

## Christ the King - Nov 22nd

In Mark's Gospel Jesus says - the time is near, the kingdom of God is at hand

In Luke he says - heal the sick and tell them , the kingdom of God has come near

In Luke 17 he says that the kingdom is amongst us.

When we talk about Jesus being a king, or having a kingdom, we need to remember one very important thing. The kings, and queens, and kingdoms that we know of, that we read or see - who's been watching the Crown?

Well, Jesus is not talking about anything like them!

When the Bible talks about God as king, its because they haven't got any other way of describing what's going on, so they use this picture of kingship. But you have to think that God is like the best king, and then multiplied by trillions!

And a good king or ruler can be good - not if they are like a figurative head of state, like ours, but if they actually have power in the way that they did in Bible times.

They can make sure their people are safe, like King David did, they can keep them fed, like Pharaoh did. If they're like King Solomon they can make wise decisions.

And, important as those things are, they are not the be all and end all.. there is also culture.

When I walked between Pakistan and India, those two countries were not the same

Dress, women, freedom, meat vs veggie, art and images..

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So what are the signs of Jesus kingdom -

Healing and wholeness - in body, mind and spirit

Forgiveness, for others, for ourselves

Peace - lack of war, but also shalom

Justice, fairness, honesty

Kindness - do to others, or even as if we're serving Christ

generosity - God will provide

Caring for the environment, being good stewards,

Can you see the kingdom..??

all those talents last week, all the care, all the generosity, the environment, the peace, the joy..

So we can see the kingdom, and yet its not fully here.

Jesus is king, yet he's not reigning everywhere..

This is what surprised the Jews and the early followers - they expected an earthly king, with an earthly rule and borders. But this is over the whole world - its not about territory!

So theologians talk about the now and the not yet, we are living in the overlap.

Sometimes seems hard to explain or hard to grasp. People used the example of a war to illustrate it - we will win, but we're still fighting.

Even better with the virus - we can tell we have vaccines, we will win, but its not over yet.

We are in the already and the not yet. We know that it will be over, but yet it continues to kill, hurt, decimate the world.

So now we must lose heart or be discouraged. Listen to this...

10:55

Hebrews.

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart...

12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. 13 "Make level paths for your feet,"] so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed...

18 You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm ...

22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant.

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We should not be discouraged, because we are working for an everlasting kingdom.. as st Paul puts it, for an imperishable crown!

And We should hope, not because we're optimistic and want things to be better.

We should hope, not because we believe that scientists will solve this problem., although they may

We should hope because Jesus has told us that he has started a new kingdom, a kingdom that even hell cannot overcome, and we should hope because we can see the signs of it all around us. - in the care and goodness and kindness.

We should hope, because our hope is in Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, and there are thousands of thousands of saints and angels cheering us on..

We should hope because our hope is founded on God, and God will not disappoint us.