

Christ is Our King

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Old Testament Lesson; Daniel 7:13-14

Epistle Lesson; Revelation 1:4-8

Sermon Text; John 18:33-37

Well, today is Christ the King Sunday, the last Sunday of the church year. It is on this Sunday we should look at Christ being our King. So, let's do that. Let's begin by talking about kings and kingdoms. Did you know that no less than 119 times in the New Testament the phrase "Kingdom of God" or "Kingdom of Heaven" is used. For example, John the Baptist once said, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near." What John the Baptist was doing is he was reminding us that the Messiah was coming and He was coming to establish His Kingdom. Well, to this day, the Kingdom of God is expanded, as Jesus our Savior is preached to the world.

But let's just back up a moment and look into the Old Testament, and look at kings and kingdoms that the Children of Israel were desiring for themselves. In the Old Testament, God wanted to be the King of His people. In the Old Testament that is referred to as '*a theocracy*'. The word '*Theo*' means '*God*' and so '*a theocracy*' is '*a rule of God*'. God wanted to rule over His people. God ruled over His people, during the time of Moses, during the time of Joshua, during the time of the Judges, and during the time of Samuel. God would speak to those leaders. Those leaders, in turn, would share with the people what it was that God said. Well, God is omniscient. God is all-knowing. He knew His people were going to be asking for a king, even before they did. And so, after the Children of Israel left Egypt,

as they were wandering in the desert, and before they came to the land that God had promised to them, God predicted they would ask for a king. But, listen to what things were like in those days. The very last verse in the book of Judges it tells us what it was like. It says, “In those days, Israel had no king and everyone did as he saw fit.” They didn't want to listen to God, anymore. They did not want to listen to their King. And so, they chose to do whatever they felt was right in their own minds and in their own hearts. Well, already, when they were wandering around in the desert, God knew they were going to ask for a king. And so, God says when the day comes that you ask for a king, there are going to be five qualifications that I want your kings to meet. This is taken from Deuteronomy chapter 17. Listen to these five qualifications very closely, because we are going to see in a little bit, here, how Solomon, who was king over God's people, broke a majority of these qualifications.

-Number one. He must be from your own brothers.

-Number two, he must not acquire for himself many horses.

-Number three, he must not take many wives.

-Number four, he must not accumulate large amounts of silver or gold.

-Number five, he is to write for himself, on a scroll, a copy of this law.

And so, time passes by. The Children of Israel enter the land God had promised to His people. Low and behold, they ask for a king, just as God had prophesied, just as God had predicted. The people went to Samuel and said, “Give us a king.” This displeased Samuel. Samuel shared that with the Lord. God said to Samuel, “*Give them what they want. But, warn them.*” And so, Samuel did warn them. He said, “*This is what your king is going to demand from you.*” Just listen to some of these demands. Samuel told the people, “The king will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses. He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and

bakers. He will take your fields, vineyards, and olive groves and give them to his attendants.”

But, the people said, “*We want a king. We want to be like all of the other nations, with a king to lead us, to go out before us and fight our battles.*”

And so, God gave them exactly what they asked for. He gave them a king. Saul was their first king. The Bible tells us that Saul was a head taller than everybody else. He was handsome. He appeared to be a good king. And yet, Saul changed. In time, he became hot-tempered. He became filled with fits of jealousy.

David became the next king. But, not everybody recognized David as king, initially. You see, for a couple of years, they recognized, (some people at least recognized) Saul's son Ishbosheth, until he died. And then, everybody recognized David, as king.

Then, along came Solomon, David's son. But, listen to what the Bible says about Solomon, as a king. Remember those five qualifications I shared with you, just a little bit ago? Solomon was from his own brothers. But, the Bible tells us Solomon took for himself twelve thousand horses to pull his chariots. That broke one of those qualifications. Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, breaking one of those qualifications. The Bible tells us that during the reign of Solomon, silver was as common as stones in Jerusalem, breaking one of those qualifications. The Bible tells us Solomon's wives lead him astray. Again, breaking one of those qualifications.

After Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became the king to the two tribes of Judah. One of Solomon's officials became king in the north, over the ten tribes of Israel.

Their desire for a king became disastrous for God's people. They would have been better off, being in that 'theocracy', as God ruled over them.

We flash forward a thousand years to the time of our text, this

morning, and we see this conversation that Pilate has with Jesus. He asks the question, “*Are you a king?*”

Jesus says, “*Is this your idea, or did it come from somebody else?*”

You see, Pilate was not a Jew. He was a Roman. Jesus' own people had handed Him over to Pilate. And so, he asks again, “*Are you a king?*”

Jesus said,

“You are right in saying that I am a King.

In fact, for this reason I was born,
and for this I came into the world.”

Jesus also said,

“My Kingdom is not of this world.”

Jesus did not come to be an earthly king. Remember when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, and Peter cut off the high priest's servant's ear, whose name was Malchus? Jesus said, “All who draw the sword, will die by the sword. Don't you know that I can call on my Father and he will put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels?”

You see, an earthly king needs an army. He needs horses, chariots, and soldiers to extend his rule. But, Jesus did not come to be an earthly king. His Kingdom is not of this world. Rather, Jesus wants to be King in your heart. He wants to be King over all who have gone before us into Heaven.

Who is the king in your heart, today? We see what happened to the Children of Israel, when they had a king. Saul – jealous, hot-tempered, strong-willed, filled with depression. David – an adulterer, murderer. Solomon – broke a majority of those qualifications that God had given for a king.

Who is king in your heart?

-Is it fame, glory, and riches? Sometimes people live by a phrase you have heard. “He who dies with the most toys wins.”

-Is it yourself? Sometimes we set up ourselves as king in our

hearts.

-Maybe it is activities. We fill our lives so packed full of activities, that we fail to let Jesus live in our hearts.

-Or, maybe it is even football. It seems funny at first, but it is sad and true. A couple of years ago, it just so happened that the Sunday School Christmas Service was at the same time as when a Packer's football game was. Many dads and many families stayed home, watching the football game, instead of being here, for the Sunday School Christmas Service.

Who is king in your heart? Jesus came to be your King. There is no sin that is so terrible that it can't be forgiven. The person who has strayed farthest from God's Word, can be brought back into His Kingdom and can be restored. And to think that God uses sinful people, like ourselves, to expand His Kingdom. No, our King didn't come to be an earthly king. He was not a normal looking King. But, it is our King who went to the cross for you. And it is our King who laid down His life, in His body, on the tree, on the cross, with a sign that was nailed to the top of His cross.

“This is Jesus of Nazareth,
King of the Jews.”

Our King was innocent, and yet, He bore our sin so that we could be forgiven, so that He can be King in our hearts now, and so He can rule over us and all believers who have gone before us in Heaven. Christ's Kingdom continues to be expanded today, as God's Word is preached. And so, may we take that message of Christ crucified for our salvation, and not only let that reign in our hearts, but may we also share that message of salvation in Christ, our King, with others so Christ may rule in other people's hearts and they may be in Heaven with Him for all eternity.

Now that Christ, our King's work on earth is completed, what is it that Jesus is doing, now? Well, as we said in our responsive verses at the very beginning of our service for today, the book of

Philippians tells us,

“Therefore God has highly exalted Him:
and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name;
that at the name of Jesus,
every knee shall bow:

And every tongue confess Him the King of glory.”

As we close out another church year, and as we begin to start another new church year, next Sunday on the first Sunday of Advent, we think of Christ our King coming, not only to rule over the whole world, but to also to be King of our hearts.

“Joy to the world.
The Lord is come.
Let earth receive her King.”

Amen