

# CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY



*Scripture:*

**John 18**

*For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world*

33. Pilate entered the praetorium again and called Jesus, and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"
34. Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?"
35. Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me; what have you done?"
36. Jesus answered, "My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world."
37. Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice."
38. Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again, and told them, "I find no crime in him."
39. But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover; will you have me release for you the King of the Jews?"
40. They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.



## **THEY WERE ALL DESCRIBING THE SAME THING.**

One said, "It is a snake."

Another: "It feels like a tree trunk."

Another: "It is a leafy plant like lettuce."

Another: "It is hard and solid like an icicle."

Another: "It is large with skin like a hippopotamus."

They were all correct. This was a group of people who could not see, and they were describing an elephant. They described the part of the elephant that had been revealed to them. And they were all correct in part. Yet they were all incorrect in describing the animal.

Paul described the Kingdom of God saying: Now we see but a poor reflection like in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. (Corinthians)

We each see a part, we each experience a part, and we each proclaim a part of what we have learned about God. Taken together, the words we say about God may describe a small part of what God is really like. So we are wise to listen to others as we speak the truth that God has revealed to each of us.

Today is Christ the King Sunday. This day sometimes gets sandwiched in between our Thanksgiving celebrations and the beginning of Advent. But we dare not miss it. Advent is the beginning of the church year. Today

we celebrate the end of the church year, and all that we have learned from our walk with the Lord in the year that is ending. It is like a balance sheet at the end of the year.

We have remembered another year of our Lord, and today is the day that everything leads up to.

## **THIS IS END OF THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR YEAR.**

The calendar says this is Christ the King Sunday. King, however, is not my favorite description of Jesus Christ. It is a word that is easily abused. Jesus' earthly ministry was not one of military might nor oppressiveness. Rather, it was one of peace, liberation, and above all, service. Jesus turned the whole concept of Kingship and Kingdoms and Lords-a-Leaping on their heads. Let's leave it topsy turvey. After all, it was not Jesus who proclaimed himself king, but it was Pilate. We read the words this morning.

## **SO WHAT ARE THE WORDS THAT DESCRIBE JESUS?**

I made myself a list of all the things I could think of that the Bible says in simply answering the question, "Who was he?" I came up with a lot more words than "King."

On this last Sunday of the Christian Calendar, we

have learned a lot more about Jesus than King. I found not one word but thirty-four words that Jesus uses to describe himself, and that come from his own lips and from the pens of the authors of the scriptures.

### KEEPING SCORE

I would like to do some score keeping today. I am going to read the words the Bible uses to describe Jesus, and ask you to take out a card and pencil, and pick the top three that describe who Jesus is for you.

Maybe you will want more than three; maybe you will end up with fewer. These are the words that the Bible uses to describe Jesus. On this day when we sum it all up, it is a good idea to consider all of them, not just the word that Pilate selected.

Let me repeat my question.

**THE QUESTION IS NOT WHAT IS TRUE OF JESUS.  
THEY ARE ALL TRUE OF JESUS.  
THE QUESTION IS,  
WHICH OF THESE IS TRUE FOR YOU?  
WHICH WORDS DESCRIBE THE JESUS  
THAT YOU KNOW OR WANT TO KNOW,  
OR EVEN WANT TO RUN AWAY FROM SOMETIMES?**

Write down several; then reduce the list to your top three.

#### 1

#### Jesus/Immanuel – God With Us

Matthew 1

20. ... an angel of the Lord appeared to (Joseph) in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name **Jesus**, because he will save his people from their sins." (Jesus' name describes his life's work.) 22. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23. "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" -- which means, "God with us."

#### 2, 3, 4, 5

#### Mighty God

#### Wonderful Counselor

#### Everlasting Father

#### Prince of Peace

Isaiah 9

6. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace**. 7. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

#### 6

#### Holy One

Mark 1 (and the synoptics)

22. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. 23. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, 24. "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--**the Holy One of God!**"

#### 7

#### Lamb of God

John 1

29. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the **Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world! 30. This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' 31. I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

#### 8

#### Prince of Life

Acts 3.

13. "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. 14. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15. and killed the **Prince of life**, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses."

(King James Version)

#### 9

#### Lord God Almighty

Revelation 16

7. And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, **Lord God Almighty**, true and righteous are Your judgments." (4 references)

#### 10, 11

#### Lion of Judah

#### Root of David

Revelation 5

5. Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, **the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

#### 12

#### Word of Life

1 John

1. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched--this we proclaim concerning **the Word of life**.

#### 13

#### Author and Finisher of Our Faith

Hebrews 12

1. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight,

and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2. Looking unto **Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith**; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**14**  
**Advocate**

1 John 2

1. My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any person sins, we have **an advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2. and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 3. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

**15, 16, 17**  
**The Way**  
**The Truth**  
**The Life**

John 14

5. Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" 6. Jesus answered, "I am **the way and the truth and the life**. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

**18**  
**Dayspring**

Luke 1

76. And you, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways, 77. to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78. through the tender mercy of our God; whereby **the dayspring from on high** hath visited us, 79. to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. KJV

**19**  
**Lord of All**

Acts 10

35. But in every nation he that fears him, and works righteousness, is accepted with him. 36. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is **Lord of all**.)

**20**  
**Son of God**

Romans 1

1. Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God -- 2. the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3. regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, 4. and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be **the Son of God** by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

**21**  
**Good Shepherd**

John 10

10. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. 11. "I am **the good shepherd**. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

**22**  
**Messiah/Christ**

John 4

25. The woman said, "I know that **Messiah**" (**called Christ**) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." 26. Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

**23**  
**Savior**

Luke 2

9. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11. Today in the town of David **a Savior** has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. 12. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

**24**  
**Chief Cornerstone**

Ephesians 2

19. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20. built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as **the chief cornerstone**.

**25, 26**  
**King of Kings**  
**Lord of Lords**

1 Timothy 6

14. I charge you to keep this commandment without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15. which God will bring about in his own time--God, the blessed and only Ruler, the **King of kings and Lord of lords**, 16. who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

**27**  
**Righteous Judge**

2 Timothy

8. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the **righteous Judge**, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

**28**  
**Light of the World**

John 8

12. When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "**I am the light of the world**. Whoever follows me will never

walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

29

### Head of the Church

Ephesians 5

21. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
22. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.
23. For the husband is the head of the wife as **Christ is the head of the church**, his body, of which he is the Savior.
24. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
25. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

30

### Morning Star

2 Peter 1

18. We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. 19. And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the **morning star** rises in your hearts.

31

### Lord Jesus Christ

Romans 5

17. So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the **Lord Jesus Christ**, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"

32

### Resurrection and the Life

John 11

25. Jesus said to her, "I am **the resurrection and the life**. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;
26. and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

33

### Horn of Salvation

Luke 1

68. "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. 69. He has raised up a **horn of salvation** for us in the house of his servant David.

34

### The Alpha and the Omega

Revelations 1

8. "**I am the Alpha and the Omega**," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

## MORE THAN KING

I hope I have convinced you that today is far more than "Christ the King Sunday." It is "balance sheet" Sunday; it is "review-the-notes-I-took" Sunday. It is the culmination of your year with the Lord. No, it doesn't fit neatly into the shopping for Christmas weekend we have been having. But it deserves a place even without gifts and pageants and costumes to celebrate it. A year with our Lord would make no sense without a day of reckoning like this. Christ himself is the gift. No one could be luckier than those who discover it.

Barbara Streisand said that "people who need people are the luckiest people in the world." It's a great song, but people who remember they have walked with the Lord are even luckier.

I would be interested to see what the top vote-getters are, but that is not the point either. It is not about votes, profit or loss, winning or losing. This is about life. Jesus Christ's meaning is exactly what you make of it. I hope you give today great meaning, sincere thanks, and profound appreciation.

Let us praise God for another year with our Lord.

Please stand and join in singing the Doxology.

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**



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