

## **“The Throne Amid the Turmoil”**

by Greg Smith-Young (Elora-Bethany Pastoral Charge)  
*A Reflection for Reign of Christ Sunday*

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

November 25, 2018

---

Read the Scripture by clicking [here](#).

---

We use the regular calendar, so today is November 25. Many churches also use a liturgical calendar. It guides us through our worship year. It takes us through seasons like Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter. The liturgical calendar marks special days like Christmas Eve, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Jesus’ Ascension and Pentecost. This is the liturgical calendar (not to be confused with the liturgical colander.<sup>1</sup>)

Next week, we start a new year with Advent. Today is our year-end. Today is Christ the King Sunday, or Reign of Christ Sunday.

### II

In that apocalyptic vision we heard, Daniel a court.

You know what courts are. They are where judges hear evidence, apply laws and give verdicts. We need judges to be wise and fair, never corrupt nor deceitful, defenders of the weak and victimized, good and just.

“Court” has another sense too. Courts are where sovereigns rule from. They exercise power and give commands. Royal courts are not so common these days, but whether monarchs or legislatures, we need our rulers to be compassionate and understanding, making laws carefully to benefit their people.

Daniel’s vision is of God’s Court. The One called “Ancient of Days” is both Sovereign and Judge. Blazing white! Bursting flames! Apocalyptic visions use the fantastic to show the fundamental. Don’t try to explain them, analyse and pick them apart. Just experience. Absorb. God the Almighty King! God the Supreme Judge!

Then Daniel sees the Human One! (Literally, the “Son of Man.”) Remember what it says about him?

*Rule, glory, and kingship were given TO HIM.  
All peoples, nations, and languages will serve HIM.  
HIS rule is an everlasting one; it will never pass away!  
HIS kingship is indestructible.*

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://restlesspilgrim.net/blog/2016/12/16/liturgical-colander/>

This is Jesus! Our Almighty King! Our Supreme Judge!

Often amid much turmoil, we celebrate Jesus Christ.

### III

Of all days and seasons in our liturgical calendar, today is the newest.

It was 1925. The world was still reeling from:

- the turmoil of World War I.
- the turmoil of the even deadlier flu pandemic that followed.
- the turmoil of ages-old empires collapsing.
- the turmoil of economic depression.

In the Soviet Union, Christians were being terrorized and murdered. In Italy, Mussolini's fascist dictatorship had just begun. In the United States, tens of thousands of KKK members had just marched in Washington to support white supremacy. In Germany, a politician had just published his memoir, *Mein Kampf*.

Amid all this, Pope Pius XI set aside today, the final Sunday of the worship year, to celebrate Christ's rule. For amid turmoil:

*Rule, glory, and kingship were given TO HIM.  
All peoples, nations, and languages will serve HIM.  
HIS rule is an everlasting one; it will never pass away!  
HIS kingship is indestructible.*

Jesus Christ!

### IV

Jump ahead a decade, to the mid-1930s in Germany. People were leaping aboard the Nazi bandwagon.

Christians were joining the euphoria. Hitler was promising to bring Germany the greatness it deserved. Pro-Nazi so-called "German Christians" were taking over the church. So-called "Jewish ideas" and clergy who had Jewish ancestry were being expelled. Church leaders were becoming Nazi officials. Worshipers were raising the "Sieg Heil" salute to the Führer.

Other Christians were keeping quiet, hoping to survive the storm.

But a small group refused the safety of silence. They called themselves the "Confessing Church." They rejected the idolatry of nation and race. They joined in a declaration in the city of Barmen. They proclaimed this: Jesus is the world's true ruler.

No matter what prime ministers say, or premiers insist, or presidents declare . . . no matter what laws parliaments pass . . . no matter what dictators demand . . . their authority is not final. Their rule will pass away. So we respect them when they earn it. We support them when they do well. We always pray for them. But when they do wrong, we can stand against them humbly, lovingly, and with confidence. We know that:

*Rule, glory, and kingship were given TO HIM.  
All peoples, nations, and languages will serve HIM.  
HIS rule is an everlasting one; it will never pass away!  
HIS kingship is indestructible.*

Jesus Christ!

V

On Wednesday evening, the community hall at the Fergus Sportsplex was packed. We had come to hear Jennifer Hedger and Michael Landsberg. They are sports celebrities, headliners on *TSN: The Sports Network*. They are at the top of their game, and both live with depression and anxiety.

They came to support us. The suicide rate in our county this past year is more than two times higher than the provincial average!

I live with depression and anxiety. I have had this disease since my early twenties. Sometimes I am doing well. Other times. . . I have very supportive family and friends. I see a counsellor when I need to. I take medication every day. Still, sometimes it rages. When it does, I cannot feel joy. I feel flat. I feel useless and worthless. I am pretty much done. All I can do is get through the day. I can't just pull myself out of it.

I know for some of you this sounds all too familiar. You are not alone.

Here is something else I know. My illness, and any of illnesses we have, they do not rule. Jesus does! Even when I am not prevailing over it, Jesus still has me. Even if I struggle to believe this, it is still true:

*Rule, glory, and kingship were given TO HIM.  
All peoples, nations, and languages will serve HIM.  
HIS rule is an everlasting one; it will never pass away!  
HIS kingship is indestructible.*

Jesus Christ!

## VI

This week ahead, you are going to follow your King, as he goes ahead of you into your many neighbourhoods. You will be living under his orders, which we can sum up in three commands that wrap together. Love God with all you are. Love one another within the church community. And, love your neighbours as though they were you.

These are all simple. None are easy. Neighbours can be hard to act with love for. Yes, the ones we share a street, or a fence line, or a hallway with. Also, the ones we work with, or go to school with, or spend significant time with in whichever neighbourhoods we are part of. Acting with love for them can be hard because they are real people. Real people can be difficult. (You know that! You're a real person too!)

Jesus' orders are often so simple, and they are difficult.

But he is the King! Jesus already rules in your neighbourhoods, every single one of them. No place is outside of the scope of his reign. No place! No person is not subject to him. No one!

Jesus is the Good King in your neighbourhoods and for your neighbours. He listens with compassion and understanding. He commands wisely and fairly.

Jesus is the Good Judge in your neighbourhoods and for your neighbours. In him there is no corruption nor deceit. He defends the weak and victimized. He is good and just.

This is already true. It's just that often our neighbourhoods and neighbours do not know it.

But you do. So you can live into their lives, and you can love into their lives knowing this, confident in Jesus.

Jesus rules with love. He loves you. He loves us. He loves our neighbours. He loves our enemies. His rule is the love of God!

*Rule, glory, and kingship were given to JESUS.  
All peoples, nations, and languages will serve JESUS.  
JESUS' rule is an everlasting one; it will never pass away!  
JESUS' kingship is indestructible.*