a wonderful new book that helps us see Jesus more clearly.

LOOK DEEPER AT THE CROSS

What can we say about Jesus over a few hundred pages? That's where we run into a problem. In our (rightful) quest to be cross-centred, we narrow our vision of who Jesus is and what he's done. We say, "Jesus died for my sins on the cross," and stop there—but we're missing the riches of Christ when we don't dig deeper into what this actually means. The solution is not to find a different focus than the cross, but instead to look *deeper* at the cross.

In *Man of Sorrows, King of Glory*, Rhodes helps us do just that by explaining the threefold office of Christ—a doctrine that has deep roots in church history but is largely neglected among Christians today. Rhodes explains how Adam failed in the Garden of Eden to fulfill the roles God had given him. He should have spoken truth in response to Satan's lies to Eve, protected the holiness of his wife and the place where they dwelt with God, and exercised dominion by conquering the serpent. But he failed on all counts. Rhodes writes, "That's

why a second Adam was needed: a true prophet to open our eyes, a priest to cleanse us from sin, and a king to conquer death and the devil on our behalf" (24).

See how much richer this understanding of Jesus is? We need a comprehensive vision of Jesus's work and his heart towards us. He is more than a ticket to heaven! Here at the cross we see Jesus, in his boundless grace, make right what was broken in the fall. The second Adam does what the first Adam did not—the cross is Jesus's "pulpit, altar, and throne" (54).

LOOK WIDER THAN THE CROSS

Even while we keep the cross central in our theology, Rhodes wants us to look wider: "It's possible that we've fallen into the trap of only ever speaking about Christ in his humiliation and neglecting his ongoing work in his state of exaltation" (18). We make the gospel all about Good Friday and forget about Resurrection Sunday. Rhodes structures *Man of Sorrows, King of Glory* to correct this imbalance, exploring the threefold office from the lenses of Christ's humiliation (his incarnation, life, burial, and death) and his exaltation (his resurrection, ascension, session, and return).

We're robbing ourselves of joy—and a deeper relationship with Christ—when we neglect to meditate on, teach about, and sing of Jesus's ongoing work for us now as our glorified prophet, priest, and king. Jesus is working for us still today, and he will continue until we're safely home.

Jonty Rhodes isn't reinventing the wheel here. He is not, thankfully, trying to say anything *new*. He draws deeply from theologians throughout church history, citing classic creeds and confessions as well as the likes of Calvin and Bavinck. He brings these old truths and presents them afresh. And I'm grateful for that—the church needs to proclaim the glorious riches of Jesus far and wide in every

generation.

I hope *Man of Sorrows, King of Glory* will be just one of many books written about Jesus in this generation, for the joy and edification of his people. I commend it to anyone who wants to know Christ better and love him more—there is no higher goal we could pursue.

Christians, rightly called “people of the cross,” look to Jesus’s death and resurrection as the central points of his earthly mission. But in order to understand more fully the person and work of Christ, it’s important for believers to fix their minds on his entire ministry—his life, death, resurrection, and ongoing ministry today—and not solely on his work on the cross.

In *Man of Sorrows, King of Glory*, Jonty Rhodes uses the traditional roles of Jesus as prophet, priest, and king (often referred to as his “threefold office”) to show how his whole life—in humiliation on earth and now exaltation in glory—is lived for *us*. As believers explore Jesus’s life, death, resurrection, and ascension, they will develop a holistic portrait of the Messiah and a deeper appreciation for God’s plan to reclaim sinners.

“*Man of Sorrows, King of Glory* is theologically rich while remaining accessible and devotional. This edifying book will help Christians understand Jesus more fully and love him more deeply.”

GAVIN ORTLUND, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Ojai; author, *Finding the Right Hills to Die On*

“This book is full of biblical insight and draws on a rich stock of historic Reformed theologians. In *Man of Sorrows, King of Glory*, we move from Adam to the new creation and see how in Christ’s exaltation he becomes the human king the world has been awaiting. Jonty Rhodes shows that the death and resurrection of Jesus have so much more importance for Christians than we usually recognize.”

SIMON GATHERCOLE, Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, University of Cambridge

JONTY RHODES is minister of Christ Church Central Leeds, a congregation of the International Presbyterian Church in Leeds, United Kingdom. He has spent the last ten years planting churches in England and is the author of *Covenants Made Simple*. Jonty is married to Georgina, and they have four children.

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