

Seedling Group Questions for the week of November 25 – Christ the King

The sermon for November 25 can be found at www.saidanotherway.org

Questions for opening up

Is there something in the distant future you are really looking forward to? Why?

Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? How did the situation get resolved?

Read Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

Daniel, like the book of Revelation, is apocalyptic literature, a genre that often uses visions and fanciful imagery to communicate hope in God's ultimate victory over the suffering imposed by oppressive powers. Contrary to popular science fiction, there are really no secret codes hidden in apocalyptic literature that need to be deciphered. Just read this and try to imagine the scene in your head—if you were being persecuted, these magnificent visions would have reminded you of God's power and glory over and above whatever you were going through.

Going through Daniel's images one-by-one, share your primary emotions or associations surrounding each of these items. Then, share how you relate any of them to your vision of God (or not): Throne. White clothing. Woolen hair. Fire. Courtroom. Human being.

In this vision, God, "the Ancient One," gives all dominion and glory to a human being. Do you hear this as good news or bad news? What kind of human being would you want to have dominion and glory over you? Over your enemies?

What aspects of this life do you hope never pass away?

Read John 18:33-37

What stands out to you about Pilate's interrogation of Jesus here? Do you imagine Pilate as angrily confrontational or more doubtful and nervous? Why?

What all might Jesus mean when he says that his kingdom is "not from this world"?

Jesus tells Pilate he comes to testify to the truth. What truth do you think that is?

Putting things together

Pastor Phillip says, "To some degree, we're all Pilate, unwilling to see and make sense of this pure gift of love standing right in front of us. But when it does envelop and transform us, we begin to see that it is something to be shared and spread. If there is a force behind Jesus' authority, it is the force of self-giving, the force of handing over oneself in love." Where have you seen examples of the "force of self-giving?" How has it been transformative?

In what ways does Jesus challenge the powers- and authorities-that-be in our world today?

Making it personal

Do you think of Jesus as your king/sovereign on a regular basis? Why or why not? How does calling him a sovereign influence your personal relationship to him?

What truth about Jesus do you think you need to testify to more readily?

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

⁹As I watched,
thrones were set in place,
and an Ancient One took his throne,
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
and its wheels were burning fire.

¹⁰A stream of fire issued
and flowed out from his presence.
A thousand thousands served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him.
The court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened.

¹³As I watched in the night visions,
I saw one like a human being
coming with the clouds of heaven.
And he came to the Ancient One
and was presented before him.

¹⁴To him was given dominion
and glory and kingship,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion
that shall not pass away,
and his kingship is one
that shall never be destroyed.

John 18:33-37

³³Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" ³⁵Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." ³⁷Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."