



Today, we are blessed to witness Lexa's baptism, on the day the church calls Christ the King Sunday, oddly enough. But as a reminder that Jesus is meant to be a different kind of one sitting on a throne: the One who has no interest whatsoever in ruling with power and might and vengeance, but of peace and love and compassion, including for Lexa. And as we heard from Revelation, we remember that God is our beginning and ending and beyond. So, as much as we in the church insist on the importance of baptism in any child of God's life, we cannot

stake any kind of claim that God's love has not already been there for Lexa from her very beginning. God cherishes Lexa far too much to wait until today to be with her.

And part of the promise made here for Lexa is that at no point in her life will that love ever leave her. For Lexa will be under enough pressure in her life anyway: that she needs to get 4.0 GPAs, 36's on her ACT, and max out on extra-curricular activities, and get the best job with a sustainable salary and benefits. No pressure whatsoever for Lexa for this world she is about to take on soon enough, but rest assured, there will be no pressure whatsoever from this God who has thoroughly adored her from her very entrance into this world and even before that, and who will adore her to the end and well beyond that, too. That is the Gospel for Lexa regardless of how well she does in school or how often she changes her mind about what she wants to do with her life, not to mention even if there are times when she isn't so sure about God as well.

After all, this Christ the King Sunday may not be relatable to everyone: not all children of God appreciate considering the idea of Jesus as a King at all. Some prefer to consider him a friend or a teacher or a Savior, and some of those preferences of relating to God change over a faith journey. But the Promise remains the same for Lexa and all of us: no matter how that faith journey turns out, no matter how much there are doubts or flat-out disbeliefs at times, no matter how topsy-turvy it may be for her or anyone else: nothing can happen in this life to separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ.

Today's baptism is not about trying to convince Lexa to follow a path of maximizing Sunday school and public worship attendance the rest of her life, but to further bless her with the gift of the Holy Spirit, to set her free from having to worry about having to satisfy a vengeful king from a heavenly throne, to be set free to use whatever gifts she has for the benefit of her family and complete strangers and for the whole world to improve from whatever precious piece of God she has to offer. Today's baptism is about recognizing that Lexa joins the vast body of Christ as yet another cherished disciple in sharing peace, love, and compassion with whoever she meets.

After all, on this Christ the King Sunday, we do not proclaim our Lord staying on some heavenly throne, ruling over our beginning and ending and everything in between. Instead, the God who loved us more than enough to come down to our earthly realm, filled with struggles and doubts and pain and anguish, but somehow still had more than enough love to set up just as holy of a seat within the depths of our hearts. And from the very beginning of Lexa's life, Christ insisted on being right there with her. And yes, the Gospel remains for her, that no matter what happens from this day forward, this Lord of ours will never ever leave her. For that Greatest News of all for Lexa, for all of us, we most certainly give thanks to God, indeed! Amen!