

Proper 29 Year B Christ the King

11/21/2021

2 Samuel 23:1-7; Psalm 132:1-19; Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

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Today is of course Christ the King Sunday...

The last Sunday of the Church Year.

We have been blessed to journey around the church calendar yet another time...

Following the life of Christ.

One of the things that I so enjoy and also, so need is the formation of the circular church calendar reminding me of the ways of our Lord in the midst of a year of ups and downs... of struggles and triumphs.

It is a pleasure each year...

to journey through the church year together.

Over the last few weeks our Sunday collects...

That is, our opening prayers...

have begun to bring to our attention and to direct us toward our Christian hope...

As believers... that is our eternal life with Jesus Christ...

Advent will continue this theme as we move toward the celebration of the first Advent of Jesus Christ...

the first coming of our Lord with the Christmas narrative.

But as I reflected on our readings this week...

The theme of eternity was present in all of the readings...

In the first reading from 2 Samuel, we heard these words...

Which are some of the last words of David...

the celebrated king of Israel.

We read:

For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure.

And of course, that is what God did...

Making an eternal covenant...

God said: *I will establish the throne of (David's) kingdom forever.*

(2 Samuel 7)

And this was fulfilled in his descendant Jesus Christ.

Who rose from the grave and therefore establishing a forever kingdom...

A lineage that will never end...

With the true King of kings on the throne.

The theme of eternity is also in our appointed Psalm...

We responded with these words:

Their children will sit upon your throne forevermore.

The people of God will be with Christ and in his kingdom forever and ever.

In our second reading from the book of Revelation...

John writes about Jesus saying *to him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.*

Christ Jesus is the king who will reign forever and ever.

Eternity is his reign.

For he is the Alpha and the Omega...

The beginning and the end.

He always was, he is, and he always will be...

His Kingdom is an eternal kingdom.

And finally, in our Gospel reading from John the apostle...

In the narrative we have Pilate the leader of Roman power in ancient Israel asking Jesus if he is the King of the Jews.

And Jesus responds by telling Pilate:

You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.

Jesus acknowledges his kingship...

But he also describes his kingdom as very different than the kingdoms of this world...

Jesus said:

My kingdom is not from this world.

If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews.

But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.

The Kingdom of God is a heavenly kingdom...

A kingdom of peace and love

A kingdom of justice and joy

A kingdom of humility and freedom

This is in contrast to the earthly kingdoms of our day

Jesus' kingdom is not the dominating culture or the trends in our society.

Jesus' kingdom is not the United States of America or any other nation.

Jesus' kingdom is not a political party.

Jesus' kingdom is not any of these earthly kingdoms.

Jesus' kingdom *is though* present on this earth...

Jesus' kingdom *is advancing* on this earth everyday...

Advancing through his people... the church...
Growing, impacting, and transforming lives...
And his kingdom and his people are awaiting the return of the king.
The second coming of our Lord.
To set all the world at right.

As Jesus said in the book of Revelation:
Behold, I am making all things new.
(Revelation 21:5)

These are the actions of our good and faithful King.
Jesus is going to set the world at rights...
Making all things new.

And our collect for today brings this all together...
I invite you to have it in front of you...
It is in the bulletin.

In our tradition...
the primary way we express our theology is in the way we pray...
So, of course, the Book of Common Prayer is our theological guide.
Our collects are found in the first part of the prayer book.

We prayed this morning:

Almighty and everlasting God...

(Expressing the eternal God as powerful)

Whose will it is to restore all things...

(This is one of the most comforting promises of God...

to restore all things...

not just some things... *all* things...

Our God is a God of redemption...

of restoration...

of liberation...

He is a God of justice...

He has an eternal plan to set the world at rights...)

The collect goes on to tell us how he is going to restore all things:

In your well-beloved Son, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords:

(The restoring of the world is through Jesus Christ...

not a different prophet, not a nation,

not a leader or a social movement...

God will restore all things through Jesus Christ)

And then it says:

Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin,

(We are divided amongst ourselves that is for sure...

and also, we are divided against God in so many ways...

and we are very much driven by our sins...

practicing the things that are against the good will and purpose of our Lord)

Yet here is the hope...

May be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule...

(And this is the how...

The answer to our sin... is freedom in Jesus Christ.

The answer to our division... is being brought together in Jesus Christ.

For it is in his reign... made known to us in the cross and resurrection...

That we can receive forgiveness of our sins...

And we are brought together as one people...

The church... the people of God... the Children of God...

When we submit ourselves to King Jesus under his rule of grace...

When we admit that Jesus has done something for us that we cannot do on our own...

Through the cross...

That is our salvation...

Our baptismal confession is that Jesus is our Lord and our Savior...

He is our king!

And so, the question for us today...

On Christ the King Sunday...

Is this...

Who is your king?

Who do we submit to?

What do we bow down to?

What has our allegiance?

Do we follow a leader on this earth...?

A favorite politician or perhaps a political ideal?

Maybe it is a movement that gains our allegiance?

Perhaps money is our king...?

Or health...?

Or comfort?

When I make decisions, consider ethics, or the morality in this world...

do I consult the king in prayer and the holy scriptures or is my first turn toward something or someone else?

Do we follow the trend of the day...
that I am my own person...
that I am mine...
that I am my own king...
As old blue eyes sang... *I did it my way.*

Well, there is a better way...
A way where we follow the Lord of lords and the King of kings...
Following a Savior who said: *I am the way, the truth, and the life.*
(John 14:6)

May we bow our will...
May we bow our might...
May we bow our imaginations...
To the one who is worthy...

May we serve the kingdom of God...
and not the earthly kingdoms of our time.
May we serve the King of kings...
and not the will of this world or of my own selfish desire.

May our song be to crown him with many crowns...

Casting the crowns off our own heads...

And placing the authority of our lives with Jesus Christ...

Because we were bought with the precious blood of Jesus...

Jesus is our king!

As the hymn says:

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne

Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own

Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee

And hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

May this be our song...

Looking for the return of the king...

Awaiting the day...

Preparing the way...

Because...

Christ Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Amen

and

Amen.

