

On Sunday, we will celebrate the culmination of the liturgical year with Christ the King Sunday (or Reign of Christ), and in doing so, as part of our worship, we will read a passage from the first chapter of Revelation.

Now, when we open the pages of the book, we are invited to remember that this document was not written to us, but to the seven churches in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). In addition, according to verse 3, this document was to be read aloud in worship, indicating that the symbolic language (which is often perplexing to us) would have been understood by the original readers.

John was writing to a community of faith struggling in their culture, and he was their pastor, and so he would not have said, "Look, I want you to read this stuff in worship, and even though you won't understand a word of it, do not worry because when the 'Left Behind' series comes out 2000 years from now, then you'll know what it means."

John did not want to confuse them; he wanted to encourage them. As a result, Revelation (while described as a prophecy) is something other than a prediction of future events. It is rather a discernment of the present condition, designed to inspire faithfulness to God as Christians constantly found themselves dealing with decisions about whether or not to compromise their faith in order to gain social or economic advantage.

Accordingly, on Christ the King Sunday, we are summoned, like Revelation's original audience, to work for a world that is governed by the teachings of our Lord, a world where all members of the community may live together in unity and peace of shared resources, a world where we follow the reign of Christ which is embodied through solidarity, compassion, and love, rather than being infected with the empire's way of seizing power and control and unleashing the beast of greedy violence.

So, on this Christ the King Sunday, let us hear what the Scripture (and the Spirit) may be saying to us. May the blessings of Thanksgiving support and sustain you throughout the week. I look forward to seeing you on Sunday at either 8:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.