

# “FISH STICK JESUS: CHRIST IS KING!”

## Christ the King Sunday—A

November 23, 2014

Celebration of Giving; Commitment Sunday

Peace Lutheran  
Grass Valley, CA

### A Joke:

A couple was stressing about not seeing their kids enough. So the husband/Dad called his son the weekend before Thanksgiving. He says, "Son, I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; 55 years is enough".

"Dad, what are you talking about?" the son screams.

"We can't go on any longer," the father says. "We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister and tell her".

Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone.

"No way they're getting divorced", she shouts, "I'll take care of this".

She calls her Dad immediately, and screams at her father, "You are not getting divorced. Don't do a single thing till I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there by Wednesday. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up the phone and turns to his wife.

"Good news", he says, "The kids will be home for Thanksgiving and for a change they are paying their own way."

### TEACHING POINTS:

1. "Fish Stick Jesus"
2. "Where do we look for Jesus?"  
Right inside us in breath and heartbeat
3. Parable: "If we hide God in the ordinary events of people's everyday lives, they'll never find Him."
4. Look for Jesus in your neighbor, in ordinary events. Jesus will be there. You can count on it.
5. Our commitment as a sign of the presence of Jesus.

Sometimes truth IS stranger than fiction!! This sounds like fiction. It's the truth. These stories, as you may know, are from a few years ago.

Someone found the face of Jesus in a fish stick.

Another found Mary, the mother of Jesus, on a grilled cheese sandwich.

A man saw Christ with all His angels on the cross in the shower.

And another person located a piece of popcorn that looks like Mary holding the baby Jesus.

This isn't fiction. This is the truth. These are real life sightings of Jesus. Real life sightings of "God in action."

It was November 2004 when Fred Whan, an Ontario man, found, with the help of his son, the face of Jesus on a fish stick that he had burned. He put it in the freezer for a year, and then brought it out to be auctioned on e-bay. I couldn't find out if he got more or less than the \$28,000 a Florida woman, Diana Duyser, got for the decade old burnt grilled

cheese sandwich upon which she had identified an image of the Virgin Mary. (Homiletics, November 2005, page 31.

What's up with this? I'm thinking, this Christ the King weekend, that these "God sightings" are an expression of a desire to see God in action. It is part of our desire to know the Christ that today we acclaim as King. It has to do with our faith and a need to know that God steps across time and space to touch my life and be involved in my life. It has to do with looking for Jesus.

"We're all looking for the same thing," says Dan French (The Washington Examiner, "Jesus Christ Superstore: Find God in old, burned food? Sell it on e-Bay"; Wednesday, March 30, 2005) "some faith-worthy sign to give us at least a fleeting clue on how to live our best lives and be our best selves in a confused, nearly un-navigable world."

The question, then, is: "Where do you look for the face of Jesus?" "Where do you go to find the presence of God?" "Where do you see Jesus at work, alive as 'King' of the Universe?" Where is God acting for your life?

Some years ago, I asked a young person, "Where do you see God leading in your life?" The response, sadly, was, "God isn't active in my life. God never has been, and I doubt if God ever will be."

That feels so sad, doesn't it. But I guess it depends on where you look-- if you look. It all depends upon how you see-if you see.

You see, I think the problem is that we don't know where to look for God, for the King Jesus. We somehow think that we have to look for the dramatic, for the unusual, for the extra-ordinary. We've gotten the notion from somewhere that if God is at work it has to be in a way that no one would ever believe if we told them. I think that is behind the comment of the young confirmation student.

Friends, none of this is the truth. God is active in your life. God is active in my life. If you'd agree that "God never has been active and I doubt if God ever will be" let me tell you you're looking in the wrong place. You're looking for something too far off. You're looking for something too dramatic. You have too broad a concept of "miracle." Your faith eyes simply are looking the wrong way.

The truth of the matter is that we don't have to look beyond our daily lives to see God. God made us and breathed into us the breath of life. If you doubt God's presence in your life, simply take a deep breath. Breath is a miracle. Your heartbeat is a miracle. God is active right in your daily living breathing heart-beating being. God is ruling supreme in your life, or you would be here. Breath would stop. Life would end.

Every time we breathe, every time our heart beats, every time our eyes blink, God is in action. God is at work. These are real life "God sightings". It even extends further than that. They extend to many things we take for granted in daily life, things of which we might not even be aware. It depends on where we look, and how we see.

Once upon a time, there was a far-away land that was ruled by a vicious king. His iron hand reached into every corner of his subjects' lives. Every corner - except one. Try as he might, he couldn't destroy their belief in God.

In his frustration, he finally summoned his advisors and asked them: "Where can I hide God so the people will end up forgetting about him?"

One suggested hiding God on the dark side of the moon. This idea was debated, but was voted down because the advisors feared that their scientists would one day discover a way to travel into space and God would be discovered again.

Another suggested burying God in the deepest part of the ocean. But there was the same problem with this idea, so it was denied.

One idea after another was suggested and debated and rejected. Until finally the oldest and wisest advisor had a flash of insight. "I know," he said, "why don't we hide God where no one will ever even think to look?"

And he explained, "If we hide God in the ordinary events of people's everyday lives, they'll never find Him!"

And so it was done. And they say people in that land are still looking for God - even today. ("Where To Hide God So No One Will Find Him"; Brent Blair, 2000)

Friends, it's sad when it is easier to see Jesus in a fish stick, or in a grilled cheese sandwich, or in the shower stall, or in a piece of popcorn than it is to see Jesus active in our lives.

So where do we look for Jesus? Where do we look for God? READ GOSPEL

Jesus says that we are going to see him in the ordinary events and the ordinary people in our lives. Jesus says that as we look there, we won't ever be able to say, "God never has been in my life and I doubt He ever will be."

Do you want to see Jesus? Try looking into the eyes of the person next to you. Try looking at the face of the person at the next desk, or behind the counter. Try looking into the eyes of the people with who you rub elbows every day. Try looking into the eyes of the person you don't really want to deal with tomorrow morning, or tomorrow night, or even this afternoon.

Our Risen Christ is King. Our King shows up all round us: in the needy, the less fortunate, those who will never "make it", the dying, the struggling, and those who live in places we will go. Jesus says if we want to see him, we look among those we call "the least."

You see, because Christ is King, Christ is living among us. Because he lives among us we live differently.

Today we engage in an ancient practice of celebrating our commitments to give. In these gifts, we see Jesus at work, through us, because of us, for the sake of the world. Our giving helps to see Jesus in something that is bigger than we are.

Do you really want to see Jesus? Just look around you. Jesus says he's there. We can count on it!!

Amen!