

Christ the King/XX Trinity 2020
Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish
Father Craig Looney
Colossians 1.12 St. John 18.33



“We want a King,” the people demanded of Samuel, the great prophet who lived about 1100 years before the birth of Jesus. Samuel was upset by the people’s demand for a king. God is their King...he is THE King who loves them and sent judges to rule over them and encourage them to be faithful. But they wanted a human king, just like everyone else.

The First Book of Kings records the major role Samuel played in transitioning God’s people from the period of judges to the a kingdom under Saul. When Samuel asked God what he should do, God told Samuel to give the people what they wanted. He told Samuel, “They are not rejecting you; they are rejecting me.”

God told Samuel to tell the people this is what they can expect from their human king...

...he will send your sons off to war and they will be killed in battle,
...others will have to work in the king’s field
...your daughters will have to clean the king’s house so it smells nice,
...others will have their land confiscated and work for nothing,
...still others will get taxed unfairly
...when the people complain to the king, he will ignore them

The people got their kings and queens. We read in the Hebrew Bible some were better than others. Some were fair and just and cared for the people. They tried to get the people to remain faithful to God. Others were cruel and unjust and cared only for themselves. They turned away from God.

Since Samuel’s time, monarchs have been either good or bad. Upset over the Tea Act of May 1773, merchants and others turned Boston Harbor into one big teapot. The Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution led to the Great Experiment...the United States of America...where there was no room for a king. History has also shown King George III was not as ruthless as the history books often depict him.

Today we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King. Many Americans, even within the Church, view monarchies as quaint remnants of a bygone age. We like our government officials elected...but God...*who was, and is, the same, and evermore shall be...*as the great hymn *The God of Abraham Praise* proclaims (#285, Hymnal 1940), wasn’t elected.

Our proclamation of Jesus as King begins on Christmas Day. Jesus is our Sovereign King! He is our Benign King...gentle, kind, approachable, sympathetic, compassionate, caring and benevolent. He is not out to do us harm. If we consider the words of the great Palm Sunday Processional...*All Glory, Laud and Honor...*he is our *good and gracious King*.

Saint Paul tells us in today’s Epistle that God our Father has reserved for us a place in the kingdom of Light; rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us safely into the kingdom of his dear Son, who has set us free from our sins. No human king or queen or elected government official has the skill set to accomplish what Jesus has done for us.

We want King Jesus to rule over our lives because he always wants what is best for us. Jesus is the King whose sovereignty over us today’s Collect reminds us is gracious and for which we pray will ultimately bring all people of the world together in peace. Jesus is, in fact, the ruler of the Universe.

Today is also the 20th Sunday after Trinity and the Gospel for the Day is the Parable of the King’s Marriage Banquet for his Son. King Jesus loves us but he never forces his Kingship on anyone. We take his Kingship seriously and the invitation to his Wedding Banquet in heaven when we accept the Invitation and get ourselves ready for the event.

Saint Paul also tells us our true citizenship is in heaven. The Feast of Christ the King gives us the opportunity to thank God our Father for the gift of eternal life Jesus has made possible for us to enjoy.

Let King Jesus reign in our hearts, minds, and souls...he is our good and gracious King!

