

Sermon for November 23, 2025
Christ the King Sunday
"Christ Our King"

Colossians 1:11-20

We don't know much about kings. We know the definition but have no experience of them. We have all grown up in a republic or democracy of some kind. To us kings are the characters in fairy tales or stories of long ago and far away. When we think of a monarch we think of the Queen or King of England. A genuine monarchy is something we have no firsthand experience of. As a result we modern people don't really know what we mean when we call Christ our King.

To understand what "Christ the King" means we have to understand what a monarchy is. Let me contrast it with the form of government we know: democracy. The way that a democracy works is rather plain to us. In a democracy power is distributed evenly among the people. In a democracy the people tell the leaders what to do. If they don't do what we say, we kick them out of office. In an absolute monarchy things work the other way around. All the power belongs to the King or Queen. The monarch tells the people what to do and they obey. If they don't, the Monarch has the authority to punish them for it.

Now hold on to your socks. I have some news for you that might be shocking for some. The Kingdom of God is not a democracy. It is a monarchy. You may say, "But our founding Fathers set forth on this continent a new nation founded on the ideals of democracy." But in the beginning God set forth in the midst of nothing a universe and said I am in charge here. In the Kingdom of Heaven, God is the source of all authority. God tells us what to do, not the other way around, and the Bible tells us that God has placed his Son in charge.

As Christians we are citizens or subjects of the Kingdom of God. In Colossians the Bible tells us that we have been transferred into that kingdom. Before we gave our lives to Christ we were slaves to the powers of evil, but when we accepted Christ he delivered us from that domain. Christ made us citizens of his kingdom. Just as immigrants can become American Citizens, Jesus swore us in to become citizens of the Kingdom of God

As I have said before, we are resident aliens in this world. We reside here, but this is not our home. We are aliens in a strange land. We are settlers whose homeland is far away. We are merely passing through on our way home.

Because we are resident aliens, our allegiance is to our King and not to this land. We do not answer to the authorities of this world. That is why the Pilgrims whose Thanksgiving feast we commemorate this week came to America. They recognized a higher authority and did not want to be hindered by the authority of an earthly monarch. They came to America to be faithful to their Heavenly King. The authority that we ultimately follow and answer to is our King in Heaven. If this world says, "hate your enemies," and our King says, "love your enemies," then it is our duty to love those who hate us. If this world says, "the one who dies with the most toys wins," but our king says, "lay up treasures in heaven," then it is our duty to forsake the material to treasure the eternal.

Christ is our King and the sole governing authority over our lives, but Christ is different from other rulers. In this world power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. So history has shown us that monarchs are often corrupt. They oppress their

subjects by laying heavy burdens on them and making unreasonable demands on them. Monarchs in this world distance themselves from their subjects and leave them powerless.

By contrast Christ loves and cares for his subjects. Christ's power is absolute, but it remains pure in its desire to nurture and love. Christ doesn't push us down, he lifts us up. He frees people from oppression and takes the heavy burdens from them. Jesus empowers his people instead of depriving them.

Unlike the rulers of this world, Christ's authority is made perfect in his servitude. Christ's power is made manifest through his weakness. Instead of maintaining a distance from his subjects, Jesus became one of us. He experienced our pain and he even died our death. So Christ is uniquely qualified to be our King, because he knows us intimately and can therefore care for us infinitely.

After pointing out that Christ is a loving servant King, Paul goes on. He says, "May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."(Col. 1:11-12) This is at the beginning of the letter and he is wishing them well. Paul is saying, "May you be strong and may you be able to face life with patient endurance." But that is not all, he is wishing them the kind of endurance that finds joy and a reason to give thanks in the midst of the trials of this life.

What is the source of this great power that enables one to face life with that kind of patient joy? Christ is! Through Jesus Christ our Heavenly Father has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Heaven, and Christ has transferred us from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of light. We live in this world but we are citizens of Heaven.

Christ is our source of strength, but who is Christ? Paul writes, "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."(Col. 1:15-20)

Christ Our King. Christ: The only begotten Son of God, God in the flesh, light from light, True God from true God, the author of salvation who was there at the beginning, the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for the sins of the world.

Our King: The one we answer to, the one who protects us, the one who is our sole authority. He is the one who frees us and empowers us.

Is Christ your King? If not, then make him your King today! If he is your King, then be strong. Be strong in the kind of strength that lets you face the troubles of life with a calm assurance. Be strong because your King and protector is the image of the invisible God. Be strong in the face of this world's demands because you answer to a higher authority. Be strong in the face of darkness because you are a child and subject of the power of eternal light. Be strong in the face of death because you have an eternal home in the heavens. Be strong because Christ is your King.