

Communion Exhortation:

“I want to share with you some words from a hymn written in the 500s about the cross and its relation to Christ’s kingship:

The standards of the king advance / the mystery of the cross shines forth /  
whereby the founder of our flesh / in flesh upon a gibbet hung. . . . Thus  
were the prophecies fulfilled / that David sang in truthful strain /  
proclaiming to the world at large / that God did reign from on the tree.  
O beautiful and shining tree / adorned with purple of the king / selected,  
as its trunk deserved / to touch so close such sacred limbs. . .  
All hail..victim, hail / for sake of his passion’s great fame / by which our  
Life endured his death / and by his death restored our life. (“*Vexilla Regis  
Prodeunt*”, by Venantius Fortunatus)

One of only two other places in the New Testament where the word “Paradise” appears is Revelation 2:7— **“To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”** That is, of course, the *garden of God*.

The cross became as a new tree of life in a new garden. And on its branches it bore fruit, bread from heaven: Christ’s Body given for the life of the world. [Jn 6:33, 51]

Christ has opened the Garden to us by His death on the cross and His resurrection, and no longer bars the way to the Tree of Life, to those who are in Him. He bids us to feed on His sacrifice by faith, and to look with longing hope towards the fullness of His Garden City which will one day join heaven and earth, when death itself shall die.

This meal is God’s gracious gift to you, to seal to you His promise that though the kingdoms of this earth are passing away, ***this one .. is still only getting started.***

Church of Jesus Christ, members of His Garden, come to the Tree of Life!

Word of Commission:

“On the cross, Jesus was mocked: *Save yourself if you really are the Chosen One.*

What Christ showed is that the way to life was through death. And thus He showed that He truly was — and IS — the Chosen One. The King of Israel. And the King of all Creation. [Ps 47:2]

But through His work on the cross, He has incorporated us into Himself. And because of what the Chosen One has done on our behalf, listen to what St. Paul can call *us*: **“Put on then, as God's *..CHOSEN ONES..*, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”**

Through the Chosen One, we are called chosen ones. Which means that we are part of the King's victory! CS Lewis once wrote: “Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed . . . and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage.” [Mere Christianity, p 51]

We've come here to hear the words of the King; to find out His battle plan. Now go into the world with the Fruit of the Spirit, to undermine the values of the worldly kingdoms which are failing, and to proclaim the unfailing kingdom of Jesus Christ.