



## *The Prince of Peace Reigns*

*Luke 23:33-43*

*“Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”*

*November 20, 2016*

## **Thoughts for the Week**

**Scriptures: 2 Samuel 5:1-3, Colossians 1: 12-20, Luke 23: 35-43**

The scriptures that describe Jesus’ passion and death make it very clear that he did not choose the word “king” to describe himself or his work. It is very clear, however, that Jesus preached about a kingdom, not his kingdom but the kingdom of God the Father. The Latin title, “This is the King of the Jews,” that hung over Jesus’ head on the cross was placed there by some Roman official to annoy the Jewish hierarchy, the scribes and Pharisees.

So, if Jesus himself refused to accept the title king and insisted that his kingdom was not like those kingdoms of this world, what shall we call him? How shall we name him? Let’s name him “Shepherd” because we can find countless places in the gospels where Jesus uses that title and where he calls his disciples the “sheep of my pasture.” Jesus also describes himself as one who gives his life for his sheep. Moreover, he severely criticizes the Jewish leaders whom he calls false shepherds. None are described as leaders who will give their lives for their sheep.

If one chooses to consult the history of royalty around the world, it seems clear that kings and queens often have a sorry record; they are ultimately more concerned about titles and power than about service to those who depend upon them for the necessities of human life. Sadly, there is something about titles that tends to contradict the very notion of leadership as service.

Let it also be said that the title, Jesus as shepherd, is a metaphor that can be used to describe all of us in God’s kingdom. We are invested with the power of service in one another’s behalf. Yes, I will admit that we all like titles because they seem to make us feel important, imagining that we somehow stand above one another. Too bad for that!

Now, I obviously have no idea what pastors, priests & ministers around the world will be saying in their homilies this Sunday, but if they have first consulted the scriptures beforehand they will steer clear of words like kings and kingship and stick with the only title a Jesus ever chose for himself: “Shepherd of the flock.”

# Quotes on Peace

A smile is the beginning of peace.

*Mother Teresa*

End each day with thoughts of peace. Begin each day with thoughts of peace. Continue thinking thoughts of peace throughout your precious day and happiness will be yours.

*Anonymous*

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek but a means by which we arrive at that goal.

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Let loose of what you can't control. Serenity will be yours.

*Anonymous*

It isn't enough to talk about peace, one must believe it. And it isn't enough to believe in it, one must work for it.

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

Year by year the complexities of this world grow more bewildering, and so each year we need all the more to seek peace and comfort in joyful simplicities.

*Anonymous*

## Stewardship Thought

*What I'm trying to do here is get you to relax,  
not be so preoccupied with getting,  
so you can respond to God's giving.*

*People who don't know God  
and the way he works fuss over these things,  
but YOU know God and how he works.*

*Immerse yourself in God-reality,  
God-initiative, and God-provisions.  
You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.  
Don't be afraid of missing out.*

*The Father wants to give you the very kingdom itself. Be generous.  
Give to the poor. Get yourselves a bank that can't go bankrupt,  
a bank in heaven far from bank robbers, safe from embezzlers,  
a bank you can count on. It's obvious, isn't it?*

*The place where your treasure is,  
is the place you will most want to be, and end up being.*

*Luke 12:29-34 (Message interpretation)*