

Christ the King

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[0 : 0 0] You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.

Worship this morning's holy gospel in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. As we read scripture, we easily see the language of war is used throughout them.

It is impossible to miss. From Genesis chapter 14, when Abraham battled with the five kings, through Revelation chapter 19, when Christ returns and battles the kings and nations of the earth, we see and we hear the language of war.

It is inescapable. In Exodus chapter 15, verse 3, as Moses surveyed the bodies of the dead Egyptians that had washed up onto the shore of the Red Sea, he cried out, The Lord is a man of war.

The Lord is his name. In 2 Samuel chapter 7, verses 12 and 13, we learn it is David, a man of war, that is the man after God's own heart, and who inherits the covenant made with Abraham.

[1 : 1 7] The Maccabees, who were Levitical priests, defended the holy ground of Jerusalem by going to war against the Greeks and Romans, even suspending the Sabbath rest to do so.

In St. Matthew chapter 10, verse 34, Jesus told the twelve, Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

And in Gethsemane, he said to them, But now he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack. And he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

Again, this is the language of war. I could give many more examples, but I will only give one more since we read it, we read it, I'm sorry, this past Tuesday in morning prayer, and so it should be fresh in our minds.

2 Timothy chapter 2, verses 3 through 5 states, You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

[2 : 2 3] No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life. And he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

We tend to see Jesus' life, ministry, and death in a very antiseptic way. We don't see it as spiritual warfare.

But Jesus was always about his father's business. His mission was to overcome sin, Satan, and death in order to redeem the world.

To accomplish his mission, he suffered. He bled. And he died upon the cross. There was nothing antiseptic about it.

As Christus Victor, our king overcame his enemies and ours. We, the church, are now on the mop-up mission of pulling down strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

- [3 : 40] We must be fully about our king's business. My brothers and sisters, you and I are soldiers of Jesus Christ.
- We are men of war. We were enlisted, actually adopted, into his army at baptism. We are in his army, the church militant, under Jesus Christ, our king.
- On the day of our adoption, our baptism, our souls and bodies were bought with a price. We are not our own. No true soldier is.
- Yes, we can get out of this army. We can desert it. Then we know the price of desertion. The wages of sin is death.
- Of course, though, we want to be true to our enlistment. We want to be the soldiers that Jesus has called us to be. On the day we are taken from the battlefield, we want to hear, Well done, good and faithful servant.
- [4 : 53] You have been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord. But how?
- How do we live as good and faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, our king? To do so, we need to understand what our mission actually is.
- As we understand the mission, we can execute the battle plan. Those good works, which God has prepared in advance for us to walk in.
- The mission of the church is laid out for us in the New Testament. It begins with Jesus' great commission to go. We are to take up the apostolic mantle that began in Jerusalem on Pentecost and bring Christ to people and people to Christ in this place, in our day, as they did in theirs.
- As we read the apostolic writings, we learn the war for souls has two fronts. The war within ourselves and the war within the church.
- [6 : 07] To be effective soldiers, we must first submit to and remain under the light and easy yoke of Christ. If we don't, we will lose the war within us.
- We must be soldiers that pray and study scripture daily, receive the Eucharist at least weekly, confess our sins daily, and receive sacramental absolution consistently.
- We must add to our faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.
- We must give shelter to the strangers, wash the saints' feet, relieve the afflicted, and diligently follow after every good work.
- As we live in this manner, we become crucified with Christ and realize the life that we now live, we live by the faith of the Son of God.
- [7 : 11] And as we become mastered by Christ, we can then turn our attention to the second front in the war for souls, the war within the church.
- In 2 Timothy chapter 4, verses 3 and 4, St. Paul warns of a time when Christians will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers, they will find for themselves teachers, and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables.
- We live in these very days. There is any number of false shepherds who teach Christianity as a means of self-improvement, or have wholly bought into the spirit of the age, the woke culture, critical race theory, all those things we hear about in the news headlines.
- Others teach that what is good is actually evil, and what is evil is actually good. The faithful, the true church militant, you and I, must stand against these heretics and heresies.
- Our parish and our Anglican province must yield no ground to them. As the laity, you need to involve yourselves more deeply into the life of this outpost of the church to build it up.

- [8 : 43] It is a fortress for you and for all who sincerely seek Christ our King in the midst of hostile territory. We recall those who in Nehemiah's day worked to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem with a trowel in one hand and their sword in the other.
- They did not leave the work to the professionals and a few others. Everyone did their part. They knew their very spiritual lives were at stake.
- And so are ours. Do we realize it? Now some would say there's a third front to this war, the war with the culture.
- But we will never impact the culture, not even scratch its surface, if we are not first successful in the war within ourselves and within the church.
- They are the two fronts. We need to focus our prayers and our efforts on. If we are not holy, meaning set apart for God to use, and the church is not holy, the culture will never be holy.
- [9 : 58] This has been the great failure of the church these past 50 or so years. We've trusted politics to do what the church must do upon her knees.
- As we remain faithful to Christ our King, we will become the objects of the culture's wrath. Some may be canceled. Some may have their jobs taken from them.
- Access to goods and services may be limited. They may take more than that. We must continue to stand for Christ our King.
- Revelation chapter 12 verse 11 states, Jesus said, He who finds his life will lose it, but he who loses his life for my sake will find it.
- What are we willing to lose? What are we willing to lose in order to find? We must be fully committed to the war for souls.
- [11 : 09] Brothers and sisters, there is a reason why the language of war is used throughout Scripture. It is used because in this world there is only one place of peace.
- That place is within the life and within the body of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, the King. And until he returns, there will only be war upon this earth, the war for souls.
- And you and I have been enlisted to be good and faithful soldiers, ready, willing, and active in the fight. May he use us mightily.
- And then you are the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.