

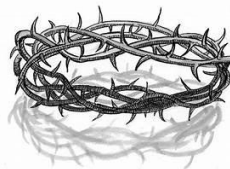
Sermon 26 November – Christ the King. Baptism. Family Sunday

Today is the last Sunday of the church's year and we celebrate Christ the King. It is a day when we celebrate Jesus as King, over all of creation and every aspect of our lives.

So, what can you tell me about kings. What do you know about them? Yes...A king lives in a palace, with many servants. A king wears fancy robes/clothes, jewelry, and a crown. Kings rule over people and manage/ control armies. They give instructions and make decisions. A king is supposed to keep the peace and make sure everyone is treated fairly and taken care of. Now, I know we don't really know about kings because we don't have a king, but I am sure that you have read about them. Seen pictures of them, isn't that so?



Now, do you think this is the kind of king Jesus is? Did Jesus live in a palace and wear fancy clothing? Was he in charge of an army? No...He wore simple clothing. He did not even have his own house. He taught people about God and told them how God wanted them to live. He did not wear a fancy crown but a crown of thorns that others made him wear because they wanted to make fun of him.



And so, when we read about Jesus and his life, we see that he is a different kind of king to the ones we know about. To the one's we read about.

So, what kind of king is Jesus? Why do you think we celebrate Jesus as king today? He is a king because he is the Son of God. He died and rose again so that we can come close to God in a new way. He came to save us – rescue us - from all the wrong things we do. All the hurt we cause to others and ourselves. He does not want to order us around. He loves us and wants us to love him and follow his teachings. Jesus wants us to be guided and shaped by God's values and not the world's values. Do you think this is a good king? Someone we can follow. Yes...definitely!

In the gospel reading Jesus said that the way we treat – or don't treat - others is the way we treat – or don't treat – him. In verses 35-36, Jesus says, “for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you

welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ (Matthew 25: 35-36). And in verse 40, Jesus says, **‘I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’** (Matthew 25: 40). And so, we see that whatever we do to others – the way we treat them – we do to Jesus. In verses 42-45, Jesus says when we don’t do these things for others – when we don’t feed them, give them clothes, take care of them when they sick or are in prison, then we are not doing this for him.

The way we treat others shows how well we know Jesus - and what is important to him. It shows how love him and serve him. When we say Jesus is our King it means we obey and follow him. We identify with him and his values.

In a little while we will be baptising a number of people – some babies and others older. Their parents, godparents and the older people will be making promises that show they identify with Jesus. They will promise to love, obey, and follow him. In other words that they will serve Jesus as their King. Baptism reminds us of who we are in Christ. We are the beloved children of God and inheritors to the kingdom of heaven. Through baptism we identify with – give our lives to - Jesus the king who serves with love and justice and who calls us do the same.

Let us pray.

May the power of God that is at work in us open the eyes of our hearts that we may come to know, love, and serve Christ as King.

Amen