

One planned on making his horse a senator (Caligula). Another loved to sing but was so bad at it that he had to post guards to keep people from leaving the room when he performed (Nero). And still another dressed in a lion skin and carried a club because he fancied himself the Greek god Hercules (Commodus). The emperors of Rome, like kings from every age and nation, could be downright silly. We should count our blessings that our leaders today aren't nearly as zany. But even if our mayor was a Caligula, our premier a Nero, and our prime minister a Commodus, it wouldn't matter because Christ, our savior, is king supreme. He rules over all creation for all those bound for salvation. Today, on this Christ the King Sunday, let us, "Crown Him As Lord of All!"

The Christians of Colosse, a city in present day Turkey, needed to hear that their Jesus was king supreme. False teachers had infiltrated their midst suggesting that believing in Jesus wasn't enough for salvation. That was too easy. A higher wisdom was needed to be a complete Christian. They encouraged the keeping of Old Testament laws like circumcision, dietary laws, and the observance of OT holidays. They also suggested that the Colossians worship angels. To make sure that the Colossians understood why Christ was all they needed for salvation the Apostle Paul wrote the words of our lesson.

We live in a culture today that doesn't think much of Jesus or worshipping Him. When you go home, and you notice that your next door neighbor didn't go to church this morning, and you know he didn't go last night – that next door neighbor is basically saying to you, "Jesus Christ isn't worth worshipping. You should stay home." When some of the local sports teams set up their events so that you can't attend church on a Sunday, they're basically saying to you, "Jesus Christ isn't worth worshipping – you should play sports instead." When you go to the store after church, and you are surrounded by people who didn't worship Christ this morning or last night, those people are basically saying to you, "Jesus Christ isn't worth worshipping – you should go shopping instead."

Are they right? Is Jesus Christ really not worth going through all the trouble of worshipping? Let's look at how he is described in our second lesson for this morning, from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians, chapter one. There the Apostle Paul tells us why we worship Jesus Christ.

We worship him, first of all, because he is our God, and he is our Maker. Vs. 15 talks about he is the image of the invisible God. All the fullness of God dwells in him, verse 19 says. Jesus isn't just "like God" or teaches us "about God." Jesus Christ is God. Everything you ever wanted to know about God - if you have any questions in your mind about what God is like, what kinds of things would he say and do – everything you want to know about God can be found in Jesus Christ. He is God, through and through. The Christmas song, "Mary Did You Know" has a line that says, Mary did you know when you kissed your little baby, you kissed the face of God."

He's also our Maker. Verse 16 tells us that by him, all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities, all things were created by him and for him. Have you ever pictured Jesus as the creator of everything you see? When you look at a beautiful sunset, do you say to yourself, "Jesus made that sunset"? When you're looking out over the lake, do you take into account that Jesus made that beautiful lake? All things were created by him, and for him. The materials that make up your house, the food you eat, the medicine you take – all things were created by him and for him. As you sit listening to this sermon your human heart is busy pumping blood, 1500 gallons a day, through 60,000 of miles of blood

vessels, feeding and nourishing each cell. What a King we have in Jesus, the creator of all things. Verse 17: “He is before all things, and in him, all things hold together.”

According to these words, Jesus holds together our world. The sun and earth saty in their respective locations, because Jesus holds it together. Without him, everything would fall apart. That’s why we worship him.

Have you ever had your identity stolen? Someone claims to be you, takes your money? Jesus Christ has had his identity stolen. Here we learn that he is the reason our world exists. But someone has stolen his identity, and that someone is named “evolution.” Evolution says, “Jesus didn’t make the world. I did. God is a far-away mystery in the sky. As far as this world is concerned, everything has happened by chance. Gorillas have evolved into people. Yes, the earth is the exact distance it needs to be from the sun – but that’s all by accident. The world keeps going - that’s all by chance. I’m evolution. Believe me. Don’t believe Jesus. He’s not your Maker. He doesn’t hold the world together, and he’s not worth worshiping. Believe me, and then you can stay home on Sunday.”

As Christians, we don’t believe that. We believe that all things were created by Christ and for Christ. That’s why we worship him. And that’s not the only reason. The next verse tells us that Christ is the head of the church. Isn’t that comforting to know? The Christian Church always looks like it’s on the verge of falling apart. Some denominations are riddled with scandal. Others have financial problems. Churches all over the country are trying to figure out how to keep their attendances up. It always looks like the Christian church is in the process of falling apart. But Christ is the head of the church, the firstborn from among the dead. In spite of all of its problems, Christianity will continue to exist, all the way until Judgment Day, when Jesus raises his people from the dead. That’s why we worship him. He’s our God, our Creator. And he’s also the head of the Church.

And finally and most importantly, we believe that Jesus Christ is worth worshiping because he is our “peace-maker. The last verse of our lesson talks about how God the Father “reconciled to himself all things, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” There is no other king like Jesus this way. People are always striving to make peace in this world. Some world leaders do that through the use of force – we’ve seen that in the Middle East. If there are people causing trouble, disturbing the peace, we use force to stop them. Sometimes that works in this world. But that’s not what Jesus did when he came into this world. As King of Heaven, he had at his disposal thousands of angels, the most powerful army ever gathered. But Jesus didn’t use force to make peace between us and God.

Some world leaders try to make peace by influencing and negotiating. We’ve seen that in the Middle East too. Let’s make peace. Let’s sign a deal with a terrorist nation IRAN so they don’t make a nuclear bomb. We’ll drop off millions of dollars in cash if they just abide by a few regulations. Let’s negotiate. But when Jesus came, that’s not what he did. There was nothing to negotiate. Our world was sinful, and that wasn’t going to change. And God is holy and always punishes sin, and that’s not going to change either. Negotiating wouldn’t work.

And so how does one make peace? People in our world are recognized for their efforts at making peace. Every year, the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to people who stand up for human rights, who clear land mines, who negotiate. But the biggest, and the

hardest thing to do, is to somehow make peace between a sinful world and a holy God. But how? Jesus did it – look at verse 20: “through his blood, shed on the cross.” As we saw in our Gospel lesson, the whole world mocked him as he did this. He didn’t receive any type of awards.

But what he did worked. On the third day, he was raised from the dead, a sign that his sacrifice was accepted. The sins of the world – were forgiven. God’s holy judgment – already carried out. Unlike any other king or world leader in history, Jesus did the impossible. God the Father no longer plans to punish you for your sins. All that has been finished, at the cross. You are forgiven.

Do you remember those 33 Chilean miners who were trapped 2000 feet down in the darkness of the earth after their mine collapsed? There was no way they could rescue themselves by digging their way out. They had to depend on other people to drill holes down to where they were trapped to provide them with food and water, and eventually a hole large enough to rescue them. Such was our spiritual condition without Jesus. We are without God and without hope. We are totally dependent on God to rescue us. Jesus our King did what we could not do. We are out of the darkness.

That’s why we worship him. Yes, he is our God – all the fullness of God dwells in him. Yes, he is our Maker. Everything we see and have comes from him. He is the head of the Church, that is true. But most importantly, he is our Peace-Maker, and he is our Savior. He’s the reason you can close your eyes at night and pray to God, and have the comfort of knowing that God is listening. He’s the reason you don’t have to be afraid to die. He’s the reason God blesses your life, guides you and takes care of you. There is peace between you and your God – Jesus has given that to you, through his blood, shed on the cross. And so we worship him.

Every single person in the world worships a king. For some, their king is money. For others, their king is entertainment. For many, their king is themselves. I worship me. Your king is greater than all of that. Your King is Jesus **Christ**. What he has done, what he is doing, and what he will do someday – these are the reasons we worship him. And we’re glad to do it. There’s nothing more we’d rather do. Amen.