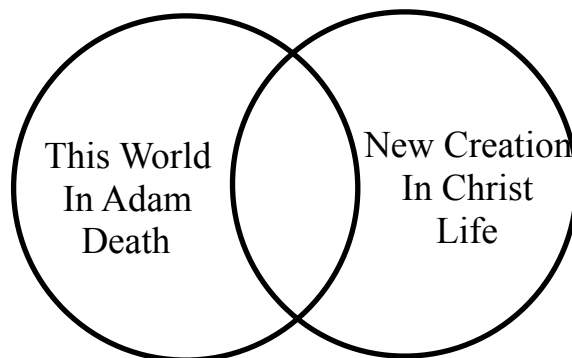


Jesus Christ, Emperor of the Universe (Solemnity of Christ the King, Year A)

1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28—The Kingship of Christ over “All Things”

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, *the first fruits* of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ *For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.* ²² *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.* ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then *at his coming* those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes *the end*, when *he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.* ²⁵ *For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.* ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is *death*... ²⁸ *When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* (1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28; RSV, adapted)

1. First fruits: first part of a harvest, dedicated to God (cf. Exod 23:19)
2. New Adam = “a man” = Adam-Christ typology



3. Second Coming: at his “coming” (Greek *parousia*) (15:23)
4. Kingdom: = “empire” (Greek *basileia*)— rules over *other* kingdoms (15:24)

Fear God. Honor the emperor (Greek *Basilea*) (1 Peter 2:17, RSV).

5. Angelic Powers: “rule,” “authority,” “power” (cf. Rom 8:38; Eph 1:21; Col 2:10)
6. Under His Feet: a priest-king like Melchizedek (cf. Psalm 110:1-2)
7. King of Creation: “all things” (Greek *ta panta*) = *all creation* (15:28; cf. Psalm 8:6)

The Living Tradition

Thomas Aquinas: [W]hen all things shall have been subjected to him, namely, to Christ, then the subject himself *according to his humanity* will be subjected to him, namely, to *the Father*: “The Father is greater than I” (John 14:28), and even now Christ *as man* is

subjected to the Father, but this will be more manifest then. The reason for this subjection is “that God may be all in all,” i.e., that the soul of men rest entirely in God, and God alone be beatitude. For now there is life and virtue in one glory and in another; but then God will be the life and salvation and virtue and glory and all things. (Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* no. 950; trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P.)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (Solemnity of Christ the King, Year A)

1. What do you think of the fact that Jesus Christ is not just “king,” but “emperor” of the Universe? Is this how most modern Christians think about Jesus? If not, why not? What are the implications of Jesus’ *imperial* reign over all creation?

For Further Reading

1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P.; eds. J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón; Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012).
2. Gerald Bray, ed. *1-2 Corinthians* (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament VI; Downers Grove, IL.: IVP, 1999).
3. George T. Montague, SM, *First Corinthians* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).