

Christ the King  
*Ezekiel 34:11-31*

Sermon

*Hobart, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

*Devonport, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

*Launceston, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING:**

### **Ezekiel 34:11-31 NLT**

#### *The Good Shepherd*

<sup>11</sup> “For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search and find my sheep. <sup>12</sup> I will be like a shepherd looking for his scattered flock. I will find my sheep and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on that dark and cloudy day. <sup>13</sup> I will bring them back home to their own land of Israel from among the peoples and nations. I will feed them on the mountains of Israel and by the rivers and in all the places where people live.

<sup>14</sup> Yes, I will give them good pastureland on the high hills of Israel. There they will lie down in pleasant places and feed in the lush pastures of the hills.

<sup>15</sup> I myself will tend my sheep and give them a place to lie down in peace, says the Sovereign LORD. <sup>16</sup> I will search for my lost ones who strayed away, and I will bring them safely home again. I will bandage the injured and strengthen the weak. But I will destroy those who are fat and powerful. I will feed them, yes—feed them justice!

**v20** “Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will surely judge between the fat sheep and the scrawny sheep. <sup>21</sup> For you fat sheep pushed and butted and crowded my sick and hungry flock until you scattered them to distant lands. <sup>22</sup> So I will rescue my flock, and they will no longer be abused. I will judge between one animal of the flock and another. <sup>23</sup> And I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David. He will feed them and be a shepherd to them. <sup>24</sup> And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be a prince among my people. I, the LORD, have spoken!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Eze 34:17-31). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

## ***The Good Shepherd and His Sheep***

### **John 10:11-18 NLT**

<sup>11</sup> “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming. He will abandon the sheep because they don’t belong to him and he isn’t their shepherd. And so the wolf attacks them and scatters the flock. <sup>13</sup> The hired hand runs away because he’s working only for the money and doesn’t really care about the sheep.

<sup>14</sup> “I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, <sup>15</sup> just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.

<sup>17</sup> “The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. <sup>18</sup> No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. "Text edition"--Spine. (2nd ed.) (Jn 10:1-18). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

## INTRODUCTION:

### I. ADVENT

#### A. IN THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR, WE ARE JUST ABOUT TO ENTER ADVENT.

##### 1. Laurence Stookey; Calendar, Christ's Time for the Church:

"The First Sunday of Advent is regarded in the Western Church as the beginning of the liturgical year. But Advent is first of all about the end of time.

Because the term itself means "coming" or "arrival," and because it precedes Christmas, many have misunderstood Advent to be exclusively a time to get ready to celebrate the coming of a child at Bethlehem. In fact, the primary focus of Advent is on what is popularly called 'the second coming.' Thus Advent concerns the future of the Risen One...

"The beginning of the liturgical year takes our thinking to the very end of things. For 'end' means not only the 'end of time,' but the central purpose or goal of creation. We are not aimlessly wandering in the wilderness, even though we may be tempted to think so... History is headed somewhere by direction (though not dictation) from God.

It is necessary that the liturgical year begin with this focus on a central holy intention; for otherwise the story of Jesus, which is about to be rehearsed from conception and birth to death and resurrection, may seem less than what it is: the deliberate fulfilling of divine purpose, worked out through historical process".<sup>3</sup>

That divine purpose is, of course, to "bring many sons to glory" (Hebrews 2:10). This is the Father's plan, being worked out in and through the vicarious humanity of his Son Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is cause for great joy!

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<sup>3</sup> Laurence Stookey, Calendar, Christ's Time for the Church. p. 121.

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**S.P.S:**

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**A. TODAY IS THE SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT**

1. And it is called variously,

a) “Christ the King Sunday” or due to sensitivities about Kings being male and not always benevolent, many now call the day; “Reign of Christ Sunday”

2. Ralph Klein;

*Christ the King Sunday* first emerged, as I understand it, as an attempt to counter the outlandish claims of some European dictators in the twentieth century. The real ruler of this age is Christ! <sup>4</sup>

3. Our text today from Ezekiel 34 is one of those traditionally focused on today;

a) And it is particularly relevant in that it helps us to see what sort of ruler and King Jesus is, how he acts towards his people, and his plans and purposes

b) And so it also gives insights into the life of his kingdom, and the way he call his subjects to live as his people

**B. PRAYER**

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<sup>4</sup> Ralph W. Klein, Christ the King Sunday, Commentary on Ezekiel 34:11016, 20-24; [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?lect\\_date=11/23/2008&tab=2](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?lect_date=11/23/2008&tab=2)

## **BODY:**

### **A. START WITH A BIT OF A DISCUSSION**

1. How is the idea of Jesus being a King helpful?
2. Is it a perfect analogy or metaphor for Jesus?
  - a) Can you think of some reasons why it may not be helpful?

### **B. WHAT WAS GOD'S INITIAL RESPONSE TO ISRAEL'S DEMAND FOR A KING?**

1. They were told it was a sin, because God was their King
  - a) They wanted a King who was like those of the nations around them who would solve all their problems through the use of human power and force.
2. What did Jesus say about Christian leaders in contrast to Gentile rulers?
  - a) What did he say was to characterize the greatest among his people?

### **C. SO IT IS IMPORTANT WHEN WE THINK OR TALK ABOUT JESUS AS KING.**

1. that we remember that he is not like a Human king;
2. and he is not leading us to view him as a Human king, as some sort of autocrat, who must be obeyed just because he is bigger and more important and more powerful than us
3. We also need be clear that, as we might put it; "He is not leading us to become like the King he isn't"
  - a) In other words; he doesn't want us to live and behave according to our human perceptions of a king
  - b) His life as our King, and the life we are called to share, is something quite different to what we tend to expect
4. As we look at our passage in Ezekiel we are going to be reminded about how different he is to human rulers in his role as our leader

## II. EZEKIEL 34:1-31

### A. EZEKIEL 34 IS ADDRESSED TO THOSE PEOPLE OF GOD WHO HAVE BEEN LIVING IN EXILE IN BABYLON.

**34** Then this message came to me from the LORD: <sup>2</sup>“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds, the leaders of Israel.

### B. WHY DO YOU THINK THE LORD IS DESCRIBING THE LEADERS AS SHEPHERDS RATHER THAN RULERS OR KINGS AND PRINCES?

1. Shepherds were way down the totem pole in their society

a) They weren't powerful, impressive, rich or looked up to

#### NIV v1b-3a

say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord <sup>2</sup>GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been <sup>3</sup>feeding themselves!<sup>5</sup>

#### 2. James Limburg

The first saying in this chapter begins with "Thus says the Lord God" and then continues with a harsh word directed at the "shepherds" which is a common metaphor for kings, or political leaders. The saying begins with "hoy" usually translated as "woe" in prophetic writings; the sense of the word is to announce doom, even the funeral of the ones being addressed (cf. the NIV "woe").<sup>6</sup>

NLT 2b Give them this message from the Sovereign LORD: What sorrow awaits you shepherds who feed yourselves instead of your flocks. Shouldn't shepherds feed their sheep?

<sup>3</sup>You drink the milk, wear the wool, and butcher the best animals, but you let your flocks starve.

#### 3. What is the criticism here?

<sup>5</sup>*New American Standard Bible*. 1986; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996 (electronic edition.) (Eze 34:2). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

<sup>6</sup>James Limburg, 'The Times They Are A-Changin'', *The Failure of the Politicians*, Ezekiel 34:1-10

a) How does it impact on their view of their leadership position?

<sup>4</sup> You have not taken care of the weak. You have not tended the sick or bound up the injured. You have not gone looking for those who have wandered away and are lost. Instead, you have ruled them with harshness and cruelty. <sup>5</sup> So my sheep have been scattered without a shepherd, and they are easy prey for any wild animal. <sup>6</sup> They have wandered through all the mountains and all the hills, across the face of the earth, yet no one has gone to search for them.

#### 4. Ralph Klein;

The first ten verses of Ezekiel 34 are a sustained indictment against the shepherd-kings of Israel. Ezekiel censures these political leaders for fattening themselves up at the expense of the sheep-citizens. The shepherd-kings have not strengthened the weak, healed the sick, bound up the injured, brought back the strayed, or sought the lost (v. 4).<sup>7</sup>

#### 5. What was the result of their acting like “kings” rather than like shepherds? How should they have behaved?

<sup>7</sup> “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: <sup>8</sup> As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, you abandoned my flock and left them to be attacked by every wild animal. And though you were my shepherds, you didn’t search for my sheep when they were lost. You took care of yourselves and left the sheep to starve.

#### 6. What does this say about their true role as leaders?

#### 7. Ralph Klein;

Instead of feeding the sheep, they have made sure that they fed themselves. Verse 10 even asserts that they have fed literally on the sheep. Because of such corrupt rule by the shepherd-kings, the sheep-people have been scattered into exile.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD. <sup>10</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I now consider these shepherds my enemies, and I will hold them responsible for what has happened to my flock. I will take away their right to feed the

<sup>7</sup> Ralph W. Klein, Christ the King Sunday, Commentary on Ezekiel 34:11016, 20-24; [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?lect\\_date=11/23/2008&tab=2](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?lect_date=11/23/2008&tab=2)

<sup>8</sup> Ralph W. Klein



flock, and I will stop them from feeding themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths; the sheep will no longer be their prey.

### *The Good Shepherd*

<sup>11</sup> "For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search and find my sheep. <sup>12</sup> I will be like a shepherd looking for his scattered flock. I will find my sheep and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on that dark and cloudy day. <sup>13</sup> I will bring them back home to their own land of Israel from among the peoples and nations. I will feed them on the mountains of Israel and by the rivers and in all the places where people live. <sup>14</sup> Yes, I will give them good pastureland on the high hills of Israel. There they will lie down in pleasant places and feed in the lush pastures of the hills. <sup>15</sup> I myself will tend my sheep and give them a place to lie down in peace, says the Sovereign LORD. <sup>16</sup> I will search for my lost ones who strayed away, and I will bring them safely home again. I will bandage the injured and strengthen the weak. But I will destroy those who are fat and powerful. I will feed them, yes—feed them justice!

## 8. Ralph Klein;

Describing the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE as a day of clouds and thick darkness (v. 12) ...God counters this word of judgment with the promise of being a good shepherd for the people, one who promises to bring the people back from exile, feed them, and make them lie down in good grazing land (cf. Psalm 23:2). This divine shepherd will seek the lost, round up the strayed, bind up the injured, and strengthen the weak.

Provision of food is essential to this divine reign (vv. 13-14). This good shepherd provides a remedy for any ailment or distress of his sheep-people. Jesus both reaffirms and expands this picture when he asserts "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). John 10 is heavily dependent on the imagery proposed in Ezekiel 34.<sup>9</sup>

## 9. Bible Knowledge Commentary;

God's first action would be to restore **Israel** to her land **from the nations** and to **pasture** her like sheep **in good grazing land**. God will do what the false shepherds had failed to do—**tend. . . . search . . . bring back. . . . strengthen, and shepherd . . . with justice.**<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ralph W. Klein

<sup>10</sup>Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (1294). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>17</sup> “And as for you, my flock, this is what the Sovereign LORD says to his people: I will judge between one animal of the flock and another, separating the sheep from the goats. <sup>18</sup> Isn’t it enough for you to keep the best of the pastures for yourselves? Must you also trample down the rest? Isn’t it enough for you to drink clear water for yourselves? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet? <sup>19</sup> Why must my flock eat what you have trampled down and drink water you have fouled?”

## 10. Bible Knowledge Commentary;

The character of the sheep is seen in their conduct (Ezek. 34:17-21). The wicked sheep are those that follow the conduct of the shepherds, oppressing the weaker sheep. They **trampled** the pasturelands and even **muddied** the streams so that other sheep were left with less-than-desirable vegetation and drinking water. These **fat sheep** were successful in brutalizing the **lean sheep**. The wicked sheep even butted **all the weak sheep with their horns**, to drive **them away**. God will not permit these wicked practices to continue. Instead He will rescue the oppressed and will judge the aggressors<sup>11</sup>

<sup>20</sup> “Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will surely judge between the fat sheep and the scrawny sheep. <sup>21</sup> For you fat sheep pushed and butted and crowded my sick and hungry flock until you scattered them to distant lands. <sup>22</sup> So I will rescue my flock, and they will no longer be abused. I will judge between one animal of the flock and another. <sup>23</sup> And I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David. He will feed them and be a shepherd to them. <sup>24</sup> And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be a prince among my people. I, the LORD, have spoken!”

## 11. Ralph Klein;

This coming good and all-providing shepherd will also practice justice (v. 16) and make a distinction between the prosperous sheep-people and those whom they exploit (vv. 20-21).

The corrupt leaders have had many followers and imitators. This theme of grace mixed with judgment also permeates vv. 17-19. The attention in those verses shifts from the corrupt shepherd-kings to the equally corrupt or fat sheep-citizens, whose lack of faith is shown by the way they treat their fellow citizens.

<sup>11</sup>Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (1295). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

In many ways these verses form a parallel to Matthew 25:31-46, ...where the Son of Man distinguishes between the goats and the sheep on the basis of their deeds of social compassion toward the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned. God promises the people salvation, but God also promises to judge between those who oppress and those who are oppressed (v. 22).

In a similar way, God promises Israel a new Exodus in chapter 20. But then, after the Exodus, God will lead the people into the wilderness, where he will sort out the rebels and those who transgress against God (v. 28) before taking the rest of the people home to the land.<sup>12</sup>

*The LORD's Covenant of Peace*

<sup>25</sup> "I will make a covenant of peace with my people and drive away the dangerous animals from the land. Then they will be able to camp safely in the wildest places and sleep in the woods without fear. <sup>26</sup> I will bless my people and their homes around my holy hill. And in the proper season I will send the showers they need. There will be showers of blessing. <sup>27</sup> The orchards and fields of my people will yield bumper crops, and everyone will live in safety. When I have broken their chains of slavery and rescued them from those who enslaved them, then they will know that I am the LORD. <sup>28</sup> They will no longer be prey for other nations, and wild animals will no longer devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will frighten them.

<sup>29</sup> "And I will make their land famous for its crops, so my people will never again suffer from famines or the insults of foreign nations. <sup>30</sup> In this way, they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them. And they will know that they, the people of Israel, are my people, says the Sovereign LORD. <sup>31</sup> You are my flock, the sheep of my pasture. You are my people, and I am your God. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!"

## 12. Ralph Klein—

The coming king will not continue the oppressive and self-serving ways of his predecessors. The current unease with the term Christ the King finds an ancient echo here. Our setting aside a Sunday for Christ the King should not imply that this king will bank on his maleness nor exert his rule in a hierarchical fashion. He is a king, not according to human expectations, but rather a "king" after God's own heart.

<sup>12</sup> Ralph W. Klein

The pericope ends with the reassuring words "I, Yahweh, have spoken."<sup>13</sup>

### **C. JAMES LIMBURG**

Applied to our own time, this criticism of Israel's leaders has a word for those who hold public or pastoral (the word "pastor" comes from the Latin word for "shepherd") office. By telling what these leaders have failed to do in Ezekiel's time, they give a picture off what public officials ought to be doing.

Bob Dylan's song catches the sense of this first part of our text effectively:

Come senators, congressmen

Please heed the call

Don't stand in the doorway

Don't block up the hall...

There's a battle outside

And it is a ragin'

It'll soon shake your windows

And rattle your walls

For the times they are a changin'.

Put succinctly, Ezekiel the pastor to those in exile says to the political leaders of his time, "You shepherds have fed yourselves and have not fed my sheep." These leaders ought to be caring for the sheep, not exploiting them and fattening their own lives. In these times that are a-changing, both world and church need politicians and pastors who will care for their people responsibly.

### **A Search and Rescue Operation (Ezekiel 34:11-16)**

And now for the good news. The people's leaders have failed but there is a search and rescue operation going on. Everyone knows the story Jesus told about the good shepherd who went in search of the one sheep that was lost (Luke 15:3-7). Now, says Ezekiel, just such an operation is going on.

The Lord, the Good Shepherd, has not forsaken those who are scattered in the gloom and darkness of exile, but is searching them out. ...God will

<sup>13</sup> Ralph W. Klein

rescue them and bring them home (13-14). ...God will make them to lie down in green pastures and will be their caring Shepherd (15-16). And they will be fed with justice (Hebrew, mishpat) which is the final, climatic word in this saying in both the Hebrew and English.

Justice (mishpat) is the expected response of God's people to what God has done for them (Isaiah 5:1-7). It is a response which is not static but dynamic ...and which involves taking up the cause of the powerless -- represented by the widow, the orphan and the poor.

In our time, as in Isaiah's, the special responsibility for those in positions of public responsibility is care for the powerless (Isaiah 10:1-4; Bob Dylan's song).

### **So What's This Got To Do With Us? (Psalm 95; Matthew 25)**

This text from Ezekiel 34 suggests application for us in two ways.

First, verses 1-10 can remind all who hold positions of leadership in public or church life of their responsibilities. They will want to look at the mirror in Ezekiel 34:1-10 and see whether they recognize their own image there.

We are sheep and the Lord is our shepherd! Psalm 23 tells us about that. Jesus spoke about that in Luke 15. It makes a great deal of difference, when you are lost (in the night of despair and depression, or in the reality of a coal mine or the collapse of a building) to know that there is a search operation going on! The Gospel of John tells us that we do have a Good Shepherd who is roaming the world searching for the lost -- none other than Jesus Christ (John 10).<sup>14</sup>

## **III. JOHN 10:7B-16**

"I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep.<sup>8</sup> All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them.<sup>9</sup> Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures.<sup>10</sup> The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

<sup>14</sup> James Limburg, Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; The Times They Are A-Changin', [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?lect\\_date=11/20/2011&tab=1](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?lect_date=11/20/2011&tab=1)

<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming. He will abandon the sheep because they don't belong to him and he isn't their shepherd. And so the wolf attacks them and scatters the flock. <sup>13</sup> The hired hand runs away because he's working only for the money and doesn't really care about the sheep.

<sup>14</sup> "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, <sup>15</sup> just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.

## CONCLUSION:

### **A. JESUS CONFESSED, WHEN INTERROGATED BY PONTIUS PILATE, THAT HE WAS A KING**

1. He was taken and beaten, nailed on the cross, crowned with thorns.

a) And in bitter irony, Pontius Pilate had a sign fixed to that cross, proclaiming him King of the Jews.

### **B. CLEARLY, JESUS FORM OF KINGSHIP WAS NOT THE KIND OF KINGSHIP THE WORLD EXPECTS.**

1. Jesus' kingship wasn't seen in might or wealth, but in service and in love, in laying down his life for his people, for his sheep, his flock.

2. He is a Shepherd, a Shepherd King.

### **C. HIS POWER AND EFFECTIVENESS COME NOT FROM AUTHORITY AND CONTROLLING FORCE**

1. But through total, all encompassing, irresistible, unconditional, self-sacrificing love

## **D. GOD WINS HIS PEOPLE;**

1. And will win mankind, and bring all into his flock, his kingdom, not by earthly Kingly behaviour, but through the loving acts of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, the Shepherd King

a) It will happen as we read in Ezekiel;

### **Ezekiel 34:25-31**

#### *The LORD's Covenant of Peace*

<sup>25</sup> "I will make a covenant of peace with my people and drive away the dangerous animals from the land. Then they will be able to camp safely in the wildest places and sleep in the woods without fear. <sup>26</sup> I will bless my people and their homes around my holy hill. And in the proper season I will send the showers they need. There will be showers of blessing. <sup>27</sup> The orchards and fields of my people will yield bumper crops, and everyone will live in safety. When I have broken their chains of slavery and rescued them from those who enslaved them, then they will know that I am the LORD. <sup>28</sup> They will no longer be prey for other nations, and wild animals will no longer devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will frighten them.

<sup>29</sup> "And I will make their land famous for its crops, so my people will never again suffer from famines or the insults of foreign nations. <sup>30</sup> In this way, they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them. And they will know that they, the people of Israel, are my people, says the Sovereign LORD. <sup>31</sup> You are my flock, the sheep of my pasture. You are my people, and I am your God. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!"

## 2. Howard Wallace:

The passage from Ezekiel is chosen as a reading for *Christ the King* or the *Reign of Christ Sunday*, as Christians see Christ as the descendant of David and heir to his throne in the realm of God. In celebrating Christ's kingship in this context, then, the character of that kingship is marked by love and justice, not power merely. It also looks forward to the end time or eschaton, when God's rule will be established over all.

While that kingdom and the rule of Christ is seen as a future event, it is nevertheless reflected in the life of the Christian community today<sup>15</sup>

## 3. Dr. John Miller sums it all up;

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<sup>15</sup> Howard Wallace; Year A: Christ The King Or The Reign Of Christ, November 20, 2011, Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; <http://hwallace.unitingchurch.org.au/WebOTcomments/OrdinaryA/ChristtheKing.html>

What sort of “king is Jesus”? The word can easily evoke images of pomp, privilege, and the abuse of power. Christ’s kingship, on the other hand, is caring, self-giving and just, unlike that of the kings condemned in today’s reading.

As we read these words of Scripture we ask ourselves how we exercise our “pastoral” responsibilities as ministers, elders, teachers, public servants, doctors, nurses, parents and so on. Are we more intent on meeting our own needs than the needs of those for whom we are responsible?<sup>16</sup>

### **E. AS HIS PEOPLE, HIS FLOCK**

#### 1. Jesus, our Shepherd King

- a) Invites us to let him lead us in his ways, to care for us, protect us, guide us and nourish us
- b) He invites us to participate in his life of lovingly caring for, laying our lives down, for the good of our neighbour

### **F. PRAYER**

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<sup>16</sup> Revd. Dr. John Miller, With Love to The World, Vol.13, No.5, Focus Press, 2012, p. 12