

## CAROL SERVICE AT L.C.F.

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Preacher: Rev. Adrian Hallett

Reading: Matt.2:2

Title: 'Born King'

Last Sunday we looked at Matt. 2 and talked about the different reactions to the coming King... there was Herod's reaction of hatred and opposition, there was the Priests and Teachers of the Law's reaction of apathy and indifference and then there was the reaction of the Magi, that of worship and adoration.

Three different reactions to the coming King – I want to look again at his coming King...I want us to see and understand what kind of King he is...if we understand his Kingship and his role and rule then we should ourselves be moved to fall at his feet and worship him...willingly bow the knee to this King.

I remember using a leaflet evangelistically a few years ago... I still have a copy of it here.... entitled 'Born King'....talks about Jesus being born King...picks up again on verse 2 of that chapter in Matthew we looked at last week...'*Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews?*'

Very interesting that...'*born King of the Jews*'... make a special note of that...'*born king of the Jews*'....it doesn't say 'born to *be* king of the Jews'....as something that will happen in the future...no, he's '*born King*'....he *is* King....he comes into this world as King...

Some pictures of Prince George were released by William & Kate a couple of Christmas' ago... cute little chap...one day he will probably become King – he's third in line to the throne...Prince William is second in line to the throne...Prince Charles is first in line....one thing they all have in common... ....they were born princes.... they were not born king... they are all heirs to the throne... they have to wait until the appropriate time to take up the throne....they were all born to *be* king...but none of them were *born* king...and none of them will rule forever and none of them will rule over a kingdom that has no end.

Only Jesus was *born* King...and only Jesus will rule forever over a kingdom that will never end

That is exactly what Luke in his gospel tells us about King Jesus and his rule...'*He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end.*' (Luke 1:32).

This is no ordinary King...this King is different...this King is unique....he's born

King... he's the Son of the Most High...therefore he's divine and he's also the Messiah...he reigns forever...his kingdom has no end...Now this is some King... this is some kingdom that he is ushering in!

He was born King and he reigns forever...we remember his birth annually throughout the world as the one who was born to reign forever...therefore that must mean that he is reigning now....

He was he born King of the Jews and so at his death it is no surprise that above his head were the words: *'The King of the Jews'* (Mark 15:26) – He was born the King and he died the King!

But why would somebody who is born King be put to death for being the King? For a king to be put to death, he would surely have to have been some power-crazed despot...some kind of tyrant who cruelly oppressed his people....a kind of ruthless dictator ruling his people with a rod of iron...so much so that in desperation the people rise up...rebel against him...overthrow the throne and the king.

But no, that is not true of this King. He was born king, yes, but we're told *'he came to that which was his but his own did not receive him'* (John 1:11)....they brutally rejected him...*'We have no king but Caesar'* (John 19:15) they cried out....fulfilling what Jesus himself had said through a parable addressed to his own rebellious people, *'We don't want this man to be our king'* (Luke 19:14) or as other versions put it, *'We will not have this man rule over us'*.

How tragic that the King should be rejected in this way...because this King is no despot... he's no tyrant...he's no dictator...that's why today its so tragic that people still reject him and his rightful rule...just consider for a moment what King is being rejected here...

This King doesn't rule by fear, this King rules by love.

This King doesn't demand sacrifices from his people, this King sacrifices himself *for* his people.

This King doesn't issue laws that burden his people, this King gave the law for the benefit of his people.

This King doesn't lord it over his people, this King came to seek and to save the lost.

This King doesn't oppress his people, this King brings freedom for his people.

This King doesn't come to destroy, this King comes to fulfil.

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This King doesn't condemn his people, this King accepts his people.

This King doesn't ridicule his subjects, this King rescues his people.

This King doesn't demand service from his people, this King came to serve his people.

This King is like no other...When I know what this King Jesus is really like, I warm to this King...I am drawn to this King...I am in awe of this King....I want to serve this King...I want to honour this King...I want to bow the knee to this King...I want to submit willingly to his just and perfect rule.

This is Jesus, this is Jesus 'born King of the Jews', this is Jesus who died as 'The king of the Jews'...this is Jesus who is reigning now...this is Jesus whose Kingdom will last for ever...this is the Jesus...King Jesus, I trust we are all welcoming this Christmas.

When we reflect on what sort of King he is....when we reflect on what sort of Kingdom he is ushering in, I trust we can see the futility (and the sinfulness) of rejecting such a King....I trust it cannot be said of us '*that we received him not*', but that we might be among those '*who received him*'.... '*who believed in his name*' who acknowledge him as King and willingly submit to his rule.