

Sunday 22nd November 2020

Christ the King

Hymn

George Hugh Bourne (1840-1925)

1
Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour,
first-begotten from the dead,
Thou alone, our strong defender,
liftest up Thy people's head.
Alleluia, alleluia,
Jesu, true and living bread.

2
Here our humblest homage pay we,
here in loving reverence bow;
here for faith's discernment prayer we,
lest we fail to know thee now.
Alleluia, alleluia,
thou art here, we ask now how.

5
Life-imparting heavenly manna,
stricken rock, with streaming side,
heaven and earth with loud hosanna
worship thee, the Lamb who died.
Alleluia, alleluia,
risen, ascended, glorified!

3
Though the lowliest form doth veil thee
as of old in Bethlehem,
here as there thine angels hail thee,
branch and flower of Jesse's stem.
Alleluia, alleluia,
we in worship join with them.

4
Paschal Lamb, thine offering finished
once for all when thou wast slain,
in its fullness undiminished
shall for evermore remain.
Alleluia, alleluia,
cleansing souls from every stain.

Collect

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

{Reading

Ephesians 1 15-23

A reading from St Paul's First Letter to the Ephesians

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember

you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 119:9-16

R The Lord is a great King and a great King above all gods.

Come, let us sing to the Lord; * let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving * and raise a loud shout to him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, * and a great King above all gods. **R**

In his hand are the caverns of the earth, * and the heights of the hills are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, * and his hands have moulded the dry land. **R**

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, * and kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. **R}**

Gospel

Matthew 25:31-46

Hear the Gospel of our lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I

was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord **Praise to you, O Christ**

Reflection

Prolepsis

I have a new word for you today, well it isn't a new word it's actually an old word, and that word is Prolepsis. It's a noun which derives from a Greek word which means to anticipate. But there is a bit more to it than that because prolepsis is acting as if something future has already happened.

I tried to think of a good example of prolepsis, the one that sprang to mind was when people get awarded a knighthood, and you hear people, as soon as the honours list is announced referring to them as Sir whoever, but they are not actually a Sir until they have been to the palace and the queen has taken the sword and knighted them.

The reason I want you to know this word is because as Christians we are expected to show the characteristic of Prolepsis we are called to be proleptic, and because today as we celebrate Christ the King we are being proleptic.

In today's collect it says 'Eternal Father, whose son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne in heaven that he might reign over all things as Lord and King'. Today we celebrate Jesus' universal sovereignty his kingship over all things and all people and we do that as if it were a fact as if it has already happened, when it has not. Christ will only reign as universal saviour, at the end of time, when God's kingdom comes in all its fullness, when there is a new heaven and a new earth when according to Revelations the seventh and final angel blows

his trumpet, 'and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever."

So our celebration is proleptic. But as Christians our prolepsis goes further than an anticipatory celebration of Jesus Kingship. Because we know that by virtue of his death, resurrection and ascension the time will come when Jesus reigns as King over all, by a combination of our Christian faith and hope we are called to celebrate proleptically but to live proleptically. As Christians we are expected to live the Kingdom now, live the love, joy peace, justice and the rest now. So I have one message today be proleptic.

Hymn

George Herbert (1593-1633)

1

King of glory, King of peace,
I will love thee;
and, that love may never cease,
I will move thee.
Thou hast granted my request,
thou hast heard me;
thou didst note my working breast,
thou hast spared me.

2

Wherefore with my utmost art
I will sing thee,
and the cream of all my heart
I will bring thee.
Though my sins against me cried,
thou didst clear me,
and alone, when they replied,
thou didst hear me.

3

Seven whole days, not one in seven,
I will praise thee;
in my heart, though not in heaven,
I can raise thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort
to enrol thee:
e'en eternity's too short
to extol thee.