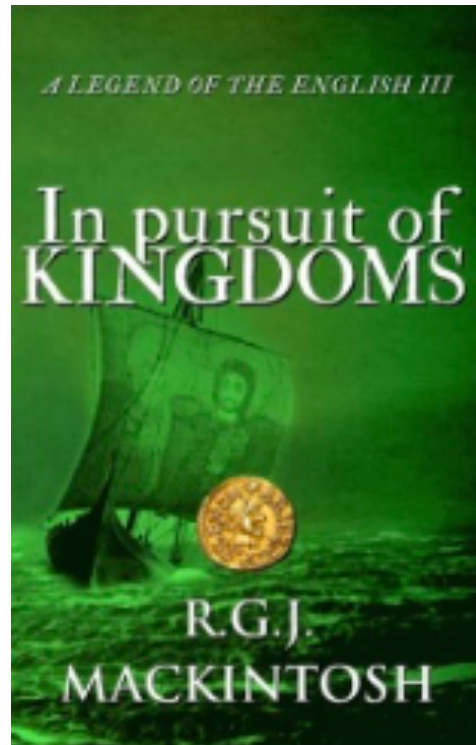


Christian Book Club Session 3:

In Pursuit of Kingdoms



PREPARATION

Gather together your small group (in friends' homes, or Zoom, etc)

AIM

Deepen your insights into some of the tensions between Religion and Faith.

Deepen your understanding of Christianity and Paganism in the C8th-9th AD.

Consider: where are we in Faith and Practice today?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How did Alric and Tola's reunion with their family reflect the tension between Christianity and worship of Wodin and "the gods"?
2. Why did Earl Sighart ask to receive Christian baptism?
3. What prompts King Ethelbert to become a follower of Christ? What might the implications and consequences be for him?
4. How does each encounter between King Ethelbert and Wodin's High Priest, Coifin, change the relationship between the two men? What are the consequences?
5. What are the changes for Ethelbert's son, Eadbald, when he becomes King?
6. How does Alric's father, Galen, show his adherence to the Christian faith after the death of his beloved wife, Erlina?
7. How does Ethelburga (daughter of King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha) become the first Abbess of a dual monastery of men *and* women? What implications might follow – not only for the Kingdom of Cantia, but also for *all* of Saxon England?
8. The Icon of Jesus with Abbot Minas is represented on the front cover of each of the three novels, and in different ways. What might be the connection between this icon and the 'pursuit' of pagan kingdoms?
9. How does the 'arc' of Alric's life indicate its meaning—in his transition from a 9-year-old youngster on the eve of his kidnapping, to his final position in Cantia?
10. What impression(s) do you have of Tola by the end of the final novel, *In Pursuit of Kingdoms*?
11. How would you sum-up the three books? What did **you** learn from this?
12. Finally, in the light of the Covid-19 epidemic, and our own Saxon history down the ages, what could be **our** Faith and Practice today?