

Locum's Line-Outs - Sunday 21st November – Reign of Christ – John 18: 33-37

Jesus answers Pilates tricky questions about being King of the Jews

John 18 provides the classic scene in which Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you the Jewish king?"

Jesus' reply, as imagined by the writer of John's Gospel, is to claim a realm that is of a radically different order of reality than either Roman Empire or Jewish commonwealth:

Pilate has met with those Jews seeking Jesus' death outside his "headquarters", the praetorium.

He has asked: *what charge, valid in Roman law, do you have to bring against him?* (v.29). V. 30 shows that they have none to propose. Pilate refuses to get involved by telling them to try him under Jewish law.

They then make it obvious that they seek Jesus' death.

Now Pilate returns inside the praetorium and asks Jesus: *are you the leader of a revolutionary movement?* In return, Jesus asks him: *Is this question your idea, based on what you have heard, or did others put you up to it?*

Pilate shows his scorn for Jews; *the religious authorities seek your death, but what grounds are there for killing you?*

In v.36, Jesus begins to explain the nature of his kingship. Were he a rebel leader, his followers "would be fighting to keep me from being handed over" to the religious authorities, but he is no threat to Pilate's power and authority. Pilate picks up on Jesus words "my kingdom". Jesus is king of "truth" (v.37); his subjects are those who belong to the truth. He was "born" and "came into the world" to establish the kingdom of God, the ultimate truth.

So What Might this Mean Today?



It's easy to miss the kingdom of Jesus, the Reign of Christ.

After all it was made manifest in crucifixion and rather than promising pomp and power it invites people into a community of love and service. While our small corner of paradise may be safe and relatively secure, we cannot avoid the wilderness privation of so many of God's children.

I don't know the answer to the current problems the world faces, they are manifold and complex, but I do know that we are to be actively engaged in the redemption of the world. I also know that battles may be won with bombs, but that ultimately wars are won by cultural ideas and by our behaviour in living out our values of love, tolerance, mutual respect and hospitality.

Pray for discerning obedience to the truth we hear in Jesus.
In the 4th Century Ambrose, Bishop of Milan wrote:

When we speak about wisdom, we are speaking of Christ.
When we speak about virtue, we are speaking of Christ.
When we speak about justice, we are speaking of Christ.
When we speak about peace, we are speaking of Christ.
When we speak about truth and life and redemption, we are speaking of Christ.

And 2 poems and a thought –

King - Bruce Prewer

King is your word not mine;
Friend I am, and not very choosy,
pagans and prostitutes,
publicans and sinners,
grace is my kingdom.

King is your word, not mine;
Servant I am, no one beneath me,
feet washer and waiter,
serving the least,
love is my kingdom

King is your word, not mine;
Physician I am, all free of charge,
touching the leper,
expelling the demons,

King is your word, not mine;
A seer I am, seeing God's word
in mustard seed and yeast,
wildflower and ravens,
truth is my kingdom.

King is your word, not mine;
Tradesman I am, honing my craft,
familiar with wood,
hammer and nails,
hope is my kingdom.
B.D. Prewer 2003

The Kingdom by R. S. Thomas

It's a long way off but inside it
There are quite different things going on:
Festivals at which the poor man
Is king and the consumptive is
Healed; mirrors in which the blind look
At themselves and love looks at them
Back; and industry is for mending
The bent bones and the minds fractured
By life. It's a long way off, but to get
There takes no time and admission
Is free, if you purge yourself
Of desire, and present yourself with
Your need only and the simple offering
Of your faith, green as a leaf.

Everyday Epiphanies, Seeing the Sacred in Everything.

By Melannie Svoboda.

Sometimes I say to God: *You know what's wrong with you?*
And God asks, *What.*

And I begin to enumerate: *You love too indiscriminately. You trust people way too much. You're far too forgiving.*

And you're entirely too patient.

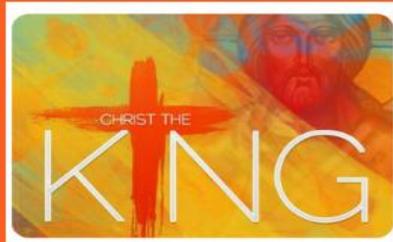
Having said that, I invite God to tell me what's wrong with me.
But all I hear God say is: *You know Honey, I really get a kick out of you!*
Which only proves my point.

Collect - Reign of Christ

Everlasting God,
whose will is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son, our Lord and King:
grant that the people of earth, now divided and enslaved by sin,
may be freed and brought together under his gentle and loving rule;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Shalom
Valerie

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Sunday 21st November 2021
Christ Church St Lucia
7am and 9am Services
5.30pm Choral Evensong
ALL WELCOME