

Sunday Thought

21st November 2021 Sunday before Advent

Readings

2 Samuel 23: 1: 7

Psalm 132 1 – 12 (13 – 18)

Revelation 1 – 4b - 8

John 18: 33 - 37

God! Almighty!



The James Webb Space Telescope is to be launched in Space next month. It will open our minds to even more wonderful views of the cosmos, filled with billions of stars like our sun. Every day we are learning more and more about our tiny world and wondering about all that greater life

farther 'out there'. There will be many who watch these discoveries and thinking about the heavens, conclude that the notion of God as the creator of it all is a nonsense. There are many of us who strongly disagree. I love to watch the unfolding views of the universe and with every new discovery my faith in God is confirmed. I believe in God whom I have come to know in Jesus. I believe he is the creator of all things and is still in the process of creating new galaxies with millions of newborn stars each day! My mind is blown by it. I feel so insect-small. My faith in God expands. I believe in a much greater spiritual universe! The Kingdom of God who is Almighty!

Our gospel reading shows us Jesus inside the grand Roman Praetorium, being interviewed by Governor Pilate. They are surrounded by Jewish leaders, intent on destroying the Messiah for whom their people have been waiting for centuries. *Are you a King?* Pilate asked his pointed question to determine the truth of their accusation. Jesus replied. *Only if you understand me to be talking about the Kingdom of God's Spirit. Yes. I am that King. I was born into this world to make it known - to tell the whole truth of God who is Almighty Love! If you listen to me, you will hear him speaking. You'll have the whole truth!* 'What is truth?' Pilate replied cynically.

The greatest scholars have wrestled with that same question from the beginning of wisdom, without real success. Pilate's mind was not big enough either. He too could not grasp how 'truth' does not come from words and arguments, but from a heart in love with God – a love-faith which becomes mightier with every trusting leap with him.

I am grateful to prophets of my youth who were preaching the message *'Your God is too small! Let's think big, they said. Believe big, pray big. worship big. Get a big picture of our Almighty God! The message of Jesus and his Cross is the most powerful truth in the cosmos – and beyond!* One of them, Paul Tillich, said we have things the wrong way round. Rather than us being made in God's image, we want to make God in our image which, of course, makes God smaller. That thought has been in my mind a lot just lately while hearing about recent Government activities and the talks and decisions of the COP26 Climate Summit. Our real problems are to do with wanting to keep God in his place. *I believe in God, and I believe I have a place for him! To leave him out is to fail.*

In the Old Testament reading we have King David's 'last words'. David was a great king though not perfect as we would expect, but he did have *truth* in place. He witnesses to how his reign has been grounded in his faith and his obedience to him as The Almighty God. He prays that succeeding generations will follow his lead. And so should we. To have God's greatness side by side with our littleness is to have life in place. David the shepherd and poet adds *'If you wish to see dew sparkling on the grass you have to stand under the sun.'* Just a dewdrop in the grass may reflect the glory of Almighty God.

Today is the Sunday before the season of Advent. It has been called 'Stir Up Sunday' – the day to stir your Christmas puddings! More recently it has been known as *Christ the King Sunday*. It seems appropriate at this moment to be stirred up about Christ Jesus as King of kings – as God Almighty. Then not only we ourselves, but the whole world could have life the right way up.

Look up into those awesome space skies. See the wonders of Almighty God. Great as they are, greater is his immense and unconfined love. He loves us tiny individuals as though we were the only one to love and die for. Amazing love! Almighty God!

A Prayer (with Psalm 132 in mind)

Lord, I am overwhelmed by the ongoing wonders of your creation.
You constantly give insights into new knowledge.
Bringing goodness, kindness, and truthfulness into the
The lives of all who recognise their place before you
Help us to view our lives in the light of your Almighty grace
Lord Jesus be the truth for me, leading me into the
exciting glories of the Father's real world of the Spirit.

