

**Christ the King Sunday  
November 22, 2015**

*"Look! King Jesus Is Coming on Clouds of Glory"*

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**REVELATION 1:4-8**

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**J**ohn, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, <sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, <sup>6</sup> and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father-- to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen. <sup>7</sup> Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen. <sup>8</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Every time another terrorist unleashes a bomb, it is a reminder to us that we are living in the last days. Any moment the heavens could open up and Jesus will return on clouds of glory. Imagine the joy that will be ours as we lift up our heads and celebrate the day Jesus comes to take us to the place he has prepared for us. That future moment defines our lives. It gives us meaning and purpose to everything we do.

I think of past moments that have defined my life. I think of the time when I made the decision to become a pastor. Or the time I accepted the call to serve as the pastor of Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Or the time when I knelt in front of my future wife and asked her to marry me. Or that very special moment when I was baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You can also look back and see moments that have defined and shaped your life.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, you are sitting here this morning in a very privileged position. You can look back at all the great moments the Lord has brought into your life. You can also look forward with eager anticipation to that day when you King Jesus will return in clouds of glory. Why do I see smiles on your faces when I speak to you about this? It is because it is all so real to you.

**You know Jesus your King**

King Jesus coming in clouds of glory is so real to you because you know him in such a personal way. John writes to the seven churches in Asia Minor, "Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before the throne, and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth." Here is a very personal greeting from the true God whom you have come to know and love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You know his grace,. You know his underserved love and kindness to you. You know the peace you have with your God and how close you are to him.

And who is this God? He is your heavenly Father who is, and was, and is to come. He

never changes. Everything in life changes but He never changes. His grace never changes. His peace never changes. This true God is the Holy Spirit whom John describes as the seven spirits before his throne. And this true God is Jesus whom you will someday see coming in clouds of glory. And I ask you do you know this King, this King Jesus who will come in clouds of glory? Of course you do.

You know Jesus as the faithful witness. You have listened to him speak to you on the pages of the Bible. You have heard him witness to his heavenly Father. Oh, to be sure, the stars of the sky witness to you that you have an awesome God, and so do the waves pounding on the surf, or the sunset the sets the sky on fire, or the heart muscle that pumps blood throughout your body as you sit and listen to this sermon. Your King Jesus tells you so much more about your heavenly Father. Listen to Jesus the faithful witness pray: "Father, I want those you have given to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world." Everything my King Jesus tells me about himself and his heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit is true and faithful.

You know King Jesus. I know you know him! He is the firstborn from the dead. Jesus is the first to raise himself to life again after he died. Death and the grave could not hold him. The death that could not hold Jesus cannot hold me. My King and your King who has told us so clearly, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." That's my King! That's your King. You know him. I know him. We will see him when he returns again in clouds of glory.

John, do you have more to tell us about our King? Oh, yes you do! He is the ruler of the kings of the earth. The rulers and kings of this earth come and go, but the King of kings and Lord of lords rules forever. "And he shall reign forever, and ever! Hallelujah!" At the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Pontius Pilate had a smirk on his face when he asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Wipe that smirk off your face Pontius Pilate. Kneel down and worship King Jesus while you still have can. The Roman Empire will lie in dust. Only the kingdom of Jesus will last forever and ever. With confidence we say of our King, "Nothing in all creation will ever separate us from the love of God that exists in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The other night we were walking and suddenly out of the corner of my eye I saw a star or meteor shooting through the sky. For a split second it was there but then it was gone. Working through this sermon I thought of that shooting star. Everything in life passes away but my King and your King lasts forever. Oh, how we long to see him face to face when he comes to us in clouds of glory.

### **You know what Jesus your King has done to save you**

How frightening it would be for us to think of facing Jesus in all of his glory if we do not know what he has done to rescue us and prepare us to meet him on that great day. "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father- to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen!"

"To him who loves us." There is no one who loves you more than Jesus. Do you have people in your life who love you? Do you even have pets that show you love and affection? You know how much you cherish their love. No one loves you more than Jesus. He is the King of Love. He is the Shepherd who holds you in his loving arms and says, "No one will take them out of my hand." His goodness and mercy of your Shepherd King follow you all the days of your life.

Do you want to know more about how much he loves you? John says "he has freed us from our sins by his blood." He freed us by his blood. He freed us from the slavery of sin and its punishment that we deserved. Think of the people in Africa about 200 years ago who were made slaves. They were captured by Arab slave traders, sold into slavery, put aboard ships and shipped to distant countries in the most horrid conditions. Many of these people became Christians and in spite of the horrid conditions in which they lived. They sang of the freedom they had in Christ. They sang of the day when King Jesus would come and take them home. As we just sung, "Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King."

There is not a worship service in this church when we do not celebrate how Jesus our King has made us free. Oh, we do confess what slaves we are to sin and how it has controlled our lives and made us unacceptable to God. You do not have to look very far into how you lived your life this past week to see how enslaved in sin you are and hopeless lost you are without Christ. Your King Jesus was not ashamed to leave the glory he had with his heavenly Father and humble himself and become obedient to death. Your King did not hesitate to become sin for you. Your King did not resist taking upon himself the iniquity or shame and guilt of us. He washed us clean with his blood suffering the punishment we deserve. He wants you to be so clean that when he returns he can claim you as his beloved Bride and take you to the place he has prepared for you. There is no religion in all the world that teaches anything like this. "he has freed us from our sins by his blood." That's my King. That's your King.

And what does your King do with you now that he has washed you clean by his blood? Does he just let you sit around and do nothing as you wait for him to come again in glory? No, your King makes your life worthwhile. He gives it meaning and purpose and value. "He has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father- to him be glory forever and ever."

Let me guess. There are days when you don't feel like you a king or queen or prince or princess. You feel like dirt. "Nobody loves me, everybody hates me...." Satan dances his little jig around you. He chortles with delight. He taunts you and calls you an old toad. But then we lift our eyes to Jesus. We see his blood that washes us clean. We believe our King when he tells us that royal blood is now flowing through our veins.

It makes no difference what your job in life is. Do you teach? Are you retired? Do you stare at a screen all day? Are you a student? Are you going through a rough patch in your life. You are royalty. You are a kingdom. You are priests that serve God day and night in his Church. Listen to these stirring words in 1 Peter: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare the praises of him who has called you of darkness into his marvelous light." Martin Luther had it right when he said, "That I should be his own and live under him in his kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness." As one gospel preacher said,

"He rescues the guttermost for the uttermost." That's my King! That's your King!

The day is coming when we will see our King coming in clouds of glory. "Look he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him so shall it be." Pontius Pilate, the man who smirked at Jesus' claim to be a king will see Jesus coming on clouds of glory. So will those who nailed him to the cross. So will those who have rejected him and hated his love for them. They will mourn when Jesus returns. They will cry out of the mountains and fall on them and the hills to cover them. But it will be too late. As much as we long for Jesus to return on clouds of glory, we value the time remaining for the people we love who don't believe. We want them to turn to him and repent. We pray for them.

Your whole life and my whole life is defined by the very real hope we have of seeing our King Jesus coming in clouds of glory. He is the Alpha and Omega, who is and was and is to come. Even so Lord Jesus come quickly. Amen.