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Christ the Servant King

Ashram Community · 22 November 2026

KEY VERSE
Luke 23:46 — "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

READINGS
Ezekiel 34:20-26; Psalm 95; Colossians 1:9-20; Luke 23:44-49

Sunday – 22 November 2026

Context: Christ's kingship through sacrifice.

Central Message: Jesus Christ reveals His true kingship not through worldly power, domination or privilege, but through sacrificial love, humble service and obedience to the Father, bringing reconciliation and peace to the world through His death on the cross.

When we think of a king, we usually imagine someone who possesses authority, commands armies, lives in a palace and exercises power over others. Throughout history, kings have demonstrated their greatness through military victories, political influence, wealth and territorial expansion. The world often measures kingship by the power one exercises over others. But the kingship of Jesus Christ presents a completely different picture. Jesus Christ is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Yet He did not establish His kingdom through military force or political domination. He came into the world in humility, lived among ordinary people, welcomed sinners, healed the sick, washed His disciples' feet and finally surrendered His life on the cross. His throne was a cross, His crown was made of thorns, and His victory came through sacrifice. Today's theme, "Christ the Servant King," invites us to understand the unique nature of Jesus' kingship. Our readings reveal a God who cares for His people, a King who shepherds His flock, a Lord who holds all creation together and a Saviour who gives His life to reconcile humanity with God. In Luke 23, we encounter Jesus at the moment of His crucifixion. Darkness covers the land, the temple curtain is torn, and Jesus commits His spirit into the hands of the Father. What appears to be defeat becomes the revelation of divine love and the fulfilment of God's saving purpose. Let us reflect on three important dimensions of Christ's kingship.

1. Christ Is the Shepherd King Who Cares for His People

In Ezekiel 34:20–26, God speaks against irresponsible shepherds who have failed to care for His flock. Instead of protecting the sheep, they have neglected them and allowed the strong to exploit the weak. God declares that He Himself will judge between the sheep and will establish one shepherd over them, His servant David, who will care for them. This passage points towards God's promise of a righteous shepherd and king who will lead His people with justice, compassion and faithfulness. Christians see this promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep and lays down His life for them. The kingship of Jesus is first revealed through His care for people. He does not rule from a distance, indifferent to their suffering. He comes close to the brokenhearted, the poor, the sick, the rejected and those burdened by sin. He understands human suffering because He entered into our human experience. Psalm 95 invites us to worship the Lord as the great King above all gods. The depths of the earth, the heights of the mountains and the sea belong to Him. Yet this

mighty Creator is also the One who formed us and cares for us as the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. What a beautiful picture of divine kingship! The One who rules the universe is also the One who cares for each individual. His greatness is not expressed in indifference to human need, but in His willingness to guide, protect and sustain His people. Jesus demonstrated this shepherd-like kingship throughout His ministry. He welcomed children when others tried to send them away. He reached out to those suffering from diseases that isolated them from society. He ate with tax collectors and sinners. He wept with Mary and Martha at the death of Lazarus. He saw people not as instruments for His own glory but as human beings worthy of love and compassion. This challenges the way we understand leadership in the Church and society. Christian leadership is not about seeking personal honour, controlling others or demanding privileges. It is about accepting responsibility for the well-being of those entrusted to our care. Parents must shepherd their families with love. Pastors must care for their congregations with humility. Church leaders must protect the vulnerable and work for justice. Those who exercise authority must remember that their position is an opportunity to serve rather than a licence to dominate. Christ is the Shepherd King who does not sacrifice His people to preserve His power; He sacrifices Himself to save His people.

2. Christ Is the Sovereign King Who Reconciles All Things through the Cross

Colossians 1:15–20 presents one of the most magnificent descriptions of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Paul declares that Christ is “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.” All things in heaven and on earth were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. Jesus is not merely a great teacher, a prophet or a religious leader. He is the Lord of creation. His authority extends beyond nations, institutions and earthly kingdoms. Everything owes its existence to Him, and everything finds its ultimate purpose in Him. Yet Paul moves from this glorious description of Christ’s cosmic authority to the mystery of His sacrifice. Colossians 1:20 declares that through Christ, God was pleased “to reconcile to himself all things” through the blood of His cross. Here we discover the central paradox of Christian faith: the King who created all things is the same King who shed His blood to reconcile all things to God. The cross was not an accidental interruption of Jesus’ mission. It was central to His saving work. Through His death, Jesus confronted the power of sin, opened the way for forgiveness and made peace between God and humanity. In Luke 23:44–49, darkness covers the land from noon until three in the afternoon, and the curtain of the temple is torn in two. Jesus cries out, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit,” and breathes His last. These events reveal the seriousness of the moment. The death of Jesus is not simply the tragic end of an innocent man's life. It is the decisive act through which God accomplishes reconciliation. The torn curtain points to a new access to God, made possible through Christ’s sacrifice. At the cross, the world sees apparent weakness, but God reveals saving power. Jesus does not defeat His enemies by destroying them. He offers Himself in love. He does not preserve His life at the expense of humanity. He gives His life for humanity. This does not mean that the cross makes injustice acceptable or that Christians should remain silent in the face of oppression. Rather, Christ’s sacrifice exposes the cruelty of human sin and calls us to become agents of reconciliation, justice and peace. His self-giving love challenges violence, hatred, exploitation and the misuse of power. The Church must therefore proclaim Christ not merely as a King to be worshipped, but as the Saviour whose way of sacrifice must shape our lives. We cannot celebrate the cross while remaining indifferent to the suffering of others. We cannot proclaim reconciliation while nurturing hatred. We cannot follow the Servant King while using power to exploit those who are weaker than ourselves. Because Christ gave Himself for us, we are called to forgive, serve, stand with the oppressed and work towards healing broken relationships. The cross is the throne from

which Christ reveals the true character of His kingdom: a kingdom established through sacrificial love and reconciliation.

3. Christ Is the Crucified King Who Calls Us to a Life of Service

The final moments of Jesus' earthly life, as described in Luke 23:44–49, invite us to reflect on the cost of His kingship. Jesus commits His spirit into the hands of the Father. The centurion who witnesses what has happened praises God, while the crowds return home in grief and those who knew Jesus stand at a distance watching these events. The cross reveals both the cost of our salvation and the character of our King. Jesus remains obedient to the Father even in the face of suffering and death. His final words express trust, surrender and communion with God. The inscription placed above Jesus on the cross in Luke 23:38 identifies Him as the King of the Jews. The title was intended to describe the charge against Him, but it also carries a profound irony: the One who appears powerless is indeed the King, and His apparent defeat becomes the means of victory. Jesus does not exercise kingship by avoiding suffering at all costs. He enters into the suffering of the world to bring salvation. His crown of thorns reveals a King who bears the consequences of human sin. His outstretched arms reveal a love that reaches towards a broken humanity. But what does this mean for us today? To follow Christ the Servant King is to accept that Christian discipleship involves sacrifice. It means choosing love when hatred would be easier, truth when dishonesty would be profitable, forgiveness when resentment seems justified and service when personal recognition is absent. It means being willing to give our time to those who need us, share our resources with those who lack necessities, listen to those whose voices are ignored and stand beside those who suffer injustice. Service does not always require extraordinary achievements. It can begin with simple acts of faithfulness: visiting someone who is lonely, helping a family in distress, encouraging a discouraged young person, caring for an elderly neighbour or offering practical support to a person in need. The kingship of Christ also challenges our personal ambitions. We may sometimes seek recognition, titles and positions, even in the Church. But Jesus teaches us that greatness in God's kingdom is measured by our willingness to serve. A position of leadership becomes meaningful when it is used to build others up rather than elevate ourselves. At the same time, sacrificial service does not mean accepting abuse or allowing injustice to continue without challenge. Jesus' love was courageous and truthful. Following Him means serving others while also defending their dignity and standing against practices that harm them. The crucified King calls us to become a community shaped by His love. Our churches should be places where people find welcome rather than rejection, healing rather than humiliation, and hope rather than despair. When we serve the poor, reconcile enemies, care for the vulnerable and proclaim the Gospel with humility, we make the character of Christ's kingdom visible in the world. The best way to honour the Servant King is not merely to praise Him with our lips, but to reflect His sacrificial love through our lives.

Conclusion

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our readings reveal the extraordinary nature of Jesus' kingship. Ezekiel presents the promise of a shepherd who cares for God's flock. Psalm 95 calls us to worship the great King and Creator. Colossians proclaims Christ as the Lord of creation who reconciles all things through the blood of His cross. And Luke leads us to Calvary, where Jesus surrenders His life into the hands of the Father. Christ is the Servant King. He rules through love, leads through service and conquers through sacrifice. His cross is not a symbol of failure but the supreme revelation of God's love and the foundation of our reconciliation with Him. Let us therefore examine our own

understanding of greatness and leadership. Are we seeking to dominate others or to serve them? Are we using our gifts for personal glory or for God's kingdom? Are we willing to make sacrifices for the well-being of others? May we never separate the crown of Christ from His cross. The King we worship is the Saviour who gave Himself for us, and the Lord we follow calls us to walk in the same spirit of humble, courageous and sacrificial love. Let us worship Him as King, trust Him as Saviour and follow Him as Lord. And may our homes, churches and communities become places where the love and justice of His kingdom are experienced by all. Christ is our King - not because He demanded that others sacrifice themselves for Him, but because He sacrificed Himself for us. May we live in the light of His cross, serve in the spirit of His love and proclaim His kingdom through our words and actions. Amen.