

Last Call

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[0:00] If you would open up your Bibles to John chapter 12. It's on page 1068 of your pew Bible.

! We've got something controversial here. Let me just pray for us one more time. Father, would you pour out your Spirit upon us that Jesus would be magnified now.

Cause all hearts in the room to rise to the King. In Jesus' name, amen. You know, there are certain names of people that if you bring up in a conversation, you're going to get an immediate response because they're controversial.

Do you remember the whole Bad Bunny situation in the Super Bowl? Controversial. If you bring up Anthony Fauci's name in conversation, it's going to be controversial.

If you bring up Donald Trump's name in a conversation, it'll be controversial. But the most controversial person that has ever walked on the planet is Jesus Christ by far.

[1:18] You bring his name up in a conversation. And you're going to get a variety of responses. And Jesus is controversial because of who he claimed to be and what he has claimed to do.

He claimed to be God in the flesh. And he claims to be the only way by which a sinner can be saved. And the question is, is that true?

Is he the King? Is he your King? Two weeks ago, when we were in John 10, there was controversy over these two titles that Jesus had claimed for himself.

The Christ or the Messiah, this long-awaited king, and the other title, Son of God, which means he's fully God. And last week, after he raised Lazarus from the dead, in great controversy, the religious leaders started to plot his death.

They wanted to assassinate him. And so here's John 12. And John 12 is a bit of a pivot in the entire gospel of John. Because John 12 is essentially Jesus' last call for people to believe in him.

[2:31] It's his last public engagement of the crowds. Next week, we'll start in on John 13, where Jesus will be interacting with his disciples.

And from there on out, we're going to have smaller interactions in more private settings between Jesus and people. So this is a pivot. This is a last call.

And there are a variety of reactions we're going to see in chapter 12. We're going to first see an extravagant response. It's going to be shocking.

And we're also going to see a response of false pretense, of some people who are trying to make the savior of their own making. We're going to see unbelief of various kinds.

We're going to see the unbelief that's the result of loving money. We're going to see the unbelief of fearing man. All sorts of different responses. Jesus is controversial.

[3:34] Is Jesus the king? Let me show you how we're going to walk through the passage. We're going to look at his anointing. We're going to look at his arrival into Jerusalem.

We're going to look at him and say, it's go time. And then we have an explanation for why the Jews are not believing. And then there's the last call.

The last two scenes of unbelief and the last call, I'm just going to touch on briefly. So, is Jesus the king?

Is he your king? And how do you respond to him? So, let's look at verses 1 through 11. Because of the amount of scripture we're going to be getting through, I'm just going to be summarizing as we work through the passage.

And in this passage, scene 1, this anointing, we see something unforgettable. It's in verses 1 through 11. Last week, we learned that after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, the Pharisees wanted to kill him.

[4:40] And so, he left the area into the wilderness. It was not his time to die. But here, in chapter 12, it's now six days before the Passover. And the Passover is this huge feast the Jews would

observe in Jerusalem, where they would remember God's deliverance of them from Egypt, and they would kill lambs.

So, now Jesus, who had left the Jerusalem area because it was not his time to die, is now comes back to Bethany because he's invited to come to a feast, because he's the honored guest, because he's raised Lazarus from the dead.

And so, he goes back to Bethany, which is just under two miles away from Jerusalem, and they gave a dinner for him. Martha is there, and she's doing what she's known for. She's serving. Lazarus is there, who was raised from the dead. He's reclining at the table next to Jesus. And then the focus falls on Mary. Mary, therefore, took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair.

The house was filled with fragrance of the perfume. If you were in the room at this moment, my guess is you'd be saying, this is extraordinary. This, this is, it almost feels over the top.

[6:10] The perfume, the nard, estimates have it in modern day money as around \$45,000.

This is one of her prized possessions. They would have been a wealthy family. But, but in order for her to pour the nard onto his feet, that means she had a certain posture.

Where do you think she was? She was at his feet. So not only is she offering her most prized possession, her posture is one of at his feet.

And then the pride of women in the first century was their hair. And what is she doing? She's using her hair like, like a towel you clean somebody's feet with.

She's, she's, it's all submitted to Jesus. It's, it's, it's the posture. It's the prized possession. It's, it's how she is anointing and spreading this perfume upon his feet.

[7:18] It's, it's a picture of extravagance. It's a picture of, this is extraordinary. It's a picture in which, oh, she's all in.

It's a picture of full surrender. She's all in. All that she is, all that she has at the feet of Jesus. She knows something.

This is the man who raised her brother from the dead. This is the man who is the Christ, the son of God, the son of man. This is the one who had healed a man born blind.

She knows who this is, even though he, she, he hasn't died. And he hasn't been raised from the dead. She has enough knowledge to know this is her king.

And so she's responding in kind. What we see next is Judas in verses four through six.

[8:23] Judas is like, hey, wait a second. We're told here in verse four that he was the one who betrayed Jesus.

He's one of the disciples. And in verse five, he says, why was this ointment not sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor? Sounds godly.

It sounds merciful, but it's just full of pretense because he's really a thief. If you see in verse six, he said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief.

And having charge of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put in it. Here's the thinking. You know, we should sell this to the poor. Put that 45 grand into the money bag and I'll help the poor.

You see what's going on there? You know what it's a picture of? It's the opposite of Mary. It's selfishness, self-serving.

[9:21] And so here we have at the outset of chapter 12, a contrast between Mary's selfless devotion, extravagant, and we have Judas's self-delusion.

And he's a disciple. This goes on. Something else happens in Bethany in verses nine through 11. A large crowd of Jews learned that Jesus was in Bethany.

They came because not only they want to see Jesus, they want to see this guy who's been raised from the dead. And then the Pharisees respond. They're like, oh no.

People are going away and believing in Jesus. And so you know what they do? Look at verse 10. They expand their murder plot to now include Lazarus.

So the evidence gets lost. This is controversial. People are willing to kill over this guy.

[10:34] It's all revolving around Jesus. We see extraordinary devotion. We see this extraordinary delusion. A disciple who's pilfering from the money bag.

And this extraordinary death making. There's no question that the appropriate response being presented here is the Mary response.

And so maybe the question that you need to be asking yourself right now is, what is keeping you from responding to King Jesus like Mary?

Full surrender. All in for Jesus. Posture. Prize possessions. The pride of your life.

All for him. The second scene we come to is Jesus' arrival. And that takes place in verses 12 through 19. It's John's triumphal entry.

[11:39] John's version of Palm Sunday. And note, it's now the next day. So five days closer to Passover when these lambs would be killed.

And now Jesus is entering Jerusalem. Do you remember how John 11 ended? There are these people from all over the countryside coming to Jerusalem.

And they were like, is Jesus going to show up? Is he going to come? And here he is. Jesus is no coward. He is on mission to bring glory to God his Father through his death and resurrection.

Well, he is met by a crowd. And you can see that crowd. 12, the next day, the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

And if you look at 17 and 18, this large crowd had heard about Jesus from the people that actually saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead. Word has spread.

[12:40] The sign, verse 18, has gone out. And now this huge crowd comes to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem. And look what they're saying.

Hosanna! Verse 13, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel. Our King has come. Our King is here.

It's Psalm 118.25. The thing is, they're missing why he has come.

There's a Hebrew word here. Hosanna. It means save us. It means deliver us.

Save us. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Our Savior is here. Even the King of Israel. Our Deliverer has come.

[13:44] The King has come. What do you think they are planning this King to deliver them from? Roman occupation. To make Israel great again.

To cause Israel to stand on its own two feet. To bring back glory to Israel. But that's not why Jesus is riding into Jerusalem on a donkey.

Jesus isn't coming into Jerusalem to deliver this people militarily or politically. He's not on a war horse. He is on a donkey.

Look at verses 14 and 15. And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it. Just that it is written, fear not, daughter of Zion. Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt. That's Zechariah 9.9.

Humble. Seated on a donkey. Coming into Jerusalem. Bringing salvation with him. Zechariah 9.9.

[14:50] You see, Jesus is coming into Jerusalem. Not to deliver people from the enemy of Rome. He is coming into Jerusalem to deliver a new people from a greater enemy.

Sin and death and the devil. That's why he's coming into Jerusalem. He brings eternal life with him.

And so the misunderstanding is the crux of it is in the word Hosanna. Save us. They had made Jesus into a Savior King of their own making.

Make us great again. You're the guy. It's kind of like when someone claims to become a Christian because they think that Jesus is going to, quote unquote, make them the best version of themselves.

And what they have in mind in that is that Jesus is the means to accomplish their appointed end.

This is what I want to do. Jesus is going to get me there.

[16:00] Jesus, you're great. You're the King. But the reality is when Jesus comes, he takes over. He doesn't exist for us.

We exist for him. He's the King. So in 14 and 15, Jesus finds the young donkey, goes in, and what we learn is that the disciples, in verse 16, they did not understand what was going on here at first.

But it wasn't until after Jesus was glorified, after that he died, that they remembered and that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

It wasn't until after he was glorified that they had the aha moment. They were a little slow on the uptake. We have a bunch of people who totally miss.

They want Jesus to be something that he wasn't. And then we have these disciples who are kind of slow on the uptick. And the Pharisees again, in verse 19, said to one another, you see that you are, they're talking to one another, you see that you are gaining nothing.

[17:12] Look, the world has gone after him. They're seeing Jesus entering into Jerusalem to great fanfare. And they're like, we've lost the crowd. Everybody, the whole world is going after him.

It's like, oh no. There's a variety of responses to King Jesus coming into Jerusalem. You have misunderstanding, a distorted view of Jesus as King, that he has come to make me what I want to be.

He's seen as a threat by the Pharisees. There's confusion among the disciples of what this really means. And so, let's ask this question.

Like the misunderstanding crowd, are you seeking to make Jesus a King of your own making?

[18:27] Are you wanting Jesus to make America great again? Is that how you're seeing him? To that end? Or are you seeing Jesus as a King of his own kingdom?

And when he calls people to himself from every tribe, tongue, and nation in the world, he doesn't call them to become Americans. He calls them to become citizens of his kingdom. That's what he died for.

I like to think of myself as a monarchist first and as an American citizen second. These disciples who eventually realized that Jesus is coming in humble to establish a spiritual kingdom, to bring spiritual salvation.

These men were eventually radically changed. Radically changed. They realized that Jesus came to establish a kingdom that will never end.

It's indestructible. It's the Daniel 7 kingdom given to the Son of Man. Jesus' arrival. It's controversial.

[19:45] Who do you say he is? Is he the King who's come to take over? To take everything over? Scene 3.

Go time. Go time. This starts in verse 19. So the Pharisees said to one another, you see that you are gaining nothing.

Look, the world has gone after him. And then look at verse 20. Now among those who went up to worship at the feast, Passover, were some Greeks, some Gentiles, some non-Jews, people from very different nations than Israel.

They are coming into Jerusalem and look what they do. They came to Philip and then Philip went and told Andrew, verse 22, and Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus and they told them that these Gentiles are like, sir, we wish to see Jesus.

The whole world is going after him. Gentiles are now seeking out Jesus. And what Jesus says next is the king speaking.

[21:03] And Jesus answered them, the hour has come. It's go time. The hour has come for the son of man to be glorified.

The son of man is that title from Daniel 7 in which God the father, the ancient of days, gives a kingdom from every, of people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

He gives them to this son of man who will establish a kingdom that will last forever. And he's saying here, the hour has come for the son of man to be glorified, to be exalted, to be revealed.

And now the question is, how will he be glorified? God, which makes verse 24 very interesting.

Here comes another truly, truly. We've seen this before.

It's Jesus saying, hey, let me set the record straight. Let me set the record straight in what it means for the son of man to be glorified. And he says, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone.

[22:09] But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Well, that's really interesting. When I think of someone being glorified, I don't think of death. And what Jesus is saying, I am going to be glorified in my death.

I am going to be like a grain of wheat that falls into the ground, dies, and then brings life, fruitfulness. See what he's doing here?

The son of man is going to be glorified in a surprising manner. This king, who's coming in on a donkey, is saying that he's going to be glorified through his death.

And then he says, verse 25, whoever loves his life loses it. Now remember, he's speaking to both Jews and Gentiles here. It is a crowd, verse 34, who's listening to him.

It's a mixed crowd. He's like, anyone who would come after me, whether you're Jew or Gentile, whether you are red, yellow, black, or white, you are precious in his sight.

[23:14] Anyone. He says this, whoever loves his life loses it. Wouldn't he? I tend to think if you love your life, you're going to preserve your life.

But that's not what Jesus is saying. Let's go on. What else does he say? Whoever loves his life will lose it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

What is going on? Whoever hates his life in this world, he's the one, she's the one who has eternal life.

What? This is how the kingdom works. You see, the way you enter the kingdom of God, how you're saved, is informed by how the king established his kingdom.

Jesus died in order to gather a people for himself, and now we, his people, come to him not saying, I'm going to live my life my way.

[24 : 19] We come to him saying, I am all yours. This is, this is a revisit to Mary. This is, this is, I'm laying my life down, posture, price, possessions, the pride of my being.

It's all yours. I am coming to you. You, you're the controlling center of my life. You've always been the controlling center. Now I, I gladly come under you.

I gladly lay my life in full surrender to you. That's what he's talking about. Here, here's, here's another way to say it. You cannot be fully devoted to yourself and fully devoted to Jesus simultaneously.

You got to choose one or the other. And the, and in order to become fully devoted to Jesus, you need to hate yourself, which is another way you need to die to yourself. You need to die to saying, I'm in charge.

You need to die to saying, I'm living for my own glory. You need to die to saying things like, I'm going to control everything. You got to die to these things and release them to Jesus.

[25 : 34] This is quite, quite a way to say it's go time. Jesus is just days away from dying on the cross. And he says, the hour has come.

And then, he says, if anyone serves me, the father will not honor, will honor him. That's, do you want to honor God, the father? Devote yourself to Jesus Christ and all that you are.

He delights in it. Jesus is glorified. God is glorified. There's a couple other words I want you to notice.

In verse 24, excuse me, in verse 23, the hour has come for the son of man to be glorified. Verse 27, now is my soul troubled and what shall I say?

For, father, save me from this hour, but for this purpose, I have come to this hour. This hour, this hour, now. It's, it's go time.

[26 : 48] And what Jesus is saying is, I am feeling the weight of what is about to happen. He's like, what am I going to do? Ask my father to deliver me from that?

He's like, no. It's for this very purpose that I have come to this hour. And the purpose is to lay his life down. To give his life for us.

That's why the king has come. It's go time. And then we read in verse 28, Father, glorify your name. Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it and I will glorify it again. This is one of three spots in the Gospels in which God the Father audibly speaks with Jesus the Son and present. His baptism, his transfiguration, and hear. And what do the crowds hear? Did you hear that thunder? Or other like, there's an angel speaking to him.

[27 : 50] And what Jesus says is extraordinary. He's saying, this voice has come. This is verse 30. This voice has come for your sake, not mine. It's for our sake that this voice of God the Father spoke.

spoke. And here's why that is. It assures us that what is unfolding before our eyes is the plan of God Almighty.

This is no accident. This is right according to plan. God is sovereignly carrying out his plan for the fullness of time in which he will be glorified with Jesus at the center of it all.

It's for us. We hear this voice. And then comes another now. Jesus is going to die.

The time has come. The hour is here. It's go time. Now is the judgment of this world. The death of Jesus is a judgment. God pours out his wrath in judgment upon all of the sin.

[29 : 00] The penalty for sin on all who would believe. It is judgment at that moment. Good Friday which is just days away from Jesus speaking this. God would pour out all of his wrath for all of our sin for one time done.

Judgment. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. When Jesus dies on the cross you can read this if you want in Revelation chapter 12 the devil gets cast out of heaven thrown down.

Victory. Victory over the devil. He no longer is able to make any kind of accusation against the brethren. It's victory.

This king on a donkey coming into Jerusalem it's go time. he's going to die and his death is going to bear God's judgment for all who would believe and it casts down casts out the devil.

And then he says in verse 32 and when I'm lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to myself. That lifting up is him referring to his being lifted up on the cross.

[30 : 27] and that is the thing. His death is the thing when those who hear and understand is what draws us to Christ because his death for our sin is the greatest news you can ever hear.

John said he said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die but it's met with confusion in the crowd.

The crowd is like we've heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. What do you mean you're going to get lifted up? How can you say that the Son of Man look at what they're doing they're saying the Son of Man and the Christ are the same person.

How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? What do you mean lifted up? When the Christ comes he's going to stay forever he's going to establish a kingdom that will never end. Who is the Son of Man?

They're asking Jesus. And what Jesus says is I'll condense it for you I'm the light of the world. If you believe in me if you walk in the light you will not you will no longer be in darkness but if you do not walk in the light you're going to walk like one walks in the dark you're not going to know where you're going.

[31 : 52] And so he says while you have the light while you have me here because I'm just days away from my death believe in the light that you may become sons daughters of light to those who received him to them he gave the right to become children of God children of light pulled out of darkness brought into the light delivered from the domain of darkness transferred into the kingdom of his beloved son.

What we have going on here is is Jesus just saying I'm here I'm here for all people I am the king who's come into Jerusalem and if you believe in me regardless of your background I am happy to be your king I will pay for your sins I will give you eternal life it's go time Jesus has come into the to Jerusalem it's go time to die it's go time to glorify his father it's go time to judge it's go time to cast out the devil it's go time for those who would believe to become children of the light are you a child of light do you know that Jesus went into Jerusalem to die for you the son of man the king had to be lifted up that's scene three scene four is a surprising explanation for unbelief in verse 36 we read while you have the light believe in the light that you may become sons of light and then it goes on when Jesus had said these things he departed and hid himself from them even though it's five days out he says these things and then he departs and hides himself his time to die his moment of death has not yet come but look at verse 37 though he had done so many signs before them they still did not believe in him they still did not believe and so what John does here the writer of the gospel of John is he then explains their unbelief why they wouldn't believe and he does so by quoting two passages from Isaiah the first is Isaiah chapter 53 so that the word spoken by the prophet they did not believe so that the word spoken by the prophet

Isaiah might be fulfilled their unbelief fulfilled what I'm about to read to you you ready the first verse may not be familiar but the second and third will who has believed what he has heard from us and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed for he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground he had no form or majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should desire him he was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised and we esteemed him not that's why they weren't believing that the suffering servant the Christ had come and they they rejected him he came to his own and his own his very own did not believe him and they are personally responsible for their unbelief they still did not believe they didn't believe they're responsible for their unbelief they have rejected the one bringing salvation but then we have further explanation in verse 39 and now we get into the deep end of the pool listen to what he says therefore they could not believe not only did they not believe and they're responsible for that they could not believe why couldn't they believe listen to where he goes this is out of

Isaiah chapter 6 he has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart in turn and I would heal them Isaiah is saying the reason why they don't believe is because they're responsible for that but underneath that all God has hardened their hearts it's God behind this that can make you uncomfortable if that makes you uncomfortable it's actually good that that makes you uncomfortable we're seeing God sovereignty operate on a level

that we tend to not think about and so what we have here what what John is showing us is both human responsibility and God's sovereignty when it comes to people believing in Jesus and what John is showing us it's not either or it's both and it's called compatibilism we believe that it's compatible for for people to be fully responsible for their own decisions and yet God is completely sovereign over all things it's it's mysterious we don't get it let me ask you this question or let me make this point if human beings this is John Piper point if human beings! [38:01] are able to turn a life threatening virus into a life protecting vaccine think of polio then I think God can figure out this whole thing between human responsibility and his sovereignty I think he's got it covered we come up short in being able to understand it but God doesn't what's even more amazing is what John says next Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him contextually he's talking about the vision of Isaiah chapter 6 where Isaiah sees these angels crying out holy holy holy is the Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory and the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called and the house was filled with smoke and I said woe is me for I am lost for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the king the Lord of hosts this this humble man riding in on a donkey into Jerusalem is is the God of Isaiah 6 and then he points to a particular type of unbelief it's it's crazy verse 42 nevertheless many even of the authorities believed in him think of the word believed in quotes but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it so that they would not be put out of the synagogue for they love the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God were they genuine followers of Jesus no they weren't these authorities who believed in Jesus they would say yeah I believe in Jesus but they would not publicly before man say it and so their real God was what people thought of them that's who they were serving and what John says here is that keeps you out of the kingdom if you're not willing to confess Jesus the king of kings before man you know what I love about this afternoon's baptism whether it's here or by Eichelman we have five people who are going public with their confession that Jesus is their king they're not fearing man what we have here is an explanation of people's unbelief in verses 44 through 50 there's a last call in publicly Jesus saying believe in me he goes to his death inviting these Jewish people and you and me to believe in him here's the point of this passage Jesus is the king he's the king who has come and the question is is it true or not is this the real king of all who would lay down his life so that you could live eternally there's a variety of responses the one that should stand out in your mind is Mary's response it was extraordinary her posture giving of her prized possessions wiping his feet was the pride of her being her hair that's how we should respond and the question is why aren't you responding that way what's keeping you from that is it love of money Judas is it losing control Pharisees is it saying silent like these authorities who wouldn't confess Jesus or is it like the crowds making this king into a king of your own making is that what's keeping you from going all in for Jesus for complete surrender remember you can't simultaneously be fully devoted to yourself and fully devoted to Jesus the king you can't have two kings and so let me urge you this morning bend your knee to king Jesus if you're not a Christian this is the last call you don't know what tomorrow holds bend your knee to [43:30] Jesus today you've got everything you need to know and if you are a Christian bend your knee to Jesus today confess him again as your king of kings and lord of lords Jesus is the most controversial person in human history and he should be because he's God in the flesh and he's made one way one and only one way to be saved through his death he calls for an extraordinary response there's this verse in psalm 96 for great is the lord and greatly to be praised we've got an extraordinary king and we gladly give him an extraordinary response do I have an amen let me pray God in heaven we thank you so much for these words of Jesus and John 12 we thank you for what you're going to do in the balance of this day we commit our way to you in the name of Jesus amen