



**ADVENT MIDWEEK 3
DECEMBER 16, 2009
HIS THRONE**

Advent is a time of preparation. It is the season that is set aside for us to ponder the greatness of our Lord—the miracle of the incarnation; begotten of His Father before all worlds. He is the Word now made flesh; the Word which speaks all life into being.

Advent is the time to think about the infant but also the man. Advent reminds us who this Jesus of Nazareth is and what His life and ministry were about. This was a child conceived in the throne of the Virgin's womb, who died in our frail flesh that He might sit upon the throne crowned in glory.

Oh, to be the king! Even for just one day. Think of the pomp and power, the prestige and wealth. Oh, to be served! How we would welcome that! But kingdoms rise and fall: imperial and personal. The kingdoms of this world: private or political, powerful or puny, do not stand forever. Ours will not either.

Jesus was not the king the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were awaiting. They wanted one who was strong, mighty, and powerful. They wanted one who would rise to political power. They wanted one who would bring wealth and riches to the nations. They found none of this in Jesus.

What sort of King is born in a dirty stable to peasant parents? What sort of King calls fishermen and tax collectors to be His disciples? What sort of King goes to a Samaritan woman and forgives her sins? What sort of King kneels down with an adulterous woman and challenges the Pharisees and Sadducees to acknowledge their own sin? What sort of a King is Jesus?

Jesus is not the King that the world is looking for. In a day and age of self-help books, quick fixes, and easy solutions, no one wants to talk about real problems and real solutions. Sin, death, and the devil have become naughty words. *Why do we need Jesus when we can fix ourselves and the world around us?*

The truth is we cannot fix ourselves or the world around us. The harder we try to fix things, the worse they seem to become. Left to ourselves, we will surely die. Jesus was the King that the dying world had to have. There was no other way than the way that Jesus walked.

He was the King who cared enough to leave His throne in heaven to take on the flesh of a man. He was the King who would give life to the dead. He was the King that healed every disease and cast out demons. He was the King that the world needed.

And He was clearly our King, clearly our Jesus, in those moments when the world would see His weakness.

A King when He was led before Pilate. A King when the soldiers beat Him with a whip. A King when the crowds taunted and jeered Him. A King when they mocked Him, putting a crown of thorns on His head, a staff in His hand and a purple robe on His back. A King when He carried His cross. A King when He forgave the sins of the thief and promised him eternal life. A King when He cried and out to His Father in pain and anguish and gave up His Spirit.

The world will see the last days of Jesus as far from kingship. But there was no other way to save a dying world. The King had to do the unthinkable. The King had to die. That is why our Advent King came not with pomp, power, prestige, and possessions but to show His great love. Not to be served but to serve us in His suffering and death.

Because of the kind of King that Jesus is, we should not be surprised with the kind of kingdom He has established. His kingdom is not of this world. This earth and this life are only the beginning, not the end. We are told to be in the world but not of the world. For our home is in the kingdom of heaven, where there will be no more death.

As you read Luther's catechism, you make an amazing discovery. The catechism is no do-it-yourself manual. Rather, as Christians we are taught to pray and live as baptized children of the King. And as His children, we know that our King delights in bringing His gifts to His people still today: In the voice of your pastor granting you forgiveness as from the mouth of Christ Himself. Through the life-giving waters of Holy Baptism, claiming you as the Father's own child and bringing you into His kingdom. Bread and wine, now body and blood, for us Christians to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

Oh, to be the King? Even for just one day. Think of the pomp and power, the prestige and possessions. No, not to be the King. But to know the heavenly King and to know that through His suffering and death, through His Holy Sacraments, He continues daily to call each one of us to be kings with Him. Amen.