

Christ the King – November 20, 2016
Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church

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Colossians 1:13-20

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. 15) The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16) For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17) He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18) And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19) For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20) and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Fellow Citizens in the Kingdom of Christ;

Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate who asked him to respond to the charges that had been brought against him. "Are you a King," Pilate asked him. Ultimately Jesus replied, **"My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place... the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."** (John 18:36, 37 NIV)

Shortly after this conversation, **Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. (2) The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe (3) and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!"** (John 19:1-3 NIV)

Sadly, neither Pilate nor the soldiers who flogged and mocked Jesus were willing to listen to the truth that Jesus proclaimed. They rejected the king who had come to rescue them from their sins, to preserve their life and to give them eternal peace. Their lack of interest in the truth caused them to take a stand against Jesus.

By God's grace you and I have listened to the truth proclaimed by Jesus. We realize that he is worthy of our honor and praise. That's what Paul wanted the Christians in Colossae to know and understand. Unfortunately, their faith was being attacked by false teachings which suggested that they needed something better than Jesus. Maybe we've felt the sting of those kinds of attacks too. Those who follow the truths of Jesus have been accused of being out of touch, of needing to get in step with the times, of needing something more than just the Bible. Not so, Paul says: Jesus is all you need so

Theme: Give Praise to Your Glorious King

1. He has rescued you
2. He preserves you
3. He gives you peace

Who is this King? What has he done for us? Why is he worthy of our praise? The answers to these questions are found in our text for today. Paul had just reminded the Colossians that he was thankful to God the Father for enabling them to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. He concludes this thought with the opening words of our text: **For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

The Bible often contrasts darkness with light, unbelief and eternal doom with faith and eternal salvation. All people are born as children of the darkness. We were evil! We were under the power of the devil and controlled by sin. We were held captive by unbelief and were unable to escape. God stepped in and provided a rescuer for us so we might be able to live with him in the light as citizens under the rule of his son, Jesus Christ.

God rescued us by sending the Son he loves into our world of darkness, sin and shame. That Son became one of us so to take our place under the wrath of God and to provide righteousness for us. He lived a perfect life for us to satisfy God's law and he offered that perfect life on the cross of Calvary to pay the penalty we deserved because of our many sins. His resurrection is proof that sin and death have been conquered. Those are the truths that the Holy Spirit has used to call us to faith and life in the kingdom of light.

Who is this King? This king is the Son of God. What has this king done for us? This king is the one who humbled himself and became one of us to rescue us from eternal darkness. He provided forgiveness of sins for us. Why is this king worthy of praise? This king is our redeemer – the one who paid a price for us so that we might live with him in his kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness forever.

There's more. **The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.16) For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17) He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

The King we desire to praise is true God. Jesus shows us God. Jesus told the disciple Phillip, **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.** (John 14:9 NIV) Jesus also said, **"I and the Father are One."** (John 10:30 NIV) Paul describes Jesus as the firstborn of all creation because he was the one who was there in the before creation was called into existence. He is superior to all things created because he is the creator.

It seems as if some of the false teachers in Colossae were fascinated by things like angels and spirits and their various orders and ranks. They may have even encouraged the worship of angels and spirits.. But all these are inferior to Jesus. The good angels are dedicated to his service. The evil spirits must yield to his voice. All things were created by Jesus and for his praise including the peoples and the nations of this world.

Jesus is the one who made and fashioned us in such a wonderful manner giving us our bodies and souls, our senses and abilities, our skills and our talents, our wisdom and our intellect so that we may use them to his honor and glory.

Jesus is also the "force" that holds creation together. He is the one who wrote the "laws of nature" and created the forces and powers of the universe. These are evidences of his wisdom and his power. Christ Jesus created all things and he preserves all things including mankind.

Your king preserves you by blessing you with all that you need for your body and soul. Therefore we can rejoice and gladly sing:

Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee, Truly I'd serve thee,
Light of my soul, my Joy, my Crown.

Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer,
Than all the angels in the sky.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be thine!

Our text reminds us that the Lord Jesus is the head of the Church. **And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.** The Church and its members cannot exist without Jesus. It is only through Christ that the church and its members can grow. We are dependant upon him for our very existence. His resurrection from the dead assure the church and its members that the payment he made for our sins has been accepted. As our living Savior he has been exalted to the right hand of God. All his enemies have become his foot stool. He rules over all things for the benefit of his church.

His Word and his Sacraments will preserve us for everlasting life. That's yet another reason to give praise to our glorious king. But we're not quite done yet!

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20) and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Once again the deity and divinity of Jesus is emphasized by Paul – the completeness – the fullness of God dwells in Christ. Jesus is true God and true man. Because he is true God, he is able to bless us with peace. All things were reconciled to God through Christ.

Once again Paul reminds us of the cross of Christ and how our King suffered there for us. Jesus in whom the full glory of God resides came into this world of sin not to flaunt his glory but to humble himself unto death so that he might repair the relationship between God and man which fell into ruin because of sin. By removing the guilt of our sin he broke down the barrier of hostility which existed between us and God. His blood provides us with peace. His death reconciled us to God completely and perfectly – all things have now been liberated from the bondage to sin.

Through faith in Christ Jesus we are at peace with God – we no longer need to fear his wrath and anger. We look at him as our loving Father – we trust him with our needs, our wants, our cares, our desires, and burdens confident that for Christ sake they will all be taken care of. We will enjoy complete and lasting peace forever in the kingdom of heaven. That's one final reason to give praise to our glorious King.

Today there are many, who like the false teachers in Colossae, look down on the Truth and don't give Jesus the honor and praise which is due his name. Our sinful natures may find some of what they say interesting and appealing. But when you consider who our king is and what he has done for you, you will be motivated to hang on to Christ and his saving Gospel as

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Amen.