

The King glorified through death

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Preacher: Dave Bott

[0 : 00] Will you pray with me as we come to God's word? Let's pray. Father, all of us, to some degree or another, have had a chaotic week in this world, the turmoil of this life.

Lord, you know each of our hearts. You know what we need to hear. You know what we need to see in you. So we pray that you would show us the light of your son.

Lord, we all need to see your son more clearly this morning. We need to know the life that you give us through knowing him. So I pray that you would make Jesus clear to us, show us his glory so that we might have life in him.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. I want to start this morning by asking, what are you entitled to in this world?

That car spot at the front of your house? Maybe some compensation, some money.

[1 : 23] Do you have that feeling where you need your ideas to be validated? People need to agree with what your opinion is. Are you entitled for people to sympathise with your emotions?

Maybe we feel entitled to have a really satisfying job where we feel important and successful. It needs to fulfil us.

Maybe we feel entitled to be comfortable. Socially, physically. Maybe you feel entitled to some peace and quiet.

Maybe you feel entitled to a holiday. In an argument. In an argument. Do you have that thought process where I deserve to get my way.

My point of view is right. I must have it. I'm entitled to it. I'm entitled to an apology. I'm not loving that person until they apologise.

[2 : 31] We don't really like it when someone's too entitled, do we? I'm picturing, as a really small example, I'm picturing like at a bakery or you're ordering a coffee and you're not quite sure who the person's going to serve and they're like, who was first?

And you know you were first. But someone sees the opportunity and they just go, oh, yep, and they take their order. I've had a hard week.

Are you entitled to be respected? To be loved? To have that position in your company?

That position of power in the family? That position of influence in the church? Do you deserve it?

Who are you frustrated at at the moment?

What do you think they're not giving you that you deserve? I think a sense of entitlement, demanding what is rightfully owed to me, it's the air we breathe in this world.

[3 : 51] It's the language we all understand and operate on. I wonder if we can treat God with a sense of entitlement.

I can easily get into the headspace of, I've done this and this and this for you, God. I deserve some leisure time now.

You have no right to tell me to do more. Or maybe we can treat God really well in one area of our life and so we deserve forgiveness for that other area.

Or maybe we praise him and thank him and pray to him in the morning and we think we deserve a really smooth rest of the day, trouble-free.

I wonder if we easily get frustrated at God because he doesn't answer our prayers when we want him to.

[4 : 57] Can we easily pray, give me today my daily bread, without also praying, your kingdom come, your will be done.

Amen. What we deserve, entitlement, it's the air we breathe and it seeps into our relationship with God, it seeps into the church, it seeps in everywhere.

And if we're honest, I think we love it. As we come to listen to John 12, Jesus stands out from this world.

He is the light that exposes the darkness. He is the light that conquers the darkness.

He is the light that draws people into his life. He stands out. So let's look at him. Let's listen to him in John 12.

[6:00] In our passage today, we're coming close to the last words that Jesus speaks publicly before he's executed. And we see that an event happens and it seems like not a big deal, but it's actually symbolic.

It's a trigger for the time that Jesus is going to be glorified as king of the world. And then we're going to look at the four aspects of what it will mean for Jesus to become king of the world.

He first tells us that he's like the one seed that is buried, that is planted to produce many seeds.

And this involves him choosing to hate his life in order to make the father known.

And by doing this, by dying, he will decisively defeat his enemies. And by doing it, on our behalf, he's going to draw the whole world to himself.

this is what it will mean for Jesus to become king. So once we've looked and listened and seen Jesus' light, we're going to be confronted with two questions.

[7:17] Is this the kind of king that we want? Is this what we're looking for? And are we going to follow this king?

So chapters 1 to 11 of John cover about three years of Jesus' public ministry. But these final ten chapters slow right down and focus on Jesus' final week.

John doesn't want us to miss the gravity of this moment. Something big is happening. All Jesus' powerful signs that demonstrate that he has been sent by God the Father, they've hit a climax.

Bringing a dead man whose flesh was starting to smell after four days. Calling him out of the tomb and then later having dinner with him.

Who wouldn't follow a king into battle who could resurrect his people. But John wants us to focus on something even bigger.

[8:28] Something is coming. And if it's bigger than that it must be huge. And John keeps telling us again and again that the Passover feast is about to begin.

The feast that remembers God's powerful signs through Moses in saving Israel from the control of Egypt. Where God's decisive act of judging Pharaoh and Egypt and delivering his people was the death that hit everyone.

But God spared his people through the land that was sacrificed so that death passed over them.

And then Jesus rides into Jerusalem with all Israel acknowledging him as their king crying out Hosanna save us we pray.

What is Jesus about to do? He's coming into the city of God's king. Will he take up his throne surely? Will he rule over the world from Jerusalem smashing all the nations bringing prosperity like never before?

We are on the verge of the fulfilment of God's promises in the Old Testament like Psalm 2 the king who will reign over all the world. The crowds want it.

[9:59] Jesus raising Lazarus he's got the power to do it. The Jewish leaders who are against him they seem powerless they seem frustrated. Surely with everything in place Jerusalem's welcome will trigger the king's ascension to the throne.

But we find a different trigger in verses 20 to 23. Have a look with me. Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks.

So these came to Philip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee and asked him sir we wish to see Jesus. Philip went and told Andrew Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

that's a pretty tame trigger for God's biggest moment in history.

A few Greeks want to see Jesus. So what? We might be thinking. There must be something more symbolic going on here.

[11:17] So what do we know? They're not ethnic Jews. They're not descendants of Abraham.

They don't have any right to the kingdom of God. But they have either fully converted to Judaism or they worship God while remaining fully Greek.

And they've come to Jerusalem to worship at the Passover. If we picture them in Jerusalem you won't see them inside the temple. They couldn't go in there.

Only priests, Jewish priests, could go in there. You wouldn't see them in the inner court where the sacrifices were offered. Only Jews could go in there. You can't get that close to God if you're a Greek.

There is a warning sign going into that courtyard. If you go in here you will be stoned to death. They would have been in the outer courtyard at best trying to worship God, trying to come close to God. Given what's going on in Jerusalem at the time, it's not surprising they hear of Jesus and so they approach Philip, who apparently is a Greek name, so he could speak Greek, we can assume, and he's from a Greek-speaking town in Bethsaida.

[12:33] But Philip seems a bit unsure. Maybe he's expecting Jesus to be king of Israel. Should he waste time with foreigners? We're not really told what's going on in Philip's mind.

But he tells Andrew and together they seem to think it's a good idea. Maybe they're excited by Jesus growing popularity, so they go and tell Jesus. And for Jesus, he's the only one who understands what's going on.

This is the trigger. He declares the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. At the very start of Jesus' ministry, he goes to a wedding in Cana.

And if you remember what happened there, what's his response when he's asked to help with the wine that has run out? He says, my hour has not yet come.

John just puts that in there, his hour. What is it? We're not told. It keeps us in suspense. And then we jump forward a few chapters and Jesus is speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well.

[13:54] And he says to her, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. Father.

But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Then in chapter 7, after all his signs of healing the centurion's son, feeding the 5,000, walking on water, he's teaching in the temple saying, the Father has sent me.

The signs clearly show it. And the authorities try to arrest him. And we're told no one laid a hand on him because his hour has not yet come.

The hour has come for Jesus to be glorified. What's the trigger? It's the world being drawn to Jesus. The Pharisee's complaint the world was going after him was way more true than they even realised. The main purpose for which Jesus was sent by the Father into the world has arrived. But how can Jesus draw people who have nothing to do with God's law, who have no original share in the Passover, Passover?

[15:29] How can Jesus draw people like this to worship God? How would Jesus be lifted up as king? For a Jewish person, they might think back to the time of Solomon, where the Queen of Sheba comes and sees Solomon and sees the golden temple, sees his armies, sees the organisation of his kingdom, sees and hears his wise teaching.

And the Queen of Sheba was speechless. She was amazed by it. Is this what it's going to look like for Jesus to be king of the world? It's not what Jesus has in mind.

It's not God's plan. We're going to look at four aspects of what it means for Jesus to be glorified. God's love. The first one is in verse 24.

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

if you've been to the burial of a person before, have you gone back to the cemetery to see what has grown out of what has been planted?

[17:11] It's an awful thing, death. when you plant a seed, it's an exciting thing. You see the sprout and then it fully develops.

But Jesus isn't talking about botany, he's talking about a human body being planted and producing life. Something very unique is happening, is going to happen.

It's unique because Jesus himself is unique. He is the one seed, God's one son. I was reflecting this week how my dad was saved out of a non-Christian family to know and live for God.

God's and I was really thankful for that. And then by God's grace and God's generosity, I and my brothers know God as well.

God's love. God's love. God's love. My mum loves doing family tree stuff. She's looked up Lincoln and Leah in Myanmar trying to trace their family tree.

[18:35] She's looked up Emma's great-great-something grandfather who was the first missionary to New Zealand. Bit of a mixed bag there. could you imagine the spiritual tree that has sprouted all

over the world from that one seed being planted 2,000 years ago?

I'd love to see it, to map it out. Us sitting here today is fruit of that.

Jesus' glorification as king, he did not use a sword. He didn't send out an army. He did it by being planted in the earth.

Jesus is saying the better Passover is about to happen when the Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world. But don't think for a moment that this was somehow easy for Jesus to do.

He had to struggle to hate his life in order to make the Father known in the world. Verse 27, now is my soul troubled.

[20 : 04] That word there, troubled, it doesn't quite get the force across. It's like his insides are full of revulsion, the horror, the anxiety. What shall I say?

Father, save me from this hour, but for this purpose I have come to this hour. The horror of dying to this world and the desire to serve his father are clashing.

sin. He doesn't just cave in to what his father wants out of resentment. He doesn't fight and dig his heels in for what he's entitled to.

He doesn't want to die, but he wants something even more than not going through with it. father, glorify your name is what he asked for.

Make yourself known to the world through what I do. Bring people to worship who you are because you are worth it. could you know the father's love for you any more than when you look at the son on the cross dying so that death and judgment pass over you?

[21 : 27] Could you know God's love any more than that? The father has made known most clearly who he is because Jesus chose to hate his life in this world.

Imagine what a difference it would make in your relationships, in your workplace, in our church family if we shared Jesus' all-consuming desire.

Not save us we pray but father glorify your name. What difference would that make? for Jesus then a voice came from heaven I have glorified it and I will glorify it again.

John's gospel was full of people testifying and bearing witness to Jesus and now we have the father directly and audibly bearing witness that his son is saying and doing everything in service of the father.

This hour of lifting up the son to rule over the world first by dying for the sins of the world this is the father's plan. It is the decisive moment for all people forever.

[22 : 56] hearing this voice the people then and us now should listen very carefully to what Jesus says next.

In verse 31 and 32 he interprets the significance of the hour of his death burial and ascension to the throne. he uses a theologically loaded word now.

Everything is about to change. A shift is about to take place. Now is the judgment of this world. Now will the rule of this world be cast out.

When John talks about this world he has in mind all of human society that lives in rebellion of its creator. Not thanking him.

Not listening to him. Not obeying him. Not living for him. That's what characterises the world. And when this world casts judgment on the son of God thinking he deserves to die it shows the depths of the world's stubbornness not to come to God.

[24 : 18] It shows the depths of the world's rejection of God. And the cross also is a foretaste of what anyone who treats God that way will one day experience.

Now is the judgment of the world. God's God's God's judgment of the world. This is the time for the Passover lamb that Jesus is going to bear the judgment for his people.

and the ruler of this world will be driven out. You might think in putting to death the heir to the throne it might have seen that Satan had won.

But as Jesus' blood cleanses us from all our wrongs Satan has lost his power to accuse God's people anymore. Being raised up as king over heaven and earth Satan has lost his authority.

Those who are set free are free to serve Christ. And who is this for? Who is Jesus going to save and bring under his rule?

[25 : 54] Like the seed buried in the earth to produce many now Jesus uses a new image. The image of being lifted up. John here is likely picking up the picture in the Old Testament when the snake is lifted up on a pole in the wilderness and any one of God's people who deserved punishment, anyone who looked at that snake being lifted up would be instantly healed and

forgiven.

Jesus will be lifted up in his death and his ascension to the throne in heaven and anyone who looks to him will be saved.

And what's the result going to be? The result is the whole world will be drawn to him. Everyone without distinction, whoever looks to him.

Remember what triggered all this? The Greeks wanting to see him. This is the profound answer to their desire to see him. After Jesus completes the hour, Jesus calls everyone everywhere.

In me, you can approach God, you can know God's love for you. In me, come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come.

[27 : 19] Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Come. Imagine if you were one of those soccer boys in Thailand that were trapped a couple of years ago in the cave that collapsed.

Living in darkness, trapped after 18 days of being in the darkness, darkness, any hope of your life being saved is just fading away every hour.

The moment that you saw light, when the rescuers made an opening, how would you feel? Bored? would you be drawn to it? Jesus is the light of the world, and his cross will draw all people from all over the world into his life.

It's happening. You and I are the fruit of it. He will continue to do it until he has saved every one of his sheep. He will save every one of his sheep.

[28 : 45] So we're left with two questions. Is this the kind of king you're looking for?

In verses 34 to 36, the crowds fail to hear the affirmation of the Father's voice from heaven. They don't listen to Jesus. Instead, they enter into a debate with Jesus.

We've heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? It seems like a legitimate question.

Isn't the Christ meant to remain forever? How can he die? They're okay with Jesus calling himself king. They love that label.

They're just not a huge fan of the content. What type of king are you claiming to be, Jesus? They justify themselves thinking they're interpreting the Old Testament right, but they're not listening to the Father's voice.

[29 : 54] They're not listening to Jesus' voice. For us today, we've got to ask, are we actually listening to John's voice, God's word?

They want a triumphant Christ, not a Christ that dies. They're Jews. They probably have a sense of entitlement to be part of the kingdom, to receive the blessings of their idea of the kingdom.

They do not like the pattern of a crucified Christ who says, follow me. God's God's God's God's God's God's God's God's love.

I think this confronts us when we think about the part of our life that is really hurting us at the moment. What type of Christ do we want at that point? A Christ who will give us the victory and remove our pain?

or a Christ who calls you to follow him in his death, to make God known to the world? Is this the kind of king we're looking for?

[31 : 12] Jesus' response, walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.

While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become sons of light. We've got a choice of whether we will listen to Jesus or not.

Will you not listen to Jesus and be left alone in the dark following the ways of this world towards judgment? Or will you trust in the brilliance of his light as he lays down his life for you and become a son of light?

If you think back to how you came to know God, have a think back to who it was that God used to introduce God to you? Did they lay down their life in some way for your sake?

Maybe giving their time? Maybe you notice in them that they returned evil with love? love? This is the pattern that God uses to make his name known.

[32 : 51] If that's the case, I think when things are difficult is actually the best opportunity for us to show that we are following Christ.

So that injustice in the workplace, instead of demanding what you're entitled to, is an opportunity to pray Father, glorify your name.

The agony of being in an argument with a friend or loved one, it's an opportunity to pray Father, glorify your name. the pattern of the cross, help me lay down my life for this person's sake, for your name's sake.

When it's going to cost you to help someone, Father, glorify your name. Jesus challenges us with the words in 25 and 26, whoever loves his life, loses it.

Whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me and where I am, there will my servant be also.

[34 : 18] If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him. our king has been glorified through his death and resurrection.

He is king of the world and he showed us the way to glory. His way has nothing to do with fighting for what you're entitled to, but he chose to lay down his life to give life to you, to the world, to make the Father's love known.

When people see you, do they see just another person of the world fighting for what is rightfully theirs? Or do they see a child of the light?

someone who lays down their rights so that others might see Christ's death through you, that the Father might be known, his love known, so that they might come to life in Christ.

Our king is glorified, he is king of the world and he's shown us the way to glory. The question is will we follow him? Would you pray with me?

[36 : 03] Our Father, we confess that there's a big part of us that loves our life in this world.

Lord, forgive us for clinging to it. Lord, our love for the world makes us struggle to see Jesus clearly.

God God, God, we thank you that you have spoken and that you've helped us see Jesus again.

Please continue to show us your son more and more for the rest of our days. Father, I pray that you give all of us individually, in our families, as a church, a deeper and deeper appreciation for Jesus laying down his life in order to give us life so that we can know you as our father.

Lord, I pray that you would use us as a church to follow you, to be characterised as people who lay down their life for others' sake so that you might be known.

[37 : 26] In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.