

Daniel 7:13-14  
November 25, 2018 – CHRIST THE KING

## True Worship

- ✦ Comes with Christ (v.13)
- ✦ Spreads His kingdom (v.14)

In the name of the Ancient of Days and His Son our King, dear thankful Christians:

Isn't it odd how quickly some folks can mess things up. Two young men were waiting for a cement truck to pour their first foundation. Twenty minutes before it arrived, one convinced the other to cut the bands holding the bottom of the forms together. The cement poured in and blew out the forms. Fortunately the kind truck driver came back later and didn't charge for the failed first load. That was the time I told my brother, "If ever I come up with a bright idea like that again, don't listen to me."

Do you ever just thank God for being in charge of your life? God sees the end from the beginning. He predicts history, then guides and directs events as His-story. Marvel how all comes down to the cross and the empty tomb. It's not just that God has the power. He always acts in wisdom and love. ***"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."*** (Romans 8:28 NIV84) To acknowledge this in the midst of your trials is **True Worship**.

### ✦ Comes with Christ (v.13)

How many in our cold society believe all this? In these Last Days they're so sure that God does not exist, so proud of their own accomplishments, they think they can control the climate if given enough power. Advertisements say so from companies unexpected. Worship of self is sensible to humankind.

Counter culture Christians are students of the world's oldest written records with huge advantages. Maybe friends try to throw you off by demanding you prove the Bible. Like telling a five-year-old to prove stealth bombers and space ships. Knowledge flows from God above. Unfortunately, you can't know what you don't know. It's why so many Christians attend Bible class to listen, ask, learn.

God gives trials and heartaches to show what we're missing. Proud mockers force us to answer questions we might otherwise never ask. Pray for the question you can't answer as an opening for next time: "I'll look into that and get back to you." And all the while you're seeking answers in God's Word, you are wrapped up in **True Worship**. Whom will you believe – human critics or almighty God?

Our text this last Sunday of the Church Year, CHRIST THE KING, happened a few years before God delivered Daniel from the lions' den. He's been watching a night vision of a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a powerful fierce beast, followed by a little horn with a big mouth and tons of attitude. He's seeing history unfold in the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, then Roman Empires, major enemies of God's Church on earth. The timespan is so long that Bible critics trip up trying to explain how any but a God-inspired author could write of future events without direct help from God. Daniel sees God as ***"the Ancient of Days"*** seated on a throne. ***"His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened."*** He sees God destroy His enemies in blazing fire and strip empires of power. (Daniel 7:9–12 NIV84) And some folks think the Bible is boring!

We have to keep watching with Daniel to see where **True Worship** comes from. Otherwise, you end up worshiping yourself until you run out of breath and your last heartbeat. Who will help then? What will you do in the end? Why wait until too late to ask questions whose answers are revealed?

With wide eyed wonder Daniel keeps looking at the visions supplied by God and reporting in the Holy Spirit's own inspired narrative. The Lord's prophet is surrounded by fantastic images of frightening beasts representing powerful empires about to rise and fall. Everywhere he turns his amazed gaze the sight jolts the core of his being like a powerful shockwave as Daniel pulls us along, calling, "Look!...Look!...Look!" The Holy Spirit saves the best for last when finally Daniel writes, "***I kept watching the night visions, and there, in the clouds of heaven, I saw one like a son of man coming. He came to the Ancient of Days, and he was brought before him.***" (EHV<sup>1</sup>)

If you're thinking this must be the Messiah, the Christ of God, you're right. Do you know that "Son of Man" was Jesus' favorite title for Himself? It connects Jesus to this famous prophecy of Daniel while at the same time identifying with our struggles here below. Inescapable, absolute truth whether anyone believes it or not: **True Worship – Comes with Christ.** God, *the Ancient of Days*, won't have it any other way because the Messiah is also the Son of God. What He's about to receive in heaven's throne room gives life true focus, true purpose, a noble and glorious end – which is only the beginning.

### ✦ **Spreads His kingdom (v.14)**

Wouldn't you keep watching to see this? "***To him was given dominion, honor, and a kingdom. All peoples, nations, and languages will worship him. His dominion is an eternal dominion what will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.***"

How many major powers can you remember from recent history? Saddam Hussein was planning to rebuild the Babylonian Empire. Rockets out of North Korea were aimed at rattling windows and hearts in the West. Engineered military might was crippled by paranoia in the Nazis' Fuhrer who would not listen to his generals. The Soviet Empire fell without a shot. No nation survives defying God.

Only one Kingdom lasts. How strange its Leader bloodied, beaten on His way to crucifixion, before an official of the Roman Empire. Daniel saw it coming in the fourth beast. Roman Governor Pontius Pilate demanded, "***You are a king then!***" "***My kingdom is not of this world....I am, as you say, a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.***" (John 18:36f EHV) Jesus' kingdom conquers rockets, mortars, tanks, fighter jets, and pride in stubborn hearts like ours by Word and sacrament. His peace ends war between us sinners and the Holy One by washing away sin, making us holy in His sight.

Evidence of His rule is clear in answered prayer. A classmate, chaplain wrote: "Nearly every time I conduct a Bible class at Racine Correctional Institution somebody will pray at the end of class for 'traveling mercies for Brother Phil.' I usually take those prayers for granted. But God doesn't. One night last summer as I left the prison and got back on my motorcycle to ride home, the rain started. No big deal, I thought. I've ridden in rain before. But then it really started pouring. As I turned onto the freeway, the downpour was so strong, I couldn't see the road. I tried following taillights, but often I would lose them. Finally I pulled off the highway at a gas station and sat under the canopy. I caught my breath and wondered what to do next as the rain kept pouring down. Someone hollered, 'Hey, are you heading for Milwaukee?' I turned, and there was a guy with an empty motorcycle trailer behind his car. He took me and my bike to the front door of my house. That's known as 'traveling mercies.' And that's the kind of thing that happens when you pray to a God who loves answering his people's prayers." <sup>2</sup>

Why listen to God? Because in great kindness and invincible power God listens to us. The better you know Him, the more eagerly you grow in **True Worship** that **Spreads His kingdom.** His weapons give life, freedom from fear, pride, prejudice. King Jesus puts God's justice on our side by bringing us over to His side. God speed the Day when night visions turn to sight in glory everlasting. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Evangelical Heritage Version (EHV) © 2017 The Wartburg Project. [www.wartburgproject.org](http://www.wartburgproject.org). NPH (800-662-6022).

<sup>2</sup> Chaplain Phil Merten. "Prayers of God's People," *Compassion*, Fall 2006. Subscribe at [wlim@wlim.net](mailto:wlim@wlim.net) or [www.wlim.net](http://www.wlim.net). For *The Preacher's Apprentice (TPA)* sermon study or copies: [m.cordes@comast.net](mailto:m.cordes@comast.net). New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church You can also call: 651-484-1169. Hear the sermon at [www.wels.us/newlife](http://www.wels.us/newlife). 180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126