

CHRIST the KING!

Matthew 25:31-46 [MW17-36]

Sermon preached by Rev Wayne Thornton at Mangawhai and Wellsford, Sunday 26 November 2017

When is a piece of wood like a king? When it's a ruler.
What's the first thing a king does when he comes to the throne? Sit down.
Why did the king go to the dentist? To get his teeth crowned!

In Year C of our three year Lectionary

- the gospel reading set down to mark Christ the King comes from John's gospel and is the trial of Jesus, where Pilate asks Jesus; "Are you a king?"
- Year B is from Luke's gospel and is the crucifixion of Jesus surely the low point in the kingship of Christ

Both these gospel readings point very clearly to just the kind of "king" Jesus is

- nothing at all like the kings we experience in our history not even kings at their very, very best

But this year, Year A, the gospel reading from Matthew

- is about what happens when Jesus, the 'Son of Man', comes in glory did you catch that? glory!
- for this year in our three year cycle of scripture readings at least Jesus has something recognisably "kingly": glory
- and some real power too because Jesus is going to judge people, separate them out reward some and punish others
- and did you notice that all through the reading, Jesus is given the title "king" that surely is more like it!

But note, note, who does this king of glory, this king with power

- identify himself with ???
- just who is it ... ?
poor, hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, imprisoned
- and what exactly does this king's glory consist of
what exactly is power for this king ... ???

Once again we are shown that Jesus the king is not at all like any earthly king

- he does not elevate himself
he does not seek status or rewards or the selfish trappings of the good life
- indeed not
this king's glory is in the poor being cared for, the hungry fed
the thirsty quenched, strangers welcomed ...
- this king's power is used to care for those less fortunate
surely an extremely appropriate way to end the church year
and prepare to begin another

We remind ourselves that Christ the King

- judges people not according to earthly standards
but rather for how they respond to the last, the least and the lost

Which paves the way for a king who will arrive with no pomp and less ceremony

- in fact with no much of anything
in an animal feedbox, in a stable
- this is Christ our King

Yes, you can see how it all makes sense ...

This video helps put it all in perspective:

[show video clip]

Christ the King, Christ our King

- who calls us to follow his example and respond as in the gospel reading
by sharing the true blessings of life
with everyone
- but especially the last, the least and the lost

[reflect on this as we march around our building]

[reflect for a moment on how we might do just that, this coming week]