

CALVARY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
INDIAN ROCKS BEACH, FL
THE JESUS WE WANT TO SEE
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The Jesus you want is not always the Jesus you see.

One Sunday morning, an old cowboy entered a church just before services. Although the old man and his clothes were spotlessly clean, he wore jeans, a denim shirt, and boots that were ragged and worn. In his hand he carried a worn-out hat and an equally worn out Bible.

The church he entered was in a very upscale and exclusive part of the city. It was the largest and most beautiful church the old cowboy had ever seen. The people of the congregation were all dressed in expensive clothes and accessories.

As the cowboy took a seat, the others moved away from him. No one greeted, spoke to or welcomed him. They were all appalled at his appearance and did not attempt to hide it. When the old cowboy was leaving the church, the preacher approached him and asked the cowboy to do him a favor. "Before you come back in

here again, have a talk with God and ask him what he thinks would be appropriate attire for worship." The old cowboy assured the preacher he would.

The next Sunday, he showed back up for the services wearing the same ragged jeans, shirt, boots and hat. Once again he was completely shunned. The preacher approached the man and said, "I thought I asked you to speak to God before you came back to our church". "I did," replied the old cowboy.

"If you spoke to God, what did he tell you the proper attire should be for worshipping in here?" asked the preacher.

"Well sir, God told me that He didn't have a clue what I should wear. He said He'd never been in this church."

The disciples wanted a king and they got a shepherd instead.

One who knew how to separate sheep from goats.

Kind of like a cowboy. Nobody saw that coming.

The king they wanted was not the king they saw in Jesus.

Instead they got a lowly shepherd wearing a ragged tunic, a dirty sandals and a beard.

Waiting for a king takes a long time.

Nobody expects a shepherd to show in his place.

Not hardly the person we can say, “Come let us sing unto the Lord.

Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation,” as we do today.¹

A shepherd looks ragged and worn.

Their hands are rough and they don’t smell too good.

Yet that is precisely who we put a crown on their head.

Someone lowly.

It says in the bible that, “when the Son of Man, the king, comes in glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory...he will separate people from one another as a shepherd separates sheep from the goats.”²

The one who is willing to roll up their sleeves, lay hands on those entrusted to him, who feeds them and gives them shelter, he is the one whom we have been waiting to see.

Why didn’t the disciples see Jesus as king right away?

Why don’t we see Jesus as king today?

¹ Psalm 95 *The Venite*

² Matthew 25:31-46

Much of the reason they had long ago is the same reason we have today. If Christ the King were here today, there would be no problems. There would not be any who hunger or thirst.

There would not be any who were homeless or lacked clothes.

Poverty in such ways permeates the entire culture.

It doesn't stop there as it spreads to the ethical and moral unrighteous illnesses that topple nations.

They are inextricably woven together in every social and family system from hunger to warfare.

If Christ the King were here today he would put an end to it.

This is what we want to see, but "sometimes God permits what he hates to accomplish what he loves."³

When people hunger and thirst for Jesus and his truth to rule in their lives, then we see his kingdom.

When a church is known as a warm and welcoming church, yet reverent and holy, God feels at place.

³ Joni Eareckson Tada, 2011.

When we open ourselves for the shepherd to lay his hands on us,
separating that which is good and that which is not, our wounds are
healed and our needs are met.

But be prepared,

The Lord moves in mysterious ways.

He may just show up in your lifes a cowboy or a shepherd

Because,...

The Jesus you want is not always the Jesus you see.