



**PRESTON  
MEADOW**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Sunday Morning Grow Groups

November 21, 2021

*Christ the King*

- Happy Sunday, y'all! We're glad you're here!
  - The 12 Days of Christmas giving event is off and running. We're seeking recommendations from the congregation on where to send \$10,000 a day for 12 days in December as we share the ways God has blessed us with others in Collin and Denton counties. Visit [www.pmlc.org/serve/12-days](http://www.pmlc.org/serve/12-days) to learn more!
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### Getting to Know You

(spend about 5-7 minutes here)

*Building personal connections is a key component of Grow Groups, and these questions will help foster deeper connections. Don't forget to introduce yourself if there are new faces in your group today.*

- *As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, what are you thankful for these days?*
  - *Also -- do you call it stuffing or dressing? :)*
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### Background Theme -- A King Like No Other

Leadership matters. When good leaders are able to motivate others to accomplish big things in life, everyone flourishes. Systems work as they are supposed to; people are clear about the work they are doing; folks get a sense of meaning and satisfaction from the work they do; and, we don't mind making sacrifices in our lives.

On the other side of the coin, when bad leaders are in places of authority and power, everyone suffers. We are unclear about our targets which makes us question how much of our effort we want to give. Infighting ensues. We rarely make sacrifices for our work. Morale plummets.

We see all the time how the quality of leadership impacts families, organizations, businesses, schools, governments (both small and big), and nations. Leadership matters.

Today, we mark the end of the church year with the celebration of Christ the King Sunday. Our claim is that Jesus is King not just of a nation or the people of the church but of the entire universe. That is a tall order! Yet, we see how Jesus is up to the challenge. He took on the forces of death and despair. He held true to his mission of grace at every turn along the way. When it looked like he suffered defeat in his death, he came back in his resurrection to show that he is the only One to be trusted with our hearts and lives. We worship an everlasting King unlike any other.

## DIVING INTO THE TEXT (Reading today is from the New Revised Standard Version translation)

### Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

**Background:** The Book of Daniel fits in the genre of apocalyptic writing. While it records stories of Daniel and his three friends during the Babylonian captivity of Israel under the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar, it's full of mystery and symbolism. This might be because of Daniel's ability to interpret dreams which often do not lend themselves to reason and logic. In this section we learn of Daniel's prophecy of a coming Ruler who will reset all things and whose rule will have no end.

+++ (Choose a person to read the following passage) +++

**9** As 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.

**10** A 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.

**13** As 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.

**14** To 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.

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- What stands out the most to you in this passage?
- What's the impact of the thought of a king who would rule over "all peoples, nations, and languages" when the traditional thought of a king is a ruler over one nation and people?
- If Jesus is your King, how do you serve him now? What does that look like in our day and age?
- What hope do we receive from the "everlasting dominion" of God?

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## Revelation 1:1-8 (Common English Bible translation)

**Background:** The letter of Revelation from John also fits into the genre of apocalyptic literature. Just as Daniel, it is full of mysticism and symbolism. There's plenty of room for interpretation, and many people have profited in our time from rather exaggerated interpretations of it. It begins, however, by asserting that Jesus is the One who has been foretold to take the place of everlasting dominion and rule over all of life. +++ Choose someone to read the following passage. +++

**1:1** A revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. Christ made it known by sending it through his angel to his servant John, **2** who bore witness to the word of God and to the witness of Jesus Christ, including all that John saw. **3** Favored is the one who reads the words of this prophecy out loud, and favored are those who listen to it being read, and keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

**4** John, to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace and peace to you from the one who is and was and is coming, and from the seven spirits that are before God's throne, **5** and from Jesus Christ—the faithful witness, the firstborn from among the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To the one who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, **6** who made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father—to him be glory and power forever and always. Amen.

**7** Look, he is coming with the clouds! Every eye will see him, including those who pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him. This is so. Amen. **8** "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the one who is and was and is coming, the Almighty." +++

- What stands out the most to you in this passage?
- "Revelation" means a lifting of the veil -- something that was hidden is now made known. What does this passage reveal to you that you might not have known before?
- We're talking a lot about dreams as messages from God today. Have you ever had a dream that you felt like was a communication from God? Are you willing to share how it helped you, or the impact it had on you?
- John is writing to the "seven churches in Asia," which is a diverse group of people. He claims that Jesus has made them into a "kingdom of priests." The significance here is that this kingdom is not located to a specific location and that people in this kingdom have the specific work of representing God to people and people back to God.
  - Do you think of yourself as a priest? (If you don't, you should. The priesthood of all believers is a very Lutheran concept. We all are commissioned in our baptisms to be God's representatives and not just a special few among us.)
  - How does this identity of priest help you understand your role in your family/neighborhood/school/work/community?
- Why will the "tribes of the earth mourn" when Jesus arrives with the clouds?
- Verse 8 is a good verse to memorize and keep close to your heart. How does it encourage your faith? +++

**Special Request:** *Who would like to facilitate this group next week?*

**Final Thoughts:** a poem to end our time today...

First Coming, by Madeleine L'Engle

He did not wait till the world was ready,  
till men and nations were at peace.  
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,  
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.  
He came when the need was deep and great.  
He dined with sinners in all their grime,  
turned water into wine. He did not wait

till hearts were pure. In joy he came  
to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.  
to a world like ours, of anguished shame  
He came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,  
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.  
in the mystery of the Word made Flesh  
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane  
to raise our songs with joyful voice,  
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,  
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

**Closing Prayer**

*Spend a few moments asking for any prayer requests, and pray over them if you have time.  
You may also opt to close with this prayer together.*

**God of love,  
as in Jesus Christ you gave yourself to us,  
so may we give ourselves to you,  
living according to your holy will.  
Keep our feet firmly in the way  
where Christ leads us;  
help our lips speak the truth  
that Christ teaches us;  
fill our bodies with the life  
that is Christ within us.  
In his holy name we pray.  
Amen.**

*Connect in Christ!*