

March 27, 2022

The Fourth Sunday of Lent

John 18:28-40

Jesus and Pilate

It is kind of odd how you can read a passage of scripture over for years and have it speak to you differently each time. This passage is one of them. Pilate's words in verse 33 struck me as being very odd and strange, "Are You the King of the Jews." Why would you ask that question unless there was some evidence to back it up? Even if it created the slightest possibility. It made me wonder, did others see kingly qualities in Jesus that would make Him a good earthly king? I can only suspect so much. This would explain the Jews hate and fear of Him. Jesus showed many qualities in His ministry that would have made Him a great earthly king. Jesus would be the competition to the Jews and Romans, would have to give up their power and control. I also wondered if Pilate saw the same qualities in Jesus and thought He would be a great replacement for Herod?

So, I got to thinking about the qualities of a good earthly king that people probably saw in Jesus.

Well, we know that Jesus lived His life with great integrity. The root of this word comes from the Spanish. It means wholeness. Jesus had that great ability to mend and fix broken relationships. He gave people and families hope by healing their loved ones. He made people whole by

healing them. Jesus kept His word and always acted honestly. Jesus always took responsibility for the things He said and did. Jesus had a set of rules that He lived by. They guided His life. These were the same rules every day and not just on the Sabbath. Jesus would heal people every day and that included the Sabbath. That would get Jesus into a lot of trouble with the Jews. They had a lot of rules. Some they lived by and some they did not. Jesus stuck to what He believed in.

Jesus looked after the people that God had entrusted to Him. This would be the apostles and disciples. Jesus says in John 18:9, "Of those whom You gave Me, I have lost none." An earthly king does the same with the people they rule over.

The earthly king also provides order for those they look after. Earthly kings do this by making laws to govern their kingdoms. So I wondered about the laws and commandments Jesus gave us. There were not all that many. In John 13:31, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." Jesus provided us with one new commandment. So that it may be a benefit to His believers and help them grow and prosper.

A good earthly king inspires their people. Jesus certainly did this with His apostles and disciples. Jesus had many talks with them about the Kingdom of Heaven. Many times Jesus would take them to the wilderness and talk with them privately. Then Jesus would send them out to preach the word to the people in the villages and cities. They would come back all excited about how the evil spirits were subject to them because of Jesus's name that they preached in. One of the most inspiring messages Jesus delivered was the Beatitudes. Or the Blessings. This was the blueprint or the plan for the Kingdom of Heaven

here on earth. You can find it in Mathew 5:3. This speech inspired the: poor, meek, the mourning, the persecuted, the merciful, the peacemakers and the pure of heart. All those people who were on the outside of society are now included. The good king also blesses their people and in this speech so many are included and blessed.

Finally, a good earthly king leaves a legacy. Something they leave behind after they leave this world. Something people remember and talk about. Things that change the lives of people for the better. We are still talking about Jesus's ministry amongst us two thousand years later. His words and teachings have changed so many lives over the centuries. His words have shaped and guided how we live our daily lives.

Taking all of this into consideration, I would have to say that Jesus would have made a great earthly king. Remember the village in John 6:15 that wanted to make Him king. Jesus had to escape to avoid that happening. Those people all saw those qualities in Jesus. Just as Pilate did in this morning's reading. All of this should fill us with great hope and expectation for Jesus's return. When Jesus returns, the Heavenly Kingdom comes with Him to earth.

Lenten Reflection: Acts 2:44-45. After reading this passage, I started to wonder, do I have to sell and give up my big screen TV and give the money to the poor? All in order to be a good Christian. The short answer is no. The pooling of resources was very common among the new Christians. Most of the new converts were immigrants. They were new Christians starting a new life in a new country. Pooling their stuff was the easiest and best way to survive and get a head. This sort of

practice is still very common among immigrant groups that come to Canada.

The important thing to take away from the passage is that Christians pulled together in times of need. They had a great sense of community. We read later in Acts how the Christians in one area collected money and food to help Christians in a drought stricken area. We still do similar things today. Our sense of community defines who we really are as Christ's followers. The sense of community is still the same and as strong. We have a group of dedicated people who help out at the Urban Mission feeding people. There are people who spearhead the shoe box drive at Christmas. Now there are people collecting money and resources for the people of Ukraine. From the early beginnings of the church there has always been a strong commitment to help those in need. All of this is driven by our sense of community.

The church keeps a healthy balance of the spiritual and earthly. It is hard to pray when your belly is empty or you are cold and not properly dressed. We need to look after people's physical needs too. The church always seems to find the resources needed to meet these needs.

This passage is about a church that acts and helps others. A church with a sense of community. It is this sense of community that gives it purpose. The church has always been active and dynamic in helping others. Our church today is very active in many social projects and programs. We help people on a local, national and international level. We have a strong sense of community and purpose. If you need to part

with your big screen TV to do that, then all the power to you. God
Bless, Pastor D