

The Lord's Message: The Kingship of Christ

Date: November 21, 2021

Where: Tilghman United Methodist Church

Scripture Reference: John 18: 33-37

Today is the Christ the King Sunday. This is the church's New Year's Eve. Next Sunday, we will begin the Season of Advent. Christ the King Sunday is the end of the Season of Pentecost. The Season of Pentecost has lasted for 26 Sundays, exactly half of the year. God must have known that we needed a lot of Sundays of wisdom to become disciples of Jesus. Our discipleship does not end today, but continues every day. Amen.

Let us pray.

Before we begin, I must warn you that there will be a pop quiz during this message, so please listen carefully.

In the United States, we are not very familiar or comfortable with royalty, kings, queens, princes and princesses. We fought a war to get out from under the authority of a king. A king has the right to rule over his subjects. A king has the right to control and expand his territory. A king has a right to support his kingdom from the labor of his subjects.

In verse 33, Jesus is engaged in a conversation with Pontius Pilate about Jesus being "king of the Jews." This is the charge that the chief priests and Sanhedrin have brought against Jesus. Their reason for this charge is to convince Pontius Pilate to sentence Jesus to death for making himself a king. To the Romans, Caesar was the only supreme ruler. If Jesus was found guilty of declaring himself a king, then Jesus would be sentenced to death.

Look at verse 34 to see how Jesus answered Pilate's question. Jesus knew if he said, "Yes" then he would be immediately sentenced to death. Instead Jesus is asking Pilate whether this is his idea or did someone else tell him.

Pilate is taken back by Jesus' response. He says in verse 35, "Am I a Jew?". Pilate questions Jesus as to what Jesus has done to stir up the chief priests against him.

In verse 36, Jesus makes his confession of his kingdom not being of this world. Jesus goes on to explain that if his kingdom was of this world, then his followers would have fought at his arrest. His followers did not fight, instead they all fled.

Pilate thinks he is getting somewhere with his interrogation. In verse 37a, Pilate responds to Jesus admission, "You are a king, then!" Jesus does not give Pilate a resounding, "Yes!" Instead, Jesus says that by your admission, then I am a king. Look at verse 37b. Jesus goes on to talk about truth.

Truth was a thorny issue in Jesus' day. Truth has become a thornier issue in our day. In Jesus' day, the Romans had their truth. The Greeks had their truth. The Jewish people had their truth. In our day, everyone seems to have their own truth and very few people agree on what is Truth. That is what Pilate proclaims in verse 38.

Are you ready for your pop quiz? What were the three rights of a king? The three rights of a king were to rule over his subjects, to control and expand his territory, and to support his kingdom by the labor of his subjects.

I did not come up with them on my own. God told the people through Samuel that these would be the rights of a king. In **1 Samuel 8:10-18**. In verse 17, a king has a right to rule over his subjects by making them slaves. In verses 11-14, the king has a right to control and expand his territory by taking your sons and making them into an army or making equipment for the army, by taking your daughters having them to prepare food for the army and the king, and by having a supply of food for his army and the king. In verses 15- 17, the king has a right that his kingdom is supported by the labor of his subjects. I am glad that we have gotten rid of kings, unless it is one particular King.

I must declare to you. I hope and pray that you agree with me, or at least through this message from God. "I am a subject of the King! Not just any king. I am a subject of Jesus Christ the King!"

As Christ's subject, Jesus has the right to rule over me. Jesus is not like earthly kings. Earthly kings would demand this right. Jesus does not demand this right, instead Jesus gives us a choice of whether to surrender to Jesus and become His subject or not. For me, I fully submit to give Him this right. I surrender my life to Jesus. Why would I do this, you might be asking? The reason is clear for me, because Jesus saved me from my sins. Jesus gave His life for mine.

So, what does this mean? I give Jesus the right to control my life. What I say, what I do, and what I think, I try to Let Go and Let God! I read and meditate on the Bible, as God told Joshua in **Joshua 1:8**. Then I try to put into practice what I have learned. Jesus is my King and I am His subject.

Jesus has a right to use me to control and expand His territory. I love meeting Christians and discussing our walk with the Lord. I also love to tell others about Jesus. I love praising God and thanking Him for His love and His grace that God has shown me. I love being able to pray for others and their needs. In these ways, Jesus is using me to control and expand His territory.

Jesus has a right to ask for my support for His kingdom. JoAnn and I love supporting our local churches. It is a privilege to give an offering back to God. We do not consider this a demand. We also love to be involved in the ministry of our local churches in any way that we can. We do not consider the demand of our time to be a burden. We also love to give to various ministries that are addressing the needs of those less fortunate. One of the ministries that we have been involved in for quite a while is Compassion International. We started sponsorship when our daughter, Grace was probably 6 or 7. We sponsored one girl, Assetou, until she reached the age of 22. We are currently sponsoring another girl, Maminata. She lives in Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in West Africa. We send a monthly contribution to Compassion, who in turn sends the money to support Maminata, who will turn 7 in January. We also send a little extra for a gift for her birthday and Christmas, as well as gifts for her family. These gifts allow them to purchase needed supplies, such as rice, beans, soap, or a goat. We send and receive letters to and from Maminata letting us know how she is doing and often times some priceless artwork. Jesus has a right to ask for my support of His kingdom.

If Jesus is your King, then Jesus has these rights to request from you. John Wesley put this acknowledgment of Jesus as King and demanding rights from His subjects in the form of a Covenant Prayer. The Kingship of Christ is here. Are you willing to become His subject and give Jesus His rights? If you are then you will find this prayer attached to your Order of Worship. Let us say this prayer in unison.

“I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,  
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things  
to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.”