

Pastor Jon's Sermon from Christ the King Saturday/Sunday,  
November 23/24.

Text: Colossians 1:11-20

### We Already Have a King

It has been a busy week in our household. My in-laws have been visiting since November 9<sup>th</sup> and will leave after Thanksgiving. Our furnace finally got fixed this week. Modern Sheet Metal asked if it was an emergency. I said, well, my mother-in-law is visiting from Oregon and she gets cold easily. They said, we will be there Monday.

On top of that, Eli's best friend from Oregon, Kevin and his dad, Joel, came out on Wednesday as a part of Eli's birthday present. We took them to the Bucks/Blazers game on Thursday night. Then on Friday, my day off, I took Joel and Kevin along with my father-in-law to Lambeau field for the classic tour and Hall of Fame.

The last thing you do before you exit the Hall of fame is go through the trophy room. You see all 13 of the Packer's world championship trophies, which includes four Lombardi Trophies for winning the Super Bowl. Only one team gets this highly coveted trophy for 1<sup>st</sup> Place.

This got me thinking about our lessons for this Christ the King Sunday. In our second reading from Colossians, the Apostle Paul lifts up an image of Jesus as king of all creation. "For in him all things in heaven and on earth were created." His dominion is the whole earth, all things are under his feet. All human governments and institutions pale in comparison to Jesus' jurisdiction. His kingdom puts forth a reign of justice, not just for humans, but for all creation. The Apostle Paul says, "Jesus is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything." First place in everything.

Imagine that, if Jesus would always come to have first place in our world and in our lives. I feel the world would be filled with more love, more grace, and more forgiveness. But all too often, created things seem to take first place over Jesus. Our busy lives often rule the day. Our schedules take precedence over worship, reading

scripture, serving the neighbor. Right now, for example, it is easy to get wrapped up in what is happening in Washington... the impeachment hearings and pundits staking out their positions. The 24-hour news cycle makes you feel like this is the most important thing in the world. But it is not.

Regardless, of what happens to our president, I can assure you... we will be OK. Why? Because we already have a king who is above all kings... whose kingdom is breaking in as we speak. This king was born in a manger. His kingdom lifted up the lowly and challenged the powerful. His throne ultimately was the cross where he saved us from powers of evil and death. His strength was made perfect in weakness. His service involved taking on the role of a household slave in order to wash his disciple's feet.

Our lessons for today remind us of where our ultimate hope lies. When things appear to be going to hell in a hand basket around us, Paul says in Colossians, "In Jesus all things are held together." Our lesson also says, "May you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father."

Paul says it this way in Romans 8:37-39... one of the most beautiful parts of scripture: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Nothing that happens in Washington, nor in our back yard, nor nothing we do to others or others do to us, can separate us from God's love in Jesus.

Jesus will finally take first place when his kingdom is fulfilled. In the meantime we still have to contend with the powers of evil and darkness. But Satan ultimately is no match for Jesus... neither are the principalities or powers. When we say, "Jesus is Lord" in our creeds, we believe that Jesus is first place in our lives and in our church.

This is comforting to me at times like this. I am not going to let someone else dictate where my hope should be placed... certainly not in our government. Instead, our focus should be on looking for Jesus' kingdom breaking in all around us. Look for signs of grace. Look for acts of love. Look for acts of forgiveness. Look for people standing

up for the weak or voiceless. Look for signs of healing. Look for glimpses of joy and find things to be thankful for. Join Jesus in the work of bringing his kingdom into reality through the gifts God gave you to serve.

And by all means if you are stressed about our country, turn off the TV. I always say, when in doubt get out. Whenever I am struggling in my ministry. I get out to visit the saints. They will remind you of what it means to be a part of the Christian community.

Amen!