

Crown?

[Ezekiel 34^{11-16,20-24}; Psalm 95¹⁻⁷] Ephesians 1^{15-end}; Matthew 25^{31-end}

*Christ ... far above all rule and authority and power and dominion,
and above every name that is named. [Ephesians 1²⁰⁻²¹]*

I am not sure how many of us settled down to watch the Netflix series, *The Crown*, last Sunday, but I was amongst them. On this Sunday of Christ the King it is natural to think about monarchy as we experience it. I am not sure about the accuracy of the representations, but one thing I did remember from a few days in St George's, Windsor, is that when the hymn, *All my hope on God is founded*, is sung there they omit the second verse: *Human pride and earthly glory, sword and crown betray his trust!* Could it be that ever HM The Queen is like the rest of us and baulks ever so slightly at the absolute Monarchy of Christ the King?

You know what I am going to say today: if Jesus is King, then we are subject to him and all Christian people should be and do what he says and expects. The option is that we declare a revolution and set ourselves up as our own ruler – in truth we aren't up to it! So why bow to Christ? Two things:

✧ Personality

Paul tells us about who Jesus really is and the pivotal point of it is the **resurrection**. What every Jesus may have said or done, it is in his rising from the dead that we get to know who he really is. As a result, **God... 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 made him head over all things for the Church.**

There is no question that this is awesome – it is absolute power. What is most incredible is that this power is expressed in absolute love. The resurrection is the proof that God in Christ died for our forgiveness and God in the Holy Spirit calls us to know him and become like him.

Because of this personality as it is known in Jesus **we can come to know**

him, we may be **enlightened** and we may **know the hope to which he called [us]**. We may also know **the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe**. Why would we not worship and obey such majesty?

✧ Practicalities

The absolute majesty in God condescends to lift us up and the practicalities for us are that we are expected to treat each person we meet as if they were Christ himself. To be sure, Jesus lists the **hungry**; the **thirsty**; the **stranger**; the **naked**; the **sick**; and the **prisoner**. On the basis of how we respond to such people we will be judged – **as a shepherd separates the sheep and the goats**.

Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

Just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.

Did we or didn't we? There is no room for negotiation, prevarication or equivocation! Were I to ramp up the theatricals and make any listeners squirm, that would be nothing to realising on the Day **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.**

I am aware that the Feast of Christ the King is a recent invention and doesn't have the standing of Christmas or Easter as a Festival. But I am also aware that this does not lessen the demands of the Scriptures we have read today – Christ is the King: we are his subjects! In truth, many of us would want to omit *Human pride and earthly glory, sword and crown betray his trust!*