

Christ the King Year B
John 18:33-37
Pastor Lauren Dow Wegner
November 25, 2018

I've always been a rule follower.

As the oldest of four children,

I can check off almost every characteristic that is listed
as a common oldest child trait:

I'm a people pleaser.

I've been known to be bossy (mostly just to my
siblings).

I was a very good student (see "people
pleasing")

I can be hesitant and even shy in new
situations.

And I'm very respectful of
anyone in authority--
sometimes perhaps to a fault
(again--see "people
pleasing").

Rules, for me, are meant to be followed,

Not meant to be broken.

I've done quite well and been quite happy following the rules
throughout my life.

But then I had my own firstborn,

Who, as a toddler, subscribed to the "rules are meant to be
broken" adage,

And who threw my rule-following spirit all off-kilter,

My son still questions every rule and its existence,

Even if now he's resigned himself to them.

And, to be honest, he's taught me a lot in that.

When he asks me WHY we have to do something just because
someone says so or it's written down somewhere,

Well, I sometimes find myself wondering the same as I try to
answer him. . .

And coming up short in my response.

We know that rules exist to keep order and often to keep us safe.

We began learning rules at a young age:

Wait your turn.

Color inside the lines.

Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.

Rules seem to be all about limitation.

And the truth is,

we need that for our sinful selves to function well in the world.

But today we hear of a rule that actually defies all limitations,

That blows away all the lines and the boundaries that we create.

Today we celebrate the rule,

The reign,

Of Jesus Christ.

Christ the King Sunday is a relatively new feast day in the liturgical calendar.

It was instituted in the western church in 1925 by Pope Pius the Eleventh,

In response to growing secularism and nationalism.

This is the last Sunday of the church year,

The Sunday before Advent begins,

and a new church year arrives,

And we prepare for the baby Jesus to be born.

Before we enter into the new year,

We wrap up this year by hailing and celebrating the kingship,

The lordship,

The glorious rule over all people and places,

Nations and languages,

Held by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ is King!

And Christ our King doesn't follow rules as we know them.

In fact,

Christ's reign runs absolutely rampant.

In our first reading this morning,

We hear what this reign will look like.

As "one like a human being" is presented before the
Ancient One on the throne,

And "to him was given dominion and glory
and kingship,

That all people, nations, and
languages should serve him. . .

His kingship will never be destroyed."

There is no limit to Christ's reign.

No boundary.

No rules to his rule.

There is not one piece of the universe,

Not one part of our story,

That can hide from the reign of Jesus Christ.

He's everywhere!

He's everything!

There are no clean, neat boundaries to his kingdom.

Because his kingdom is everywhere.

Just as water goes where it will when it is poured into a font,

Splashed onto our heads,

Dripping down our faces. . .

So, too, the love and mercy of Jesus Christ pours out where it will,

And we can't control it or tell it where to go.

In the waters of baptism,

With reckless abandon,

Christ the King claims us and calls us.

Just as bread is broken and wine is poured,

A meal that never ends,

A meal where there's always enough,
A meal that isn't restricted or bounded by anything
we do,
So, too, the body and blood of Jesus Christ reaches us without
restriction,
Without boundaries,
With an unending, everlasting love.
Christ the King died,
And Christ the King was raised from death,
And now, with reckless abandon,
Christ the King carries us from death to life with
him.

Whether we are rule followers,
Or believe rules were made to be broken,
None of that really matters at all when it comes to our
God and our salvation.
Because there aren't any rules,
There aren't any boundaries to Christ's Kingdom.
The Kingdom is reigning rampant,
Reaching wider than we can dream,
Deeper than we can fathom,
Above all,
Through all,
In all.
And thanks be to God,
We can't stop it.