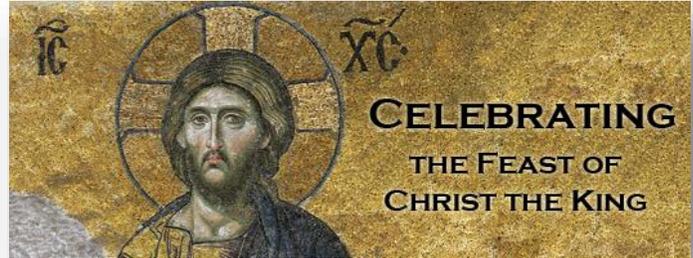


Feast of Christ the King

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November each year marks the end of the Liturgical Cycle. The L-O-N-G Season of Pentecost ends with the Festival of Christ The King. The New Church Year begins with "Advent/Coming" – the four Sundays before Christmas prepares us as we welcome Jesus in His Nativity.



The last Sunday in Pentecost affirms Jesus gracious rule in our lives and over His Church. 1 Peter 3:15a exhorts believers "to set apart Jesus as Lord in your hearts!" This is immediately followed by Peter's counsel (1 Peter 3:15b) "have a reason for the hope that is within you but share with gentleness and respect." When Jesus is truly Lord of our lives, He transforms everything within and around us! People notice and even ask what's going on?

A few years ago, I ran into a buddy from High School years. As we caught up a bit, my friend suddenly stated, "John, you've changed!" I looked at him rather quizzically and he added, "You seem so peaceful!" My first thought was, I didn't realize I was such a mess in High School! However, I responded, "When I went to university, I had a spiritual conversion experience and met Jesus. I have found Him to be truly the Prince of Peace." That's all I said... no sermon! My friend retorted, "I'd like to speak with you further about that sometime..."

People notice our lives lived out before them. Our words and actions speak more than 1,000 sermons. As we deepen in a personal relationship with Jesus, He guides and empowers us to live a life that glorifies the Father and blesses others! The fruit of the Holy Spirit begins to manifest in our lives. These are the characteristics of Jesus – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5: 22-23)

AS Wilson penned this wonderful poem ("Indwelt") that speaks of this dynamic in a believer's life:

Not by the words we say,
Not merely by our deeds confessed,
But in a most unconscious way
Is Christ expressed.
To me, 'twas not the truth you taught,
To you so clear, to me so dim,
But when you came to me, you brought
A sense of Him.
And from your eyes He beckons me,
And from your heart His love is shed,
'Til I lose sight of you, And see
The Christ instead.



Sadly, in many parts of North American Mainline Churches, Jesus is simply spoken of as an example for life. However, at the core of the Christian Life is a living relationship with Jesus. We must turn around and welcome Jesus into our lives!

One friend said, "The Gospel is free. Our forgiveness and new life was bought for us on the cross! However, once we turn to Jesus, it costs us everything!" This is what it means for Jesus to reign in our lives – to be our Lord! It is a call to complete surrender to His will and purposes. As the scripture states, "You are not your own. You were bought with a price!" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)