

SERMON FOR NOVEMBER 21, 2021

TEXT: DANIEL 7:13-14

THEME: THE KING OF KINGS

I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.**14** And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

In the name of the King of Kings:

The Sunday before Thanksgiving is usually celebrated in the church as a Festival Sunday called Christ The King Sunday. It is a relatively new church festival, its roots go back to the late 1800's when the world's greatest nations: England, America, Spain, France, and Russia, were either at war with one another or about to go to war with one another. The pope at that time wrote a letter in which he dedicated the world to Christ, the King. In the letter, the pope reminded the nations that God is present with the whole human race, even with those who do not know God. It was after WWI that another pope designated a Sunday in October as the Festival called Christ the King Sunday. A day to remember that Christ has received power and honor from God, and He was made ruler of all of creation. Later the Catholic Church, and others moved the celebration of Christ the King to the last Sunday of the church year,

and that is where we are at today. Even though there are five or so weeks until the calendar New Year, the Church celebrates the start of a new Church Year with the celebration of Advent next week. Today we honor Christ the King, a theme that is not only evident in our text for today from the prophet Daniel, but it is a theme that echoes all throughout Scripture, concluding with the Book of Revelation.

Christ is King. We need to remember that. I think that at times in our lives, when we forget about that fact, that Christ is King. What we see when we look at the world today is trials and tribulations. The news is depressing, hospital beds filled with patients, people dying at a younger age, homicides on the rise in major cities, there is anger, there is frustration, and there is fear. People are afraid of getting sick, hence they are afraid of going out and meeting with people, unless those people have a mask or are vaccinated. There is a fear of the present as inflation continues to rise and there is a fear of the future and the fear of the unknown. Cargo ships are backed up on the seas, to have its products unloaded to go to market. There are product shortages everywhere you look. It seems as if the world is spinning out of control. And against this backdrop, the Good News from God is that Christ still is King.

That is the vision Daniel sees, a vision that he sees in the midst of great trial and tribulation for the people of God. Then, during Daniel's time, God's people were held captive in a foreign land. They were discouraged and dismayed. It seemed as if God didn't know what was going on and that He didn't care. They had no future. They were resigned to a hopeless existence. And then, hope! The Lord gives to Daniel this vision: I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."

Daniel sees the clouds of heaven open and there comes one like the son of man, Jesus. He approaches the Ancient of Days, God, the Father, and Jesus is presented before Him. Jesus is presented to the Father as the One who was sent by Him, born of a virgin, living the perfect life as Adam's replacement, suffering at the hands of sinners, beaten, bloodied, crucified on a cross, as one who had died. But thanks be to God, the Father raised Jesus from the grave, and now in this vision Jesus is presented as the resurrected and ascended One,

who conquered sin, Satan, and death by His glorious resurrection. Now, presented to the Father, as the One who fulfilled the will of God and brought sinners back to the Father by His death and resurrection, Jesus now takes His heavenly throne. Jesus is now given the Kingdom, dominion and glory, a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Jesus now has the power over all creation. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He sits on the throne of all of creation. His Kingdom is one that will last forever, one that will never be destroyed.

Dear friend, that is good news for you and good news for me. Because of Jesus' life, death and resurrection you are a member of His Kingdom. Your sins have been washed in the blood spilt from Calvary's cross. As a guarantee of your citizenship in Christ's Kingdom you have been baptized. He invites you to sup at His table, receiving His true body and blood for the forgiveness of your sins and the strengthening of your faith. And why has God given to you these gifts? To assure you that you belong to Him. Even in the midst of the trials and tribulations that you face, Jesus is still your Lord and Savior. Even though you will have trials and tribulations you can be joyful, because your

sins are forgiven, you have a right relationship with God, and nothing will separate you from His love. Even though the world and Satan rages today His promise is a certainty, He is in control, He will build His Church, His Kingdom, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it.

So as members of His Kingdom, Jesus sends you out to live in faith. Trusting in Him. As a part of living out our faith, we take time to make our faith commitment in our pledges today. As the Lord has blessed us, we promise to return a portion of what He has given to us, knowing that as we give sacrificially we only do so in thanks for the Sacrifice Jesus has made, We give back to Him for He has freely given to us, and in faith we know that we can not out give God. He gives us more than what we even ask. And so we invest in the Kingdom where Christ is King, His Church. For Jesus comes to tell us what we already know, Kingdom is not of this world, His kingdom is one of forgiveness and love, for you and for all.

George III of England, America's enemy in the Revolutionary War, felt terrible about the loss of the colonies. It was said, in fact, that for the rest of his life, he could not say the word "independence" without tripping over it. He was an odd duck in many ways, but he had good insights. When the fighting in America stopped, King George and all his royal cronies in Europe were sure

that George Washington would have himself crowned "Emperor of the New World." That's what they would have done. When he was told, on the contrary, that Washington planned to surrender his military commission and return to farming at Mt. Vernon, George III said, "Well, if he does that, he will be the greatest man in the world." There is power in giving up power, in emptying oneself. That is what Jesus did for you, and now you belong to Him. Jesus is the greatest man in the world for He is God's Son in human flesh, sent to live, die, and rise again for you. He has given you a new life. And how will you live that life? By serving your King, with your offerings, with your lips, with your life. To give thanks and praise to Jesus for He the King of Kings.

Amen