

2023-11-26 ... 6.30pm Evensong Sermon ... Revd Jane Stephenson

2 Samuel 23: 1 – 7; Matthew 28: 16 – end

'Christ the King'

Some of the material I am including this evening has been written by other people since they can say things better than I can I am grateful to them and I hope you will share their wisdom

Christ the King: risen and triumphant with his Father in heaven and yet ... (to quote the hymn) ...

From Heaven, you came helpless babe
Entered our world, your glory veiled
Not to be served but to serve
And give Your life that we might live

This is our God, The Servant King
He calls us now to follow Him
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to The Servant King

There in the garden of tears
My heavy load he chose to bear
His heart with sorrow was torn
"Yet not My will but Yours", He said

This is our God, The Servant King
He calls us now to follow Him
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to The Servant King

Come see His hands and His feet
The scars that speak of sacrifice
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered

This is our God, The Servant King
He calls us now to follow Him
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to The Servant King

So let us learn how to serve
And in our lives enthrone Him
Each other's needs to prefer
For it is Christ we're serving

This is our God, The Servant King
He calls us now to follow Him
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to The Servant King

Graham Kendrick

Christ the King: risen and triumphant with his Father in heaven and yet ...not with the false pomp and glory of an earthly King. The King we worship calls us to recognize his presence in the least of our brothers and sisters: the hungry, the sick, the imprisoned: in those who despair, those who feel abandoned I found this piece and adapted it slightly from a piece written by a blogger called:

Tiber Judy :

There's an old story that's told about a king who lived in a far-off, distant land. He had a rich kingdom, with all his needs and most of his desires met every day by the royal court that served him. He was loved and respected by his family and noblemen and was known throughout the land for his wisdom and fairness. It seemed the king had everything he could have ever wanted. Except for one very important thing: he had no heir to whom he could leave his kingdom and all its wealth. So in his wisdom he came up with a plan. He would invite young people from all PTO

over his kingdom to come to the castle and be interviewed for the job. He'd sift through the applicants and find the most-qualified, most well-suited young person to become his prince or princess and heir. The king sent out the word to his people and then he waited.

Far away in a tiny remote village, a poor young man heard about the king's plan. Intelligent and hard-working, his heart leapt at the thought of meeting the king and perhaps earning his trust to become his adopted prince. But the castle was a long way from the young man's village and he had no supplies at hand for such a hard journey. So the young man worked and saved day and night to earn enough to buy the food he needed to make the trip and some new clothes to wear for his meeting with the king.

After weeks of work and difficult travel, he finally found himself outside the king's castle. Sitting by the castle gate was a filthy beggar dressed in dirty rags, crouched in the dust of the road. "Have pity on me, my son" the beggar cried out to the young man. "Help me." The young man looked down at the beggar and his heart was moved to pity for him. He gave the beggar the new clothes he'd worked so hard to buy. And then he gave him the money he'd saved for his return trip home. The beggar was overjoyed and thanked the young man for his generous heart and kindness.

Since he'd given away the only new clothes he had to the beggar, he was going to have to wear his old things to meet the king. "Oh well," he thought, "I've come too far to let anything stop me now." He was escorted into the palace and led down a long hallway to the king's throne room. As the huge doors opened before him, the young man stepped into the presence of the king. There, seated on the throne, was the beggar wearing the clothes the young man had given him. The king looked at his shocked visitor, threw open his arms and exclaimed, "Welcome, my son!"

This old story of course illustrates Jesus' frequent teaching that he shares with us in the Gospels: **"Whatever you did for the least brothers of Mine, you did for Me" (Matthew 25:40).**

We've all heard versions of God's call for our generosity in countless stories like this one. I'm sure many of you realized that the old beggar was, in the end, going to be revealed to us as the king in disguise. But there's a difference between these old stories and real life. In our everyday encounters with those in need, we don't see the "big reveal" at the end. We only see the poor in their poverty, or the sick in their illness and we have to choose whether or not we see Christ our King under their disguise.

Sharing Christ's love with others is how we build up the Body of Christ and how we, in our own way, assist Him in making His Kingdom among us.

Christ the King: risen and triumphant with his Father in heaven and yet ...

He is not distant or indifferent but deeply involved in our lives. God seeks out the lost, binds up the injured, and strengthens the weak. Our shepherd-king knows each one of us by name and desires that none of us should be lost. When we follow his will, it is to lead us to righteousness. In a world that often values power, wealth, and success, Christ's kingship stands in stark contrast. He reigns not by force but by love. He leads not with arrogance, but with humility. He serves not for personal gain but for the well-being of others. This is the kind of leadership that our world desperately needs.

(Sister Maria Okeke)

It is the leadership we all need. This is our God, the Servant King. May we have the strength to follow The King willingly.