



DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

Christ the King Sunday (C) – Colossians 1:11-20

Focus: *Christ the Ruler of All*

word of life

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and indivisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.” (Colossians 1:15-16 NRSV)

Read Colossians 1:11-20

The church calendar comes to a close with Christ the King Sunday. Christ is proclaimed as the one who has dominion over all. This proclamation is supported by this beautiful text from Colossians. With its hymn-like qualities, the message of this passage concerning the immediate reign of Christ is intended to be sung higher than the stars and wider than the oceans.

This passage begins with a prayer of strength and patience, but shifts to a resounding confession of faith. “[Jesus] has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” (Colossians 1:13-14 NRSV) It is Jesus alone who has the capacity to rescue and save us from the power of darkness in our lives.

1. *Give examples of the power of darkness.*
2. *How do we get transferred into the kingdom of God’s beloved Son?*

The use of “kingdom” is quite rare in the New Testament outside the gospel accounts of the life of Jesus. This passage implies the transfer to the kingdom of Christ has already occurred. We have already been rescued and forgiven our sins. The reign of Christ has already begun.

Sometimes we do not associate Christ as being present at the time of creation, but can limit his presence to his time on this earth. With soaring language, the author of Colossians proclaims Jesus present at creation, and it is through him all things came into being. Jesus is the first, in that he is the most important of all.

Jesus is the first-born of creation, but also the first born of the dead. Take a moment to contrast verse 15 and verse 18 in chapter 1. Christ is not just king and ruler over a few people, but over all of creation. It is Christ which gives us hope of a future beyond our limited time on this earth.

The clearest snapshot we have of God is through Jesus Christ. If asked what God looks like, we can point to Christ as long as we acknowledge that even Christ does not precisely define the vastness and mystery of God.

3. *Describe what God looks like.*
4. *What images (if any) best portray the image of God?*

Jesus is declared the firstborn of creation. Most certainly Jesus is the firstborn of the new creation made by God through Jesus on the cross. He is the head of the church, the body of Christ. Though he died on the cross and faced humiliation, that reality does not diminish the authority of Christ as the head of the church. It has always been the church of Christ and Christ alone.

5. *Describe what it is like if (and when) a church forgets that Christ is the head of the church.*
6. *Describe a church which fully places Christ as its head.*

Word among us

“Holy Spirit defeats Immaculate Conception”

“St. Michael and All Angels dominates”

So reads the headlines on the sports page after a weekend of high school football.

1. *Describe a time when you supported a #1 team or participated in a first place team.*
2. *What does it feel like to be #1?*

Victory has more to do than the final score of a sporting event. Using #1 language to describe Christ is not typical. We do not want to get caught up in theology of glory language, but rather proclaim the crucified Jesus Christ.

But on Christ the King Sunday, we could post #1 signs throughout our churches. For on this day of the church year, we resoundingly declare Jesus Christ as number one and head of the church, of the whole of creation, and of the dead. “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation...” (Colossians 1:15 NRSV)

There is more. “He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything...” (Colossians 1:18 NRSV) God has turned the world upside down by bringing Jesus from death to life. Christ is the first resurrected from the dead. As we join Christ in our baptism, we join the winning team which through Christ defeats the power of death and sin. The victory is because of God’s action through Christ.

3. *How does it feel to be part of the first place team established by Christ?*
4. *Is this something to brag about and tell others? Explain your answer.*

faith practice in daily life

Live among God’s faithful people

This passage from Colossians boldly connects the glory of God with the blood of his cross. It is through the cross that God has reconciled all things. God has not been defeated by the powers of darkness which grab hold of us while living in this world. Instead let us claim our baptismal inheritance and hold tight to Christ as our ruler of our life, church, and world.

5. *What questions do you have about the reign of Christ?*
6. *What evidence do you see that Christ reigns triumphant?*
7. *What difference does it make that Christ is #1?*

Prayer

May we be made strong with all the strength that comes from God’s glorious power, and may we be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to God, who has enabled us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. Amen (*modified verse from Colossians 1:11*)

last word

Ponder what it means
to be part of the
winning team of Christ

Daily Faith Practices

Written by John and Robin McCullough-Bade

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