

Grace and peace are you from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; Amen.

The reality of kings and kingdoms in our world began its greatest decline as the New World was being colonized. As the United States was formed, our Founding Fathers understood the benefits (and value) of democracy over a monarchy. A government ‘for the people, by the people’ was quickly replacing the tradition of a kingdom ruled by a family where power and control was passed down from one generation to another.

Looking back on the age of kings and kingdoms, we see periods of brief success, prosperity, and even peace. However, for all the kings and kingdoms of the past (and the few remaining today), none provided an example for the world to follow. In the context of our human life together, the exact opposite appears to be the case.

What makes a good ruler, king and kingdom; the happiness, safety, prosperity, and peace of the people? The first recorded time of great peace was the Pax Romana – the peace of Rome. In 29 BC, Octavian began to focus the Roman Empire on peace and constructed the Altar of Peace to reflect upon the importance and necessity of a peaceful existence. This peace came to a destructive end only 200 years after it began.

1000 years later, during the time of Genghis Khan (who united the Mongol tribes) the world would again know peace. The Silk Road, Marco Polo, and Eastern trade routes were only possible as a result of the greatest peace the world has ever known; during a time we associated with great conflict, aggressions, and hostility.

These are two examples of kingdoms where peace reigned for a time, but under the rule of one leader. Today, 1000 years later, most kings and kingdoms have been replaced with Republics, which have ushered in the greatest peace in the recorded history of human existence. Yes, there are still wars, crime, aggression, and terrorism, but the alliances and international relationships that work for the greater peace of the world has never been stronger or more hopeful.

Why the history lesson on kings and kingdoms in world history. My friends, the people that are waiting to make a relationship with our Lord, the people that are waiting for faith to grow, the people that are waiting for us to tell them the Good News do not understand the magnitude of the meaning in our Scripture texts today.

The collective Scripture readings all reveal the King that Jesus is: the One True and Complete Sovereign of all time and peoples that will reign with justice and peace, forever and ever. Pontius is standing in the presence of the Lord of Lords, King of Kings, and has no idea who he is talking to. We know this because he asks Jesus, “Are you a king?” God has not granted Pilate the faith to understand, to comprehend, who he is talking to. God *has* granted us the faith, knowledge and wisdom to understand and comprehend, who Jesus is and the Kingdom He has established.

2018-11-25-A King Forever

Faith is the beginning my friends and faith is the means to accomplish the work of the Kingdom that Christ has established in our presence for the sake of all people. Today we celebrate a new member in the Kingdom of God with the baptism of Wyatt Benjamin Pieper. Heaven knows no greater celebration than the welcoming of a new member; it is by God's design that the Kingdom grows daily to glorify our Father in heaven.

As Wyatt grows in grace, he will need Christian education, guidance, and compassion to see the Holy Scripture as the truth and the way of life! He will need the faith of others to form 'his faith' so he will be able to see the King and Kingdom of God that Pilate was not able to see. Without a strong, committed, and enduring family, our faith will fall like the kingdoms of this world and we will be left looking for signs and details, just like Pilate.

The King is come, the Kingdom is established, and the work continues to bring people to faith each day. There are countless workers in the Kingdom who proclaim the Good News and heaven rejoices with each new citizen! Our labors have not ceased and our rest is not yet won, but the day is promised and the Kingdom, my friends in Christ, *IS OURS!*

Today is Christ the King Sunday in the Christian Church and the final day in the church year. The Scripture readings all reveal an 'end' to all trials and tribulation and the beginning of an eternal reign of justice, peace, and rest. Today is the celebration of the reality that the ruler of this world and his reign will come to an end. The era of tyranny full of affliction, pain, suffering, decay, and despair is coming to a close fast as the final day of the Lord approaches in haste.

This is the Good News and the beginning of faith for the world that cannot see, comprehend, or understand a King and Kingdom where life will exist in complete and final peace. You, my friends in Christ, have the gift of faith to see the hope of the world to come with a King and Kingdom that all of Creation has been waiting patiently for. Share the news my friends, share the joy, love, hope and peace of the day coming soon.

Share the story of our King and Kingdom so everyone may know and rely upon the peace that passes all understanding that forever keeps our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!