



The Cross on the Table

A sermon for Christ the King Sunday¹

Twelfth and final sermon in the Fall sermon series, "Taking Jesus Seriously"

Colossians 1:11-20

Reign of Christ Sunday ~ Sunday, November 24th, 2019

First Federated Church of Peoria, Illinois

The Rev. Dr. Forrest Krummel, Jr.

Text: May you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.

(vss. 11b & 12)

A woman was going through some old boxes when she came across a crucifix. It as a gift that someone had given to her in college many years before. It brought back many memories. Although she wasn't Roman Catholic she hung it above her bed in the dorm room. Each night it was a silent witness. At the end of a bad day it reminded her that she was not alone. It reminded her of Jesus' promise, Lo, I am with you always, even to the close of the age. At the end of a particularly good day it reminded her to be thankful. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, it seemed to say. She became a teacher, one that was gifted and successful. She liked touching the future by investing in the lives of her students.

After graduation, though, she packed the crucifix away and simply forgot about it. Years passed. The bronze-colored coating on Jesus had largely flaked away over the years. The wooden cross had faded a bit, too. Looking at that crucifix and reflecting upon the memories that it stirred within her, she set it on her desk at home.

Several days later she needed some room on that desk in order to work on a project. She absent-mindedly set on some bills to pay, kind of like a paper weight. Once again she forgot about it until it came time to pay some bills. Then picking up the cross an odd thought crossed her mind. How much did her faith impact the way she spent her money. Was she being a good steward? How much should she give away? How much should she keep? How did her "wants" differ from her "needs."

1. Inspired by Martin Thielen, A Preacher's Guide to Lectionary Sermon Series: Thematic Plans for Years A, B, and C, Westminster/John Knox Press, c. 2016

A few days later she set down to grade papers. Out of the corner of her eye she saw that old crucifix. She paused to reflect upon whether or not her faith was reflected in her work. Would someone be surprised to learn that she attended church? How was her faith reflected in the way she treated her students? Her fellow teachers? The custodians? How about the way she prepared for her classes? Did she always give her best, or did she at times “call it in”?

A few weeks passed. One day she noticed that the cross was sitting on top of some old photographs. As she looked through the pictures--some of her family when they were young, others of children and grandchildren, still others of neighborhood parties and family vacations she pondered how taking Jesus seriously impacted those various relationships. Was she a good neighbor? A good in-law? A good parent? How did her faith impact her various relationships? Was she a good friend?

Over the next several months she asked herself “What difference does my faith make in my life? What impact does my faith have on my finances, my job, my family and my relationships?”

Here’s a question for all of us to ask, “What difference would it make in my life if Christ truly was the King of Life?”

To God be the glory. Amen.