

Christ and His Kingdom

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[0 : 00] Our scripture lesson this morning is taken from Luke chapter 19 verses 1 through 40.! Can you please follow with me in your Bibles. He entered Jericho and was passing through, and behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus.

He was the chief tax collector and was rich, and he was seeking to see who Jesus was. But on account of the crowd, he could not, because he was small in stature.

So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a second mortuary to see him, for he was about to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.

So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all grumbled. He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.

And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.

[1 : 15] And Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is the son of Abraham, for the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

And as they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

He said, therefore, A noble man went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minutes, and said to them, Engage in business until I come.

But a citizen hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, We do not want this man to reign over us. When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business.

The first came before him, saying, Lord, your mina has made ten minas more. And he said to him, Well done, good servant, because you have been faithful in a few, in a very little, you will have the authority over ten cities.

[2 : 40] And the second came, saying, Lord, your mina has made five minas. And he said to him, And you are to be over five cities. Then another came, saying, Lord, here is your mina, which I kept, laid away in an unhackertive, for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man.

You take what you did not deposit, and you reap what you did not sow. He said to him, I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant.

You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit, and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank?

And at my coming, I might have collected it with interest. And he said to those who stood by, Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.

And they said to him, Lord, he has ten minas, and I tell you that to everyone who has more will be given, but from the one who has not, even that he has will be taken away.

[3 : 50] But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me. And when he had said these things, he went on ahead going to Jerusalem.

When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany at the mount that is called Alvet, he sent two of the disciples saying, Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a coat tied on which no one has ever sat.

Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you why you are untying it, you shall say to this, you shall say this, The Lord has need of it.

So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. And as they were untying the coat, its owner said to them, Why are you untying the coat?

And they said, The Lord has need of it. And they brought it to Jesus and throwing their cloaks on the coat, Jesus sat on it.

[5 : 04] And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road as he was drawing near. Already on the way down the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice, praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord.

Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, Teacher, rebuke your disciples. He said, I tell you, if they were silent, the stones, the very stones would cry out.

Amen. Thank you very much, Michelle. Well, today is Palm Sunday, which begins what is traditionally called in the Christian church, Holy Week.

And it commemorates the first Palm Sunday some 2,000 years ago when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt on which no one had ever sat.

And he did this a mere five days away from his crucifixion. And that first Palm Sunday brought into full focus the fact that the crowd that was gathered and who shouted Hosanna did not understand the kingdom that Jesus came to bring.

[6 : 36] And they were not alone. They represented the view of Jews in general. The Jews overwhelmingly did not understand the kingdom that Jesus came to bring.

And sadly, some 2,000 years later, many people still do not understand the kingdom that Jesus came to bring.

And so this morning as we celebrate Palm Sunday, as we prepare for Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday, I thought it would be fitting for us to consider afresh this first Palm Sunday based on Luke's account and to see how the Jews misunderstood the kingdom that Jesus was bringing and how we can guard ourselves from the same misunderstanding.

But first, let me go ahead and pray. for us. Heavenly Father, we are so grateful for this privilege to gather on this day that we commemorate Palm Sunday.

And Lord, we ask that you would speak to us from your word. Lord, we pray that you would renew our understanding or give us a fresh understanding understanding of the kingdom that Jesus Christ came to bring and indeed the kingdom that he, through his living and dying, has brought and will return to consummate in all its fullness.

[8 : 20] would you give us attentive hearts, O Lord, and would you give us fertile minds that we might hear your word.

And I ask, Lord, that you would anoint me by your spirit that I would be faithful to your word and I'll be profitable to all who hear this morning for the glory of your great name.

We pray. Amen. Amen. Well, this passage that we are considering this morning is in three parts. It's a somewhat lengthy passage. The first part is verses 1 to 12, which is the account of Jesus going to the house of Zacchaeus.

And the second part is verses 11 to 27, where Jesus tells this parable concerning the kingdom. And then the third part is verses 28 to 40, where Jesus triumphantly enters into Jerusalem on that first Sunday.

And hopefully, you see the reason that we are considering the passage as a whole and not just focusing on the third part, where Jesus enters into Jerusalem, because these passages are connected.

[9 : 39] And it's very interesting how they are connected and why they are connected. And I think the reason they are connected is because of the author. Some of you may be aware that this account of Jesus going to the house of Zacchaeus is only found in the Gospel of Luke.

The other Gospel writers do not record it. And you may also be aware that Luke had a purpose for writing his Gospel, and he had a method that he used for writing his Gospel.

Luke wrote to give a man by the name of Theophilus a better understanding of the things that he had believed, to give him a certain understanding. And Luke was not an eyewitness, but what Luke did was Luke was one who investigated the things concerning Jesus Christ, concerning his birth and his life and ministry.

and Luke said that he was going to lay out for Theophilus these things concerning Jesus in an orderly kind of way. And so, what Luke does as we come to this particular section of his Gospel is Luke connects Jesus going to the house of Zacchaeus and Jesus telling this parable about the kingdom to the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

And so, this morning, I want us to consider Luke's account because Luke has a goal in mind. Luke is presenting the Lord Jesus Christ and showing why he came, why he died, and what it means to follow him.

[11 : 27] And in so doing, what Luke does is Luke brings into focus the misunderstanding that the crowd had and that the Jews in general had concerning the kingdom that Jesus came to bring.

And I pray this morning that as we consider this, we will protect ourselves from the same or similar misunderstandings about the kingdom of God.

So there are three particular ways I want us to see from this lengthy passage how the Jews misunderstood the kingdom that Christ came to bring.

And the first way they misunderstood was they misunderstood the kingdom's focus. this is what we see in verses 1 to 12.

It's the account of Jesus going to the house of Zacchaeus. In verse 2, we see that Zacchaeus is described in two ways. He was a chief tax collector and he was rich.

[12 : 33] And these two descriptions about Zacchaeus tell us a lot about him, although other things are not told about Zacchaeus. To have been a tax collector in that day, you had to be a special kind of person.

Tax collectors were the most despised, they were among the most despised people in Jewish society. They were seen as traitors to the whole Jewish cause because they collected the taxes on behalf of the Romans who occupied the Jewish lands.

And the common practice in that day of tax collectors was to collect as much taxes as you were able to collect and they would obviously take more than was due and they would keep the overcharged amount for themselves.

And the Roman authorities didn't care as long as they got enough taxes from them, they could care less that they enriched themselves by overtaxing the people.

And so tax collectors were seen as traitors, they were hated, they were seen as people who were greedy, dishonest, and they lacked character in general.

[13 : 45] And so they were isolated people. They had money, but they were despised, and they were isolated. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector.

And the idea was that he was in that region, he was in that area, he was the main person who collected taxes, and he was very rich, so he was also very isolated.

So it's no wonder that the crowd grumbled when Jesus went into Zacchaeus' house. They grumbled and said he's gone into the house of a man who was a sinner.

They didn't need to know anything about Zacchaeus. The fact that he was a tax collector, he was a sinner, and in his case, a great sinner as a chief tax collector.

It's very interesting how Luke records this account. He tells us the crowd grumbled and what they said, and then Luke records what Zacchaeus says, and he also records what Jesus says.

[14 : 54] The words of Zacchaeus are found in verse 8 and the words of Jesus in verses 9 and 10, and in both cases, they're striking words. Luke doesn't record for us the details of the conversation that Jesus and Zacchaeus had in the house, and I think rightly so.

I think it's a picture of the very personal nature of repentance and confession before God.

I remember growing up, there was a saying that you never know when God and sinner reconciles.

And so Jesus and Zacchaeus, they had this private conversation that Luke doesn't record, but what is very clear is that Zacchaeus' life was transformed.

Zacchaeus was a changed man because of that encounter that he had with Jesus. And how do we know this? We know this from both the words of Zacchaeus and the words of Jesus.

Zacchaeus immediately said, he says, Lord, I'm going to give half of my goods to the poor, and if I've defrauded anyone, I'm going to give them four times what I've defrauded them.

[16 : 19] Now this is remarkable for a man who obviously loved money, a man obviously who was greedy. Zacchaeus says, I'm going to take my goods and half of it I will give to the poor.

And if I have stolen from anyone, I'm going to go beyond what the law requires. The law only required him to give them 20% on top of what he stole.

Give them back the property, and then 20%. Zacchaeus says, no. He says, what I'm going to do is I'm going to give them 400% more. Zacchaeus went 20 times over what the law required him to do. And brothers and sisters, the only explanation for that kind of a dramatic decision and response to what happened in the house with Jesus is that Zacchaeus experienced a radical transformation from the encounter that he had with Jesus.

Zacchaeus experienced genuine transformation. Zacchaeus was able to part with his earthly treasures because he found true treasure.

[17 : 41] He found true treasure in Jesus and the words of life that Jesus brought to him. And he could just like that, part with half of his goods, and he could decide to go well beyond what the law required him to make restitution to those from whom he stole.

people. And how did Jesus respond? Jesus said to Zacchaeus, well, Jesus said, and we'll get to how he said it, Jesus said, salvation has come to this house.

In verse 10, Jesus actually says what appears to be directed to Zacchaeus, but really it was directed to the crowd.

I want you to look at verse 10 again. It says, and Jesus said to him, today salvation has come to this house since he is also a son of Abraham.

Now, when you think of how Jesus says that, Jesus could not have been speaking directly to Zacchaeus. Jesus would have instead said to Zacchaeus, today salvation has come to your house since you are also a son of Abraham.

[19 : 08] But he doesn't say that. He says, salvation has come to this house since he also is a son of Abraham.

For the son of man came to seek and to save the lost. Jesus was addressing the grumbling crowd. Jesus was addressing those who protested that he ran into the house of this sinner, this tax collector, this man who was a traitor of the Jews.

And Jesus was saying that salvation was also open to people like Zacchaeus, who they wanted to exclude because they considered him to be a great sinner.

In verse 10, Jesus tells them his mission statement. He says, for the son of man came to seek and to save the lost.

Jesus, in essence, saying to them, he says, what are you grumbling about? This is why I came. I came to seek and to save the lost. That's why I will go into the house of this sinner.

[20 : 30] But the difference between Zacchaeus and the crowd was Zacchaeus knew he was lost. The crowd didn't think they were lost. The crowd connected themselves to Abraham.

They thought that what was coming to them, they had a right to it. And they thought that the blessings that God had promised to Abraham, because they were his descendants, those blessings came to them as a right, not to people like Zacchaeus, who was a great sinner and a traitor of the Jewish people.

And so what we see is that Jesus brings right before them, and he brings before us as well, the focus of the kingdom that he came to bring. The focus of the kingdom that Jesus came to bring is to bring salvation to lost people like Zacchaeus, and lost people like me and you.

But the crowd had something else in mind. The crowd, typical of Jews of that day, they envisioned a political kingdom. They envisioned a kingdom that was exclusively Jewish, that the promised Messiah would come and would usher in, and he would liberate them from Roman rule.

They wanted a king and a kingdom that would offer them a political revolution.

[22 : 06] But the kingdom that Jesus came to bring, and the kingdom that Jesus brought, is a kingdom that offers spiritual transformation. salvation. It's not a political kingdom.

And it should be clear to all that if the mission of Jesus was to bring a political kingdom and bring political revolution and revolutionize society, he had the power to do it.

If Jesus wanted to just turn society upside down and right all the wrongs of society, he had the power to do that.

But that was not his mission. His mission was not political revolution. His mission was spiritual transformation. You remember when Jesus stood before Pilate, and Pilate challenged him and questioned him.

Jesus said to Pilate in John 18, 36, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting that I might not be delivered over to the Jews.

[23 : 13] But my kingdom is not from this world. The crowd grumbled because the focus of Christ's kingdom was not what they wanted.

And brothers and sisters, the focus of the kingdom hasn't changed. The focus of the kingdom remains the same. It is not about political transformation.

It is not about cultural or moral transformation. It is not about self-improvement or self-fulfillment.

The focus of the kingdom is not to help us to live our best lives now and all that pertains to what is so popular in so many Christian circles.

Instead, the focus of the kingdom is the transformation of the hearts of lost men, women, boys, and girls. The focus of the kingdom is radical transformation of people like Zacchaeus.

And here's the irony. They had problems with the Romans. And Jesus, by transforming Zacchaeus, was actually undermining Rome because he was allied with Rome and now he was going to be allied with Christ.

[24 : 40] But they could not see that. And that's the way society is to be transformed. Society is to be transformed when the hearts of people are transformed. And this is why we must take very seriously this common thing that we hear in our country about we're a Christian nation.

And we're this kind of people. Listen, brothers and sisters, for the amount of churches that we have in this country, and for the amount of people who say that I'm a Christian in this country, something is wrong with the society that we have.

It cannot be biblical Christianity. Christianity. It cannot be the Christianity, it cannot be the gospel that transforms the hearts of men and women as it did for Zacchaeus and resulted in the radical life change that it brought to him.

And friends, if the gospel that we proclaim is not transforming the hearts of people, it is not the gospel that Jesus Christ has come to bring.

It is not the biblical gospel. The transformation that Jesus brings changes the lives of people, and as a result of that, societies change.

[26 : 01] But no societal change. No plans and programs of the government. We've seen it. We've seen it in our country and other countries where they spend untold amounts of money to transform society, and society remains the same because the hearts of people have not been changed.

Only the Son of Man, only the Lord Jesus Christ, can change the human heart. And this was the focus of the kingdom.

This is what Jesus came to do. He didn't come to do the bidding of the Jews to fulfill the lifelong ambitions they have had about being liberated from Roman oppression.

But not only did the Jews have the wrong understanding of the focus of the kingdom, they also had the wrong understanding of the timing of the kingdom when it would appear.

And this is my second point. Look again at verse 11. And as they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable because he was near Jerusalem and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

[27 : 33] So Jesus deliberately tells this parable knowing that he is going to Jerusalem. And guess what? He is not going to Jerusalem absent-minded.

He knows what awaits him there. Jesus was more certain of the death that awaited him in Jerusalem than a person who gets a diagnosis from the doctor who says, you have three months to live or you have five months to live.

time. We all know that sometimes those diagnoses don't prove to be correct. They either have more time or less time. But Jesus knew for certain that he was going into Jerusalem and he was going to be the Passover lamb who was going to be crucified for the sins of his people.

and so he proceeds to tell them this parable because he is near to Jerusalem and they had a wrong understanding of the kingdom that it would appear immediately.

They believe it was right at the door. And we see this by the things that they will be saying in the next section on Palm Sunday. And the reason they were so excited about this kingdom appearing immediately is because they thought we're beneficiaries of it.

[28 : 53] We're first in line for this. This is our kingdom and we're going to get the respect that we deserve. Jesus' own disciples didn't understand this.

Jesus' own disciples were preoccupied with who was going to be the greatest, who was going to sit on the left, and who was going to sit on the right. And they certainly didn't plan for Jesus to die.

They didn't expect themselves to die. And they all expected an imminent kingdom that was going to come. And so Jesus tells them a parable.

A parable is a story designed to teach a spiritual lesson. And this parable is about a noble man who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and then to return.

But before he sets off on his journey, he calls his servants to him, ten of them. And he gives them an amount of money that amounted to like three months' wages for a laborer at that time.

[29 : 55] And he told them, engage in business until I come. We're told this noble man also had citizens. But his citizens hated him.

And they sent a delegation after him, saying, we don't want this man to rule over us. And that was typical in that day, where they had dominated territories where Rome would rule, for example, and someone would be appointed over a territory.

They'd have to go to Rome to receive official credentials. And the people would oftentimes send delegations and say, we don't want this person to be our ruler.

But despite their protests, the noble man receives the kingdom and he returns. And upon return, he does two things.

First, he rewards those servants who put his money to work. And then he punishes his citizens who did not want him to reign over them.

[31 : 01] And the fitting punishment was to execute them. Again, the reason Jesus told this parable is because it was near to Jerusalem and the crowd thought that the kingdom was going to appear immediately.

And in the crowd, Jesus had Jesus had both servants and citizens.

And these servants, actually, they referred to as enemies as well because they did not want him to rule over them. And the lesson that he told both of them is that the kingdom was not going to come immediately.

The lesson to the servants was that they were to be busy. They were to be working until the king is coronated and until he returns.

And the idea is that it's not going to be a short wait. He says he's going to enter a far country and then to return. And in their understanding that wasn't getting on a plane, that was taking the normal slow means of transportation that were there.

[32 : 22] And they were told you to take these resources that this noble man, your master, has given to you and you are to employ them in his service for him, his account, until he comes because you will give an account for it.

and we see that the enemies will pay an eternal price for rejecting his reign over them.

And this, I think, we should consider and realize that this is not just a parable in a vacuum. This is a parable for us as well. Those of us who are servants of Christ, but also those of us who have not trusted in Christ and who thereby would be enemies of Christ.

I think, by and large, we have a different problem. Those of us who are servants of Christ, we have a different problem about the kingdom and how we view the kingdom than the people in Jesus' day. They thought the kingdom was going to appear immediately. our temptation is to think it's a long way away. And that is such a dangerous way to think because it's been 2,000 years since Jesus would have told this parable.

[33 : 47] Approximately 2,000 years since Jesus told this parable. And when the people of his day, the misinformed crowd and his misinformed disciples may have thought that the kingdom was immediate, we should be thinking like that some 2,000 years later.

We should not be thinking that it is very, very far away. And the reason we shouldn't be thinking that it's very, very far away because the temptation is to be idle.

The temptation is not to see the need to be busy living for the Master with all the resources that he's given to us, every ability, every resource that he's given to us.

We have to be living for his service. We have to be living for his purposes, not our own. And yet, I think you would agree with me that if we were to assess the general attitude of those who would profess that they belong to Christ, there isn't a sense of living with that awareness, that day-by-day awareness, us, that our Lord is going to return.

Our Lord is going to return, and he is going to bring us into account for how we have lived our lives as his servants. Brothers and sisters, let us not make the mistake of thinking that the kingdom of God is very, very far away in terms of its consummation and Christ returning to bring it into fullness.

[35 : 29] This promise of Christ's return is repeated again and again in the pages of Holy Scripture. He will return and he will reward his servants.

And notice in the parable that he makes it very clear that rewards are not equal. Heavenly rewards are not equal. faithful. And he even, it's interesting, he doesn't call the ten servants, he stops at, it seems, the third servant.

And this third servant, he remains a servant, but he is unrewarded because he is unfaithful. Jesus was not just telling some idle joke or some idle tale.

No, Jesus is telling a parable to teach a lesson. And it's a lesson for you and me, brothers and sisters. If we name the name of Christ and we belong to him, then we become servants of Christ. And he is entrusted to us resources. And we are to use those resources in his service. And that's not just what we do on a Sunday morning. That's all of life.

[36 : 43] That's in our jobs. That's in our workplaces. That is stewarding our whole lives in service for this king who has promised that he is going to return. And who has told us that we shouldn't be idle and careless just because it may appear that his return is not imminent.

And if you're here this morning or you're listening online and you've not trusted Jesus, there are only two groups of people. You're either servant of Christ or you're an enemy of Christ.

You're one of those citizens who say, I would not have this man to rule over me. And maybe you have not said those words. But you live your life in a very matter of fact way that you are Lord of your life and you will do what you want.

And what you're saying is, I will not have this man to rule over me. but you belong to him as the one who created you.

And you will give an account to him for the life that you have lived on his earth. The language is very graphic that Jesus chooses to use about how this noble man handles the enemies of his in verse 27.

[38 : 17] He says, I want you to bring them and slaughter them in front of me. That's not politically correct language today. But I will tell you, brothers and sisters, that this is mild language compared to the actual destruction and punishment, eternal punishment, that will come to those who reject the Lord Jesus Christ and who will not have him to be their king.

This language is mild compared to what we read about in the book of Revelation in particular about the punishment that awaits those who do not trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

And so let us not make the opposite mistake that the disciples and the Jews of Jesus they made, them thinking the kingdom was immediate, but us thinking, oh, the kingdom is way off.

Let us not even make the mistake to think, oh, I don't think it's going to happen in my lifetime.

Brothers and sisters, we do not know. We do not know. The Bible says is at such a time that you think not, that's when the Son of Man will come.

And those who are thinking this has happened and that has happened, the ways of the Lord are past finding out. And so we need to be living, informed by this reality that 2,000 years have passed.

[39 : 51] And I don't know, it could be many more years to come, but our attitude should not be one of thinking, oh, the kingdom is a long way away. Our attitude should be one of living every single day that, Lord, this could be the day.

Would you help me to be faithful with everything you've entrusted to me, faithful with my whole set of circumstances, that when I stand before you, I will give an account.

Every one of us will give an account before the Lord for the lives that we live on this earth in his name.

having set this stage by showing how the crowd misunderstood the kingdom's focus and how they misunderstood the kingdom's timing, Luke then turns to how the crowds misunderstand the kingdom's king, and this is my third and final point.

Luke does this by recounting that first poem Sunday in verses 28 to 40. 20. And notice how in verse 28, he connects the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem to the parable of the noble man receiving a kingdom and the account of the salvation that came to Zacchaeus.

[41 : 20] Look at verse 28 again. And when he had said these things, and when he had said these things, he went on the head going up to Jerusalem.

It was in Jerusalem that Jesus was going to demonstrate the kind of king that he was and the kind of kingdom that he came to bring. And he started on that first Palm Sunday that culminated on that first resurrection Sunday.

Jesus told two of his disciples to go into the village, and upon entering, he told them, you're going to find a colt tied on which no one had ever sat.

And he further told them that if anyone questioned them about untying the colt, that they should say the Lord has need of it. The disciples go into the town, and everything is exactly as Jesus told them when they were untying the colt.

The owners asked, what are you doing? Why are you doing this colt? And they said, the Lord is need of it. They bring the colt to Jesus. This act of Jesus was demonstrating that he was a king.

[43 : 10] In the Near East, it was a part of the cultural practice that the king had this inherent authority to be able to command their people or property, or anything into his service.

And we see the prophet Samuel pointing to this in 1 Samuel chapter 8 verses 11 to 17, when he rebukes Israel for wanting a king to be like the other nations.

And what he tells them, what he warns them about is he says to them, he says, when you get a king, is that this king is going to take your sons and take your daughters and take your fields and take your donkeys into his service and for his purposes.

This was the rite of kings. And so we see Jesus going into Jerusalem and he exercises this ancient rite of kings.

He says, you go and you take that coat, it doesn't belong to me, it belongs to somebody else, I want you to bring it. And they say, why do you need it? You say, the Lord, the Lord has need of it.

[44 : 18] And it happens exactly the way that he said. But notice that Jesus doesn't just say, go and get me a donkey, go and get me a colt.

He says, I want you to get one that no one has ever sat on. And that also was a part of the royal custom of kings. That the animal that the king rode on, whether a horse or donkey, no one else would have ridden on that animal.

And nobody else would ride on that animal. It was exclusively for the king in the king's service. No one had ever sat on this colt that Jesus commandeered.

And Jesus was showing himself to be a king, but a different king. He was showing himself to be a different king.

He was not showing himself to be a king who was flaunting his power, flaunting selfish power when he commandeered this colt. He commandeered the colt as a show of servanthood.

[45 : 30] And he demonstrated the kind of king that he was and the kind of kingdom that he was bringing. They brought the colt to Jesus and placed their cloaks on it. And as Jesus rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road as if to lay out a kind of red carpet for Jesus because they saw him, though selfishly, as the Messiah.

And this act of Jesus walking into Jerusalem, riding into Jerusalem on a colt, was an intentional act on his part, and it was to fulfill the messianic prophecy about the coming Messiah.

Jesus was demonstrating the fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy in Zechariah 9, 9-10. Here's what he reads.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you, righteous, and bringing salvation as he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem and the battle bow shall be cut off and he shall speak peace to the nations. His rule shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.

[47 : 02] Zechariah prophesied that this king, Israel's king, was coming to them differently, unlike the other kings. This king will be righteous.

He will be perfectly righteous without fault. This king will bring salvation. He's not bringing a political salvation. He's not bringing a salvation of having conquered foreign enemies.

salvation he brings was not accomplished by the blood of the citizens who so many times die in battle and they bring some kind of a victory to the king.

Now the salvation that this king was bringing on that first Palm Sunday, he was bringing a spiritual salvation.

He was bringing a salvation that would transform the souls of men, women, boys, and girls, and a salvation that would be achieved by his own blood which he was going to shed in about five days.

[48 : 16] He was a suffering king. He was a suffering king. And I think when we think about kings today, the last thing we think about them is suffering.

The last thing we think about them is being humble. Largely, the kings of this world are marked by arrogance and pride. And yet, the king of kings rode into Jerusalem decisively, determinedly, not on a horse, but on a humble colt.

He was humility personified. king of king. He was not just a humble king, a servant king.

He was also a suffering king. And rather than being a king of war, he was a king of peace.

Zechariah 9, 10, we see God promised to bring peace not just to Jerusalem, but to all the nations, and that his reign would extend from the sea to the ends of the earth.

And while we hope for peace in the world, we hope for peace to come from those parts of the world that are ravaged by war today, the sad reality is that we will know war until the Lord comes.

[49 : 43] We will know war until the prince of peace comes. when one war is settled in time, another one starts because of sin, because of greed, because of selfishness.

And it is only when the prince of peace comes will there be true peace from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth.

That will be the only time that we will know true and lasting peace when the Lord Jesus returns. this was the king who was riding into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday.

He was God's king and he was bringing God's kingdom. Look again at verses 37 to 38 where we see the response of the people.

Luke writes as he was drawing near already on the way down the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord.

[51 : 00] Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. They were not so much praising Jesus because they understood him to be God's king.

they were praising Jesus because they understood him to be this Messiah that they wanted and they were praising him because of all the wonderful works that God had done through him.

And I'm sure in that part of the world and I'm sure that happened in this part of the world would be the same. Who wouldn't want a king who would multiply bread and fish? One of the greatest works that he actually did.

in Psalms 113 to 118, these Psalms are called the Hallel and the Psalms, these were typically sung during the Feast of Tabernacles and during the Passover.

And the last one of them, Psalm 118, Luke quotes from that and the in verse 38.

[52 : 12] Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Luke quotes that, but there's a slight variation how Luke quotes it. In Psalm 118, 26, it reads, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

And what they did was initially they were blessing the pilgrims, blessed is the one who would come to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

But over time, they understood this to be referring to the Messiah. And so this he became known as the Messiah, and that's exactly the way Luke actually cites it.

He cites it, blessed is he, sorry, blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Not blessed is he, but blessed was the king because they understood the he to be the Messiah who was coming in the name of the Lord.

But again, the Jews had a political Messiah in mind. They had a Messiah in mind who was going to free them from Roman bondage. But Jesus was a different king. Jesus was a biblical king.

[53 : 27] He was the promised king that God sent, who would set them free, not from Roman bondage, but from the bondage of sin that they and we all are under.

The sad reality, though, was on that day, not only was the crowd mistaken about who Jesus was, but his own disciples didn't understand who he was.

Those same voices that were saying to him, blessed is you who comes in the name of the Lord.

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Five days later, many of those voices would be saying, crucify him. Because they didn't understand the king that he was and the kingdom that he came to bring.

The apostle John in his gospel helps us to see that they did not understand. They, the disciples, did not understand the significance of Jesus coming into Jerusalem on a donkey, even though they were calling him king of Israel.

In John 12, 16, this is what Luke writes, his disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, they remembered these things that had been written about him and that

had been done to him.

[54 : 55] John is referring to himself as well. They all lacked misunderstanding. And brothers and sisters, the misunderstanding prevails today in pulpits and in churches.

And the reason is that some seek a different king, a different king from the one that God offers. Many seek a king that they can fashion in their own image. a king who would be what they want him to be rather than them becoming what he wants them to be, them becoming conformed into his image.

And this is why we have so many people claiming to follow Jesus. And it is very clear that they're not following the Jesus of the Bible. And fundamentally, they don't make him their king. They don't relate to him as their king. A king who is to be reverent and a king who is to be obeyed. For them, Jesus is more like a divine personal assistant. To help them to be what they want to be. To help them to get whatever they want. And they will praise that Jesus. And it's alarming to see how they will praise an unbiblical Jesus.

[56 : 23] And when the biblical Jesus is presented, they're bored and they have no interest in the biblical Jesus. Brothers and sisters, may that not be the case with us.

May we become acquainted with and may we worship and obey the biblical Jesus as he is revealed in scripture. father. In verse 39, and I'm closing, the Pharisees hearing Jesus being called king, they urged him to rebuke his disciples.

And in response, Jesus says, if those shouting and praising God and calling me king were to be silent, the very stones will cry out.

And Jesus was really pointing to something that is very profound. Every single thing that God has created, he's created to worship the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Rocks were created to worship God. They're not like us. They don't have personality like us. They don't have the ability like us to praise God in an intelligent way. but nonetheless, they were created to worship God.

[57 : 45] Trees, everything that God created, was created to worship him. What Jesus was in essence saying, he's saying, if those who are supposed to praise God and praise me as king, men and women, if they will cease to do it, God will use the most inanimate part of his creation and give them voice to praise him and to praise his son.

Human beings have, human beings are top of God's creation and their praise is to be on top of God's creation, above all other beings and things that God has created.

And if we fail to do it, he says, God will go to the basis part of his creation and give them voice, that they will do the necessary thing and praise the king.

Brothers and sisters, maybe praise king Jesus, not because of crowd psychology, not because everybody else is doing it and it seems the popular thing to do, and not because we have our own agenda in mind what we want him to do for us.

Let us praise him with empty hands and empty hearts from our own desires other than just to praise him because he is the king. He is God's king, bringing God's salvation to people like us who need it.

[59 : 23] And he brings the salvation we need, not the one that we want, not the one that we think we need. who needs to groan who groan who groan who who groan who groan who groan who groan who groan groan who groan Because the king, God's king, the one who has come to transform the hearts and lives of men and women and set them free from bondage, so radically transformed their lives that people would say, what are you doing?

As they would have said to Zacchaeus. That's the king that we need to behold on Palm Sunday, the true king, the biblical king, God's king, and what he came to bring.

And brothers and sisters, when we behold Jesus as the true king that he is on Palm Sunday, Good Friday takes on a different meaning. Good Friday is not about God dying for us because we're so special.

Good Friday is about a merciful and gracious God dying for us because we're not special, even though we aren't special. Nothing in us. It's the focus of why Christ sent his son to die on the cross. It is his sheer mercy and grace for undeserving sinners like you and me. And may the Lord help us to celebrate Good Friday with wide-opened eyes that the king of glory ascended Calvary's hill, took the place of sinners like you and me, and died in our place so that he can do the most important thing for us that is set us free from sin.

[61 : 29] If a lot of people say to me, oftentimes greeting me, man, all is well, and I would say to them, no. And they say, what do you mean, no? I say, well, you know what?

All that matters is well, and it is well with my soul. The reason I can say that is because I am persuaded about what Jesus did on the cross of Calvary.

Jesus took care of my greatest need, and he was only able to do that because of who he is. It's who he is that makes all the difference in what he did for us.

And so may God help us as we celebrate on Friday, as we celebrate on Sunday next week, let us do it, celebrating the biblical king who came to die sinners like us.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for sending the Messiah. Thank you for sending a Messiah, not one that we ordered, but one that we needed.

[62 : 44] And Lord, may we remember his mission that he came to seek and to save the lost. Lord, may we remember the timing of his kingdom and the work that he has given to us to do.

Lord, may we remember that he is the servant king, a suffering king. He is the worthy king, worthy of our worship, worthy of all of our praise.

But help us with clear hearts and minds to remember the Savior's sacrifice on Good Friday, and then to remember the Savior's resurrection on Resurrection Sunday.

Would you do this, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.