

“Behold Your King”

3 December 2017

Little Trinity Anglican Church, Toronto

**Discussion Questions (as many as you like, in any order)**

*Read Matthew 21.1-13 and Romans 13.8-14*

1. Advent (the four Sundays before Christmas), which means “coming” or “arrival”, is traditionally a season of waiting and preparing for God. Is there anywhere in your life that you feel like you’re waiting for God? What would it look like for God to arrive?
2. The sermon uses St. Thomas Aquinas’ threefold framework for Advent: 1) that God came in the flesh as Jesus, 2) will come again as judge of all creation, and 3) constantly is coming into our lives now, by grace. Matthew 21 gives us a vision of Jesus, both in his first coming and in our lives, as the king who is a) prophesied, b) acclaimed, and c) named.
  - a. Prophesied. The people who welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem understood some of the prophecies about the Messiah – but none of them expected the cross. What/how do you think about Jesus’ second coming? Is it something you think about a lot? Sometimes? Never? What does the promise/prophecy of Jesus’ coming again mean to your life today?
  - b. Acclaimed. Jesus was greeted with the honours (cloaks and palm branches thrown on a rough road) and titles (Son of David, “blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”) of the expected King. What does his road into your life/soul look like? Practically speaking, what would you start/stop doing to honour his arrival?
  - c. Named. Jerusalem’s citizens asked, “who is this?” Share with each other who Jesus is to you. What does he look like? Sound like? Act like?
3. Advent, known as the “Little Lent”, is a season of active penitence (contrition or sorrow for things we’ve done wrong) as well as passively waiting. Why does Jesus do what he does in the Temple (Matthew 21.12-13)? What do his actions here mean for us, in light of the way we’ve read the first part of the gospel (per question 2, above)?
4. Questions about Romans 13:
  - a. “Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed” (Rom 13.11). What’s that mean? How should this affect how we think about “being saved”?
  - b. What’s it mean to think about the “now” as nighttime awaiting daybreak?
  - c. Time to get real with each other: where in your life do you “make provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires”? How would you “put on the armour of light/Lord Jesus Christ” instead?
5. What’s the main theme of this week’s Collect (congregational prayer that’s paired with Scripture readings – see below)? How’s it sync (or not!) with your take on the Scripture?

*Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.*