

## Scripture Reading: John 1

**“1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His [c]own, and His [d]own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”**

# **“The Comings of Jesus”**

**Here at Church of the King we strongly believe that the gathered Saints are blessed and empowered each week as we lift up our hearts & voices together in worship! We believe that we are convicted, forgiven, instructed, strengthened and encouraged as we hear the Scriptures expounded in preaching and gather around the Lord’s Table:**

- **Blessings that are commonly called Word & Sacrament.**

**We focus on expositional preaching which means taking the Scriptures verse by verse.**

- **There are also times and seasons where we preach on particular subjects or seasons and this morning will be such a sermon!**

**We are celebrating the first Sunday of advent and I want us to consider the important role that advent plays in our remembrance of the Church calendar & how it reminds us of the importance of Jesus being at the center of all history!**

- **In Revelation, Jesus proclaims Himself to be the Alpha & the Omega:  
The beginning and the end!**

**-- Jesus, as the Son of God created all there is, including mankind in His own image.**

**-- Jesus, as the incarnate Son of Man, redeemed His people and all of creation at the cross.**

**-- Jesus now reigns forever as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!**

- **This is what fallen man in their darkness have rejected and this is what we, as faithful servants of Christ, must affirm and believe!**

**So, this morning I want to again briefly review how the church calendar teaches and reminds us that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega and consider the centrality of Jesus in all of history.**

- **Our practice has been to try and have a proper focus on the church calendar without having a slavish devotion to it.**

**You can find resources that have prayers and colors and robes and readings for just about every Sunday, or even every day of the year...**

**But sadly, in most of the Churches where you would find an abundance of such things, they have left Jesus far behind. This was the case with the Pharisees and Sadducees which Jesus encountered in His earthly ministry:**

- **They knew all the details and procedures of the Scriptures and yet failed to recognize the very deliverer that God sent into their midst who was foretold by those same Scriptures!**
- **We certainly do not want to follow that sad tradition!**

**However, just because something can be abused is no reason for us to ignore or avoid a practice that can build our faith and the faith of our children. If you doubt the importance of remembering certain days & seasons, just consider how the world is now working to destroy our nation and culture: We should note that Halloween and Earth Day have become more and more prominent, while the Christian holidays are almost eliminated... Easter has become spring break. Pentecost is a distant memory and even Mother's Day & Father's day are seen as offensive in many circles. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July and Columbus Day are being replaced with genocide remembrance. Thanksgiving has been absorbed into Black Friday and Christmas is just a winter holiday to get lots and lots of gifts.**

- **As a culture changes, so do its holidays and remembrances!**
- **Thus we try each year to focus on the major elements of the Church calendar to remind us that All of history revolves around Jesus.**

**Last week we came to the close of ordinary time and now we have Advent which is both the beginning the end of our Church calendar. Jesus is the beginning and the end of history: The first and the last or the Alpha and Omega. The Bible tells us of Jesus coming as the creator of the heavens & the earth!**

- **Our morning text reveals how Jesus comes at the center of history to redeem His people and to bring forth the New Creation.**

**AND the Bible teaches that Jesus will come again at the end of the age to judge the living and the dead.**

**So, it is proper in the season of Advent to remember that Jesus came as the Savior of the world AND that Jesus will come again as the final judge of all the world.**

- **Thus Advent is both the beginning & the end of the Church calendar year.**

**Our annual journey begins at the beginning with the incarnation of Christ:**

- **Remembering as John does in our text that Jesus is the very Word of God who created all there is and is now the One Who comes to us in the flesh.**

**From Epiphany Sunday until Psalm Sunday we remember the earthly ministry of Jesus: Epiphany means manifestation and just as the Magi came to see the new born King, we long to learn more and more about the life of Jesus year after year!**

**With Palm Sunday we enter what is called Holy Week:**

- **Remembering that Jesus entered Jerusalem to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.**
- **Coming at His appointed time!**

**Jesus is rejected by the religious leaders and executed by the Romans demonstrating the truth that Paul rightly declares in Romans chapter 3:**

- **That BOTH the Jews & Gentiles stand guilty before our Holy God.**

**However, on Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday we learn that what Satan and the world meant for evil, God intended from eternity past for good as the penalty for sin is paid and the wrath of God satisfied at the cross!**

- **God then demonstrated the power of this redemption by raising Jesus from the dead: The first-fruit of the Godly harvest to come.**

**Jesus spends another forty days with His disciples on earth instructing them and giving them the Great Commission. On Ascension Sunday we remember that Jesus has ascended to the Father's right hand in heaven where He rules until all the nations of the earth are subdued and the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth.**

**This is another important coming of Christ! Many today put that rule somewhere in the future, but we should listen carefully to what Daniel tells us: 7:13 "Behold [I saw], One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed."**

- **We will know revival has happened when that Day is remembered by our nation in the same way we used to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July!**

**With Pentecost Sunday we remember how this great task given in the Great Commission is to be accomplished:**

- **The Spirit of God, the Comforter Jesus promised, descends upon the Church giving them the power & courage they will need.**

**With eyes to see, we saw the Book of Acts as the story of how the Spirit of God is bringing glory to the Son by filling the earth with His Kingdom.**

- **We then begin what is called ordinary or normal time in the Church calendar with Trinity Sunday, the first Sunday after Pentecost.**

**On that Sunday, our focus is on the Triune nature of our great God, learning about His Nature and remembering that each person of the Trinity is intimately involved in our salvation.**

**The weeks of ordinary time are then counted from this Sunday until the Sunday before Advent:**

**To be honest when I first began to consider the importance of the Church calendar, I thought this amounted to a big gap in the whole process!**

- **I thought, what, did they just run out of things to focus on after Pentecost?**

**As I have studied and practiced these things over the years I have come to realize that ordinary time is a vital part of our remembrance:**

**It is in these weeks, just as it is with the days, weeks and years of our lives, where we learn the importance of obeying the commands of Jesus, day by day, week by week and year by year all the days of our lives!**

- **It should be where we learn to take seriously His admonition: IF you love Me, keep my commandments!**
- **Thus, when we come again to Advent, we should understand how it is both the beginning and the end of our Church calendar.**

**Coming at the end of our ordinary time each year, we remember the promise of Jesus, that He will come at the end of time as the just judge of the living and the dead.**

**As we learn from the parable of the wheat and tares, the weeds will be gathered up and burned:**

- **The wicked will be judged and removed.**

And we as His Saints will also face a purifying judgment that Paul alludes to in I Corinthians chapter three: “7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase... 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

- The Apostle then reminds us of the importance of our actions in the ordinary or normal events and actions in our lives as His servants!

12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”

- Thus, having moved from the beginning to the end, we prepare to begin at the beginning again as we celebrate of the season of Advent in anticipation of the joy of Christmas!

We move through this year after year to help us remember that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega:

- The beginning and the end!
- We must remember that this is true for all of history and should be true in all of our lives.
- All of us here at Church of the King along with our covenant children who have been baptized are called upon to live as those who bear the name of Jesus!

I want to take just a moment to consider what that means... The Bible begins with these familiar words:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

The Apostle Paul in writing to the Saints at Colossi reminds us of the importance of this for our lives: “13 [The Father] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.”

Jesus is the creator of time and space! We are reminded of this in the opening verses of John's Gospel where we read, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God!”

- Jesus as God existed before the beginning of time...
- And thus only He can rightly claim to be the Alpha and Omega!

Thus, Jesus is present at the beginning of history and Jesus comes at what many consider the center of history:

- As John goes on to say at verse 14, “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us!”
- Because of the penalty and gravity of sin, God must become man to save man!

Jesus comes to offer Himself as the perfect obedient man and as the very Son of God with the power to take upon Himself the wrath due for all of our sins.

- Jesus comes to earth to save His people from their sins and to bring forth the New Creation.

**It is always good to remember the big picture of history:**

- **We have creation and fall and the decline of mankind from the garden to the cross.**
- **We have New Creation and redemption and advance of the Kingdom from the resurrection to the White Throne judgment.**

**This view of history stands in stark contrast with the view presented by the rebellious men of today...**

- **They replace the glorious creation of Jesus with evolution and deny the fall of man into sin.**

**Rather than decline, they see mankind moving from the primitive to the more advanced.**

**They deny that Jesus was a real man and that men were in need of a Savior. Rather they believe that the advance of man will come through his own wisdom and knowledge:**

- **The great lie of the garden and of the enlightenment, which sadly pervades almost all modern thinking today.**

**They deny the Light of the World and turn to their own lesser lights...**

- **And this truth can be seen in our contrasting calendars!**

**As John proclaimed: “10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.”**

**As we obey the Great Commission we must confront such unbelief with the power of the Gospel both in word and in deed:**

- **We must proclaim the truth and we must live the truth!**

**We should do so with great confidence because John understood that God from eternity past had chosen those who would hear and respond!**

**John goes on to proclaim:**

**12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”**

- **May we always remember that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega!**

**Communion Meditation: II Kings 23**

**“22 Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. 23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the Lord in Jerusalem. 24 Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord.”**