

Christ the King A - 2023

Shortly after her Coronation, Queen Victoria attended a splendid performance of Handel's *Messiah*. She'd been told in no uncertain terms that members of royalty do not stand with everybody else when the Hallelujah Chorus is sung. It was simply not proper. But when the singers lifted their voices to shout "Hallelujah, the Lord omnipotent reigneth", she could only just stay in her seat. She didn't want to violate the traditions of royalty. And when the chorus came to the climax, proclaiming Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, repeating the phrase with increasing crescendos, the queen of all England and the British Empire rose and bowed her head before Jesus Christ, the King of all - including all earthly kings and queens. There will come that day when every knee in heaven and earth will bow before him, "And he shall reign for ever and ever! King of Kings and Lord of Lords!"

The Gap between Words and Action

One of my favorite cartoons of all time is one from the Peanuts comic strip. In this particular one, Snoopy is sitting in the doorway of his dog house shivering violently during a winter storm. You can see that it is near Christmas time by the decorations on the dog house. Charlie Brown and Lucy are walking by - all bundled up and warm as toast. They offer a greeting, "Be of good cheer, Snoopy," Charlie Brown says. "Yes, be of good cheer," Lucy replies. And they keep on walking as Snoopy sits there with chattering teeth.

The message of the cartoon was powerful. The most noxious lifestyle of all is when compassionate words come from a care-less heart. Snoopy would no doubt prefer a blanket over a greeting. A compassionate heart is a reflection of the heart of God.

(by John Jewell from [Be Compassionate](#))

The Long Reach of an Act of Kindness

Alex Haley, the author of *Roots* tells the story of how his father had his life changed by a simple act of kindness:

He was the youngest of eight children, living as a sharecropping family. Everyone in the family was needed to help with the crops. After several years of schooling the family pressed each child into service on the farm. Fortunately, the boy's mother intervened on behalf of her child and was allowed to stay in school. When he was ready for college he chose the Lane Institute, working as many as four jobs in addition to full-time studies. It was all physically and emotionally wearing.

He worked for a summer as a porter on a train and happened to meet a man early in the morning who couldn't sleep and wanted to talk. This man was impressed by a black porter working to earn money for college and tipped him the unimaginable sum of five dollars.

By the end of the summer Mr. Haley had to decide whether to convert his summer earnings into a mule and begin to sharecrop, or to stretch to complete his last year at school. He took the risk of competing college. Alex Haley tells us what happened next: "When Dad arrived on campus, the president called him into his office and showed him a letter he had just received. The letter was from the elderly man whom my father had met on the train, and it contained a check for \$518 to cover Dad's tuition and living expenses for one full year." The kindness of an unknown friend made all the difference in the life of Alex Haley's father, Alex Haley himself, and every succeeding generation of that family.

As a person who has been in just a minor degree of need, I know what the acts of love and care performed by virtual strangers can mean.

(by Richard J. Fairchild from [*When, Lord, Did We See You?*](#))

Won't you come down, King?

A king once fell in love with a poor girl. At first, he thought of simply bringing her to the palace and marrying her, but he realized this wouldn't work since she would soon realize the immense difference in their backgrounds and not be happy. After much reflection, he decided to renounce his kingdom and go and live near her, so that she'd realize how deeply he loved her. Shocking one and all, he left the palace. — This story (adapted from philosopher Kierkegaard's original), somehow reveals to us the great love of our king Jesus Christ, who 'comes down' that we might be raised up. (Francis Gonsalves in *Sunday Seeds for Daily Deeds*, quoted by Fr. Botelho). (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

"You're with Him; go on in."

A few years ago, Pastor Erwin Lutzer and his daughters were visiting Washington, D.C. While there, they met a man who served on former President Bush's Secret-Service security team. The gentleman offered to give them a guided tour of the Oval Office. Pastor Lutzer and his daughters passed through many security checkpoints the next day on the way to the Oval Office. At each checkpoint, they expected to be searched and questioned. But instead, the guards took one glance at the Secret-Service man and announced, "You are with him; go on in."

Pastor Lutzer wrote that he expects our entrance into Heaven will be like that. We will have no credentials of our own that could possibly get us in. But Jesus will be walking along beside us. And at each gate, the angels will take one look at Jesus and announce, "You're with Him; go on in." [Erwin Lutzer, "Do Many Paths Lead into God's Presence?" *Preaching Magazine* March/April, 2001), p. 20.]

(<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).