

Christ the King Sunday  
Sermon Text: Daniel 7:9-10; 13-14  
Related text: John 18:33-37  
Date preached: November 22, 2009

Grace to you and peace from God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

It might be a bit easier to relate to this Sunday if we were living two hundred or more years earlier. In that time frame we might have more of an idea than we do today of what it means to live in a monarchy, with one King calling all the shots in the land for his subjects.

Instead we are long past the days of living under such a government. We have in this country a democratic system that allows us many freedoms. The ability to come here and worship is but one of those freedoms.

Yes, as we and others might be quick to point out there are flaws in how our democratic system works. It can take far too long to address issues such as health care, immigration reform, poverty to name a few examples.

So under such a democratic system, what meaning might this Sunday our church calls Christ the King, have for us. Perhaps we could look at this from a church viewpoint.

As much as we may feel things are forced upon us by people in the ELCA offices in Chicago, we are far removed from the days of living under the authority of a pope. So, even in the structure of particularly the Lutheran Church, this festival may be difficult one for us to relate.

Now before we simply suggest that the time for such a festival is now over and we should just let it slip from the liturgical year, there is still a value in celebrating this day.

The value of celebrating this Sunday as Christ the King is about celebrating Christ. The day offers us an opportunity to focus on the vastness of God's love in Jesus Christ for this world and all creation.

This festival celebrates the fulfillment of what is prophesied in Scripture such as in today's reading from Daniel. As you hear this verse, keep Jesus in mind.

“To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.”

This is God's work. God elevated his Son to his right hand. To speak of Jesus at the right hand of God is not so much to speak about a literal right hand as much as it speaks to God raising Jesus to the highest authority.

By elevating Jesus God has made him above every earthly ruler be it king, dictator, president, or pope. And that is why this day is one to celebrate.

Jesus kingdom is one that built on the foundation of God's love for the world. This kingdom has no geographical, economic, political, social, or dare I say religious boundaries.

Through God's love for the world, Jesus came and died so that we would have life through him. This gift of life is a gift for the whole world and one that we do not have private ownership over.

So with that there are certain things about Christ the King that may surprise us. It may surprise us where we see the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is not contained in nice, beautiful, exquisite places of honor. The Kingdom of God is one that isn't afraid to get dirty.

It may be a bold thing to proclaim that the Kingdom of God is present in the person wearing tattered clothing coming through the soup kitchen line. It may be a bold thing to proclaim that the Kingdom of God is present in a room where enemies work out their differences.

As you go about the extra busyness that comes with this time of year, let it serve us as an opportunity to see the Kingdom of God where we least expect it.

The Kingdom of God is seen in the atmosphere of St. Afterschool. This new ministry of the congregations of Christians Uniting of which we are apart is not an overly religious program. Yet, as we provide the space and the volunteers and other behind the scenes things necessary for this program, these children, most of whom are unchurched can begin to see the church and associate it with positive experience. And in those moments, there is the Kingdom of God.

Perhaps most surprising of all places where Christ's Kingdom is seen is when you stand in front of a mirror. That's right, I'm speaking of each one of us.

As the baptized children of God, Christ the king is with us. His kingdom may not be from this world, but his kingdom is in this world. We pray for God's

kingdom to continue to come. Christ the King will usher in this kingdom with or without our prayers, but we pray that the kingdom of Christ will come to us and that we may be a part of that kingdom, now and forever. AMEN.