

Christ as King Second Wednesday in Advent (Midweek 2) December 7, 2005 Text: LSC #125

This year our theme for Advent is *Christ as God/man, Prophet, Priest and King*. This week we will look at Jesus as our King. In order to help us with this theme we go to our catechism and under the question, “For what threefold office was Christ anointed?” we have the answer, “Christ was anointed to be our Prophet, Priest, and King.” This evening we want to look in particular at the third response, that of Christ as our King and again the catechism tells us, “As King, Christ; 1. rules with His almighty power over all creation (the kingdom of power—all creatures); Matt. 28:18; 2. governs and protects especially His church (the kingdom of grace—the church on earth); John 18:36-37; 3. finally leads His church to glory in heaven (the kingdom of glory—the church in heaven). 2 Tim. 4:18.”

As we were reminded last week, the promise to send a Savior, a Messiah was made back in the Garden of Eden. Immediately after Adam and Eve fell into sin, God stepped in and promised to take care of the broken relationship between Himself and His creatures. God promised to send a Savior who would also be a King. The prophet Micah tells us, “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days” (Micah 5:2). The Messiah would be of the human line of David. Bethlehem was David’s hometown and Jesus would be born not only from the line of David, but also in his hometown. David was also the second king of Israel meaning that Jesus would be born of his descent putting Him in line for earthly kingship certainly, but more importantly, also putting Him in line for heavenly Kingship, which is really what this prophecy is about.

So, not only would Jesus be human, born of the earthly descent of David, born of a human woman, Mary, He would also be divine, being conceived by the Holy Spirit. He would be the one whose “origin is from old, from ancient days,” in other words, He would be from eternity with no beginning, thus, He would be of the heavenly line of His divinity.

And of course, this promise was fulfilled. The genealogy of Jesus traces His life back to David, even to Adam and Eve and to God. The genealogies given in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, trace Jesus ancestry to David and to God respectively. Thus, again, we see Jesus as being truly human with an earthly ancestry traced back to King David, giving Him royal blood and even back to Adam and Eve and we see that He is truly divine, that is He is truly God tracing His ancestry back to being the Son of God.

Jesus’ kingship was revealed and confirmed by the recognition of the people especially at His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. When Jesus came riding into Jerusalem on what we now call Palm Sunday, the crowds gathered making a path with their coats and palm branches as they sang, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (Luke 19:38). Certainly we see that they recognized Jesus’ Kingship.

Jesus also acknowledging His own Kingship before Pilate. When He was on trial before Pilate and Pilate questioned Jesus about what he had heard concerning His Kingship we are told, ³⁶Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” ³⁷Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice” (John 18:36-37). Certainly Jesus knew He was a King, but He also knew that He did not come to this earth to declare such Kingship nor to rule, but that His Kingdom was and is in heaven for eternity.

Even today Jesus kingship continues. Although He does not rule us directly, as in a theocracy, like He ruled the children of Israel before sending judges and kings, today Jesus rules on earth indirectly. He rules through various authorities. He rules through parents and guardians, through teachers and pastors, through law enforcement officials as well as through governments. The Fourth Commandment certainly is the basis of all authority for in the giving of parents, all authority flows from this parental authority. Jesus rules us indirectly, giving us government in order to keep the peace so that we might have order in our land and He does this because He still cares for us.

Jesus rules in heaven where He is watching over us. He knows all that is going on here on earth and for us Christians, for those who believe in Him and look to Him He works all these things out for the best for us and for His glory. He sends His angels to guard and protect us. He knows we live in a sin filled world and He works to bring out the best for us in any and all situations and struggles in life.

He rules in heaven where He is also interceding for us. He is praying for us because He knows our needs better than we know our needs and He provides for all our needs according to what He knows is best for us according to His good and gracious will.

None of this is negated by the fact that He gave up and set aside His kingship, His glory and humbled Himself in order to take on human flesh and blood in order to be our substitute and to give His life for ours on the cross. When we speak of Christ's states of humiliation we do understand that it was humbling and humiliating to give up the glory that was His in heaven as He was ruling as King in heaven, but to give that up in order to take on human flesh and blood. While on earth, then, Jesus did not always nor fully express His kingship, rather He actively set His kingship aside in order to save us. As we prepare ourselves for our celebration of Christ's birth, God in human flesh, we understand that His humiliation began with His conception and His birth, not that being a human was humiliating, but that giving up the glory that was His in heaven is what was humiliating. We also understand, as difficult as it may be, that we continue to see the cross in our Christmas. The reason Jesus was born, the reason the baby was born, was to die.

What does this mean? First, God the Father promised it. And we know that whatever God promises, He brings to completion. God promised He would send a Savior who would be from the earthly, human line of king David, so He would be of kingly descent. He also promised the Savior would be from of old from ancient days and certainly Jesus is from of old, being God Himself, taking on human flesh and blood.

Second, Jesus fulfills it. Jesus is one with the Father and so He fulfills the promises He makes that is He came not only to live for us, to do all that things we are supposed to do but are unable to do, but also to pay the price for our sins, to suffer the eternal spiritual death penalty for us in our place. Jesus came to die.

And third, the Holy Spirit gives us faith in Him. The work of the Holy Spirit is to motivate us, to stir in us and to work in and through us to live lives of faith, doing the good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do. And they are good works because they are done to His glory.

Thus we see, Jesus is our Messiah and our King, not only as He came during His life, but also as He continues to come to us and for us today. To Him be the glory for Jesus' sake. Amen.