



## MATTHEW 27:27-31 | This is your king?

Sunday, November 23, 2014 – Last Sunday in End Time – Christ the King

*<sup>27</sup> Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. <sup>28</sup> They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. <sup>30</sup> They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. <sup>31</sup> After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.*

This is your king? It's not exactly a confidence-inspiring sight. Here stands Jesus, mangled, bloody, and bruised with a twisted crown on his head. The very people he came to save were punching him and mocking him. And he did nothing. Nothing! No retaliation. No defense. No indication at all that he was the one in charge. And then they dragged him off to kill him.

This is your king? This man's court included an IRS agent, a slimy bookie, two mamas boys, and a boorish, backwoods fisherman. This is your king? What a joke! Your king was raised in Podunk Palestine. His mom had him out-of-wedlock. His friends and family despised him, hated him. This is your king?

It's really a difficult thing to see. What a strange way to portray Christ, our King, on this last day of the church year. To see Jesus in this state doesn't instill any confidence. To look at him now doesn't really force me to bow down in reverence to my awesome king. In fact, looking at Jesus today makes me want to turn my head in horror, averting my eyes from such a brutal beating. It's a sight that I would rather not see and a situation I would rather not have on my mind.

But why are you so indignant of this scene? Why is it you're a bit turned off by the fact that today's Gospel reading is an example of complete and total weakness? It's because you think you deserve more. As you take in the scene this morning the prideful, human nature inside of you is seriously turned off by this sight. This is who God sent? This is how God chose to save you? This is what was necessary for you salvation? And every ounce of human dignity and pride inside of you is suddenly turned off.

The disciples did the same thing. In the garden, after putting up a weak fight in protest to Jesus' arrest, they fled. They weren't going to stand by their king and defend him. He's giving up! He's not even fighting back. As Peter stood in that courtyard he had no inkling of defending the honor of his king. Instead, he denied he even knew the man. And at the crucifixion of this king the only disciple to show up was John, Jesus' best friend. Where were his devoted citizens? Where was his royal court? Where were those who promised to defend him? Gone. Gone because they didn't want to be associated with such a man for fear of the same thing happening to them.

Where have you been, Christian? At work this week, where were you when an opportunity came up to defend the name of "Christian"? Where were you when you had an opportunity to bring another person into the courts of the king to hear the sweet message of life in heaven through Jesus? Where were you when you opened your mouth and instead of praises for your king came curses and lies?

Where were you when you were sent as an ambassador of the king and instead you hid behind a facade of apathy and indignation? It's not as if you just denied knowing the king of kings. You traded sides. How many times have you handed in your uniform of life for a uniform that conformed to the sinful ways of the world or your own sinful heart? It's not that you're just a poor follower of your king; you're a traitor! And treachery as bad as this deserves death.

And that's what happened that day so long ago. Behind the insults, the mocking, the beating, and the nails was a purpose. Those things are what you deserved. Your treachery deserved such treatment. But as citizens of the kingdom of Christ you have a king that defends you in such situations. Your king was taking the punishment for you. Your king was putting himself in your place so that you, his precious citizen, would not be harmed. This man was fulfilling his duties as king in the most noble way possible. He was giving his life for his people.

Isn't that the ideal king? Isn't that the exact type of king you want? Here is a king who does not think so highly of himself that he was willing to endure scorn and shame and even death on a cross for you! (Hebrews 12:2) Here was a king who took the treacherous ways of his people and placed them on his shoulders and climbed the mountain of the skull to be killed in the place of his people. He wasn't too haughty. He wasn't too self-involved. He wasn't too good for this. His compassion, love, and mercy which had been evident throughout his life was on its greatest display here. This action was so much greater than some fish and bread in baskets on the shores of the sea. It was so much greater than some muddy paste put on the eyes of a beggar. It was so much greater than the stifled sobs of a joyous widow hugging her once-dead son. There is no love greater than this: that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

You see, dear Christian, this is your king! This king is your friend, your comforter, your companion. He's here to listen, to help you carry your burdens, to give you what you need when you ask. But most of all, this king is here to save. How quickly the crowds of Jerusalem forgot why Jesus marched triumphantly into Jerusalem. How quickly the shouts of "Hosanna, Lord save us!" changed to "Crucify him!" That is what he was here to do. He came to seek and to save what was lost. He came to seek and to save you.

This king will come again. But he will not come climbing a mountain in shame. He will not come alone, deserted by all who claimed to follow him. He will not come dressed in rags, bloodied and bruised. He will come again on the clouds, dressed in blazing white clothes, with all of the saints who have died and all of the angels who serve him. He will come not in meekness and humility, but in triumph and victory. Behold, dear Christian...this is your king! Amen.



*Soli Deo Gloria!*

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