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Meditation for Christ the King

13th Sept. 2020

Christ the King

Both Friday 20th and Friday 27th November Midday Prayers for Little Gidding also touch on the theme of Christ the King, so this meditation is a bit shorter than usual.

Do go and share in those acts of worship. They are available both on the [Benefice website](#) and the [Friends of Little Gidding Facebook page](#)



Sieger Koder

We enter into quiet

From mist and darkness
From restful waters

God gathers us

From health and sickness
From plenty and poverty

God gathers us.

From highroads and byways
From fields and cities

God gathers us.

To a feast, a banquet,
To live eternal

God gathers us safe home.

Christ the King,
King of justice
We belong to you.

Christ the King,
King of glory
We belong to you.

Christ the King
King of integrity
We belong to you.

Ruth Burgess Candles and Conifers

Listen to: [You are the King of Glory](#)

Read: Ezekiel 34: 11-24

This translation is from 'The Message'. There is a translation of the same passage in [this week's newsheet](#).

“GOD, the Master, says: From now on, I myself am the shepherd. I'm going looking for them. As shepherds go after their flocks when they get scattered, I'm going after my sheep. I'll rescue them from all the places they've been scattered to in the storms. I'll bring them back from foreign peoples, gather them from foreign countries, and bring them back to their home country.

I'll feed them on the mountains of Israel, along the streams, among their own people. I'll lead them into lush pasture so they can roam the mountain pastures of Israel, graze at leisure, feed in the rich pastures on the mountains of Israel. And I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep. I myself will make sure they get plenty of rest. I'll go after the lost, I'll collect the strays, I'll doctor the injured, I'll build up the weak ones and oversee the strong ones so they're not exploited.

“And as for you, my dear flock, I'm stepping in and judging between one sheep and another, between rams and goats. Aren't you satisfied to feed in good pasture without taking over the whole place? Can't you be satisfied to drink from the clear stream without muddying the water with your feet? Why do the rest of my sheep have to make do with grass that's trampled down and water that's been muddied?

“Therefore, GOD, the Master, says: I myself am stepping in and making things right between the plump sheep and the skinny sheep. Because you forced your way with shoulder and rump and butted at all the weaker animals with your horns till you scattered them all over the hills, I'll come in and save my dear flock, no longer let them be pushed around. I'll step in and set things right between one sheep and another.

“I'll appoint one shepherd over them all: my servant David. He'll feed them. He'll be their shepherd. And I, GOD, will be their God. My servant David will be their prince.

I, GOD, have spoken.

To Think About



This charming photograph of the Queen and Prince Philip was released this week to mark their 73rd wedding anniversary. Although close inspection will reveal that they are not some ordinary couple enjoying cards from family members, if you take the background and the smart clothes away, they could be any older couple enjoying a special family moment together. In this era, we have come to expect members of the Royal Family releasing a few more relaxed poses at home, as well as the more formal pictures. It's probably the pay off for being left alone for some of the time. In the past, pictures of any senior royal would be officially posed, and usually surrounded by unmistakable objects of their wealth and power (yes, the background of Windsor castle also hints at that in this photograph).

Most images of Christ the King in glory present a rather forbidding Christ. He is sat on the throne in heaven, surrounded by the great and good of the saints. He looks incredibly serious, as he starts the business of being King in heaven. Many of our hymns for this time of the year have a great triumphalism about them.

The picture at the top of this meditation is of the Good Shepherd. However, there are enough links in it for it to make, for me, a picture of Christ returning home in glory. How different this image is –

surrounded by the lost and least, and bearing the lost sheep in his arms. And yet – it is also an image of the King, as Ezekiel shows us.

I wonder what we would put in a picture of a king
maybe:

a shepherd's crook – seeking lost, feeding providing a medical kit – binds up the injured
a mobile phone/passport – social worker, strengthening the weak a set of scales – judge
a book – gives wisdom
a gift – for he gives much

For this is how Christ, our King is described.

The people of Israel didn't have kings for a long time in their history. God was their king, and led them and provided for them. They first demanded a king from Samuel. All the other nations had one – it made them look bad. God warned them that having a king wouldn't necessarily be a good thing, but he gave into their demands, and Saul was chosen as King.

However, Saul forgot God, and so God chose David, from Jesse's family, to inherit and all of Saul's children died. David was the best king Israel knew – but his son Solomon, who started well, ended up forgetting God.

Most of the kings who followed thought that they knew better than God, but the country was torn apart by battling. It was so weakened that the people were carried into captivity in Babylon, David was long gone by the time Ezekiel writing – but the people were beginning to looking forward to Christ, Messiah – God's king, who would be even greater than David.

Listen to: [King of Glory, King of Peace](#)

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.

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.
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 enroll thee:
e'en eternity's too short
to extol thee.

The words of George Herbert's poems give us a picture of a King who reaches down to us, and calls us to respond to what the King sees in us.

Look at what Paul has to say in Ephesians:

That's why, when I heard of the solid trust you have in the Master Jesus and your outpouring of love to all the followers of Jesus, I couldn't stop thanking God for you—every time I prayed, I'd think of you and give thanks.

But I do more than thank.

I ask—ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for his followers, oh, the utter extravagance of his work in us who trust him—endless energy, boundless strength!

All this energy issues from Christ: God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule.

And not just for the time being, but forever. He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the centre of all this, Christ rules the church. The church, you see, is not peripheral to the world; the world is peripheral to the church. The church is Christ's body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence.

Listen to: [You Raise Me Up](#)



Sieger Koder

Prayer:

Into places of conflict

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of terrorists

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of soldiers

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of politicians

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those bereaved by war

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who are hungry

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those made homeless

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who despair

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who are ill

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who have been abused

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who are addicted

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who are in debt

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who are lonely

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who are fearful

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those who are depressed

May your kingdom come.

Into the hearts of those we name before you in silence....

May your kingdom come.

Into the heart of our world

May your kingdom come.

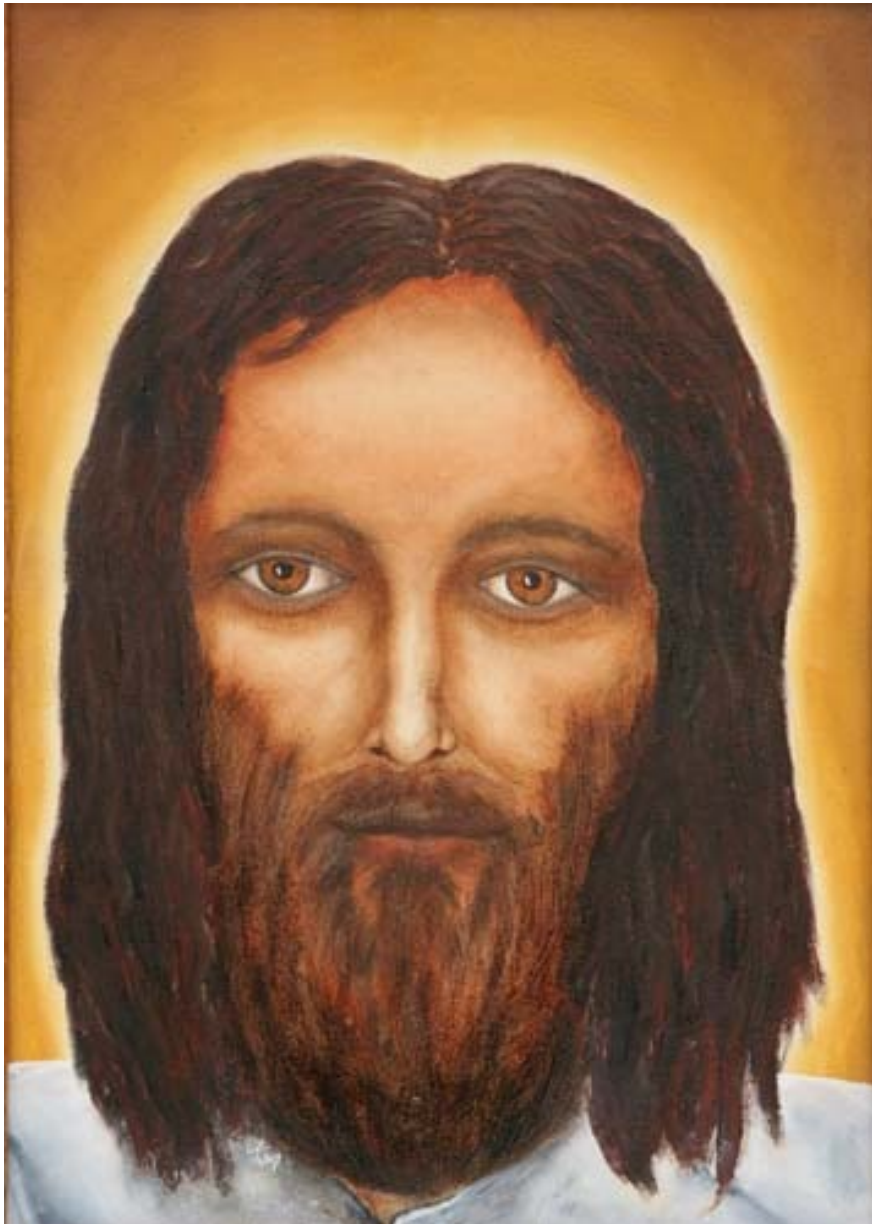
Listen to: [A Touching Place](#)

Ending

Today and tomorrow
In time and eternity
Your kingdom come.

In our world, in our streets,
in our homes and communities
Your kingdom come.

In our lives, in our loves
in our hopes and our travelling
Your kingdom come.



Katherine Austin

The True King

The face of love.

Who do you say He is?